

Adam Zack

From: joe symons <joesymons@me.com>
Sent: Saturday, June 23, 2018 4:20 PM
To: Timothy P. Blanchard; Comp Plan Update; DL - Council
Cc: fred klein; Natalie Menacho; Keara Axelrod; Sam Dillingham; Margie Doyle; Stephanie Buffum
Subject: We Should Never Have Called It Earth | The On Being Project

(this is the 2nd send of this email; the first had a pdf file that was too large. It has been removed)

Sorry for the duplicate.

Joe

To be a climate scientist is to be an active participant in a slow-motion horror story. These are scary tales to tell children around the campfire. We are the perfect, willfully naïve victims: We were warned, and we did it anyway. Dark fairytales, of course, are as old as human history, and **we tell them for a reason**. But here, the culprit is the teller, both victim and villain.

from:

<https://onbeing.org/blog/kate-marvel-we-should-never-have-called-it-earth>

It would be really swell, and smart, to see San Juan County step out of its “keep on truckin’ “ mindset and prepare wisely for a future consistent with the vision statement and climate disruption reality.

Both of these forces (the vision statement and climate disruption) beg for a significant alteration of course, one that recognizes we must live within our limits.

The job before you is to proactively figure out what those limits are, build in a buffer in case you didn’t figure right, and build a path from where we are to where we will stop when we’ve hit the buffer line. We cannot rely on the market to do this. Exhibit A here is the full portrait of the story included in this email (the link), which is a mass extinction event created by humans.

At a minimum, citizens in San Juan County should be given the opportunity to see what the current future (as determined by the market running to buildout) is. They should be given a chance to weigh in on whether this

meets the new standard that the 21st century requires of us, a standard of living within, and respecting, the ecosystem that keeps us alive.

I invite you to read the entire article, written by a climate scientist and, as well, a mother, thinking about her young son.

The opportunity is here, now, to imagine where we are going and to imagine whether that is where, and how, we want to get there. Right now there is no imagination. That is unworthy of all of us.

Joe Symons
Olga, WA
KeepSanJuansWild.org

carpe diem



August 1, 2017

/NASA



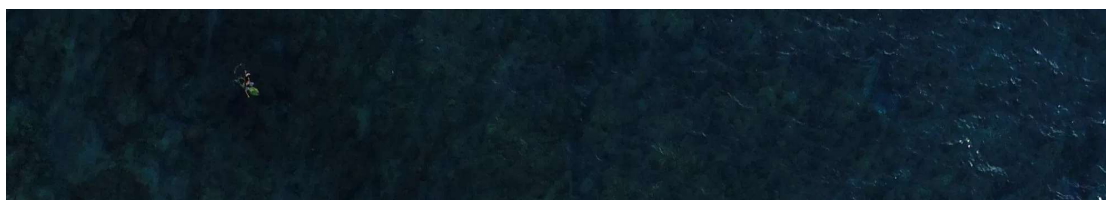
We Should Never Have Called It Earth

BY KATE MARVEL (@DRKATEMARVEL), CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

We should never have called it Earth. Three quarters of the planet's surface is saltwater, and most of it does not lap at tranquil beaches for our amusement. The ocean is deep; things are lost at sea. Sometimes we throw them there: messages in bottles, the bodies of mutinous sailors, plastic bags of plastic debris. Our sewage.

Sometimes the things we lose slip unnoticed down the sides of passing ships. We expect never to see lost objects again, but every so often they are carried by shifting currents and swirling eddies to wash ashore on distant beaches. We are reminded that things, once submerged, have a habit of returning.

I am not afraid of the ocean, although I should be. On hot summer weekends I take my son to the beach. He toddles toward the water, laughs at the lazy waves splashing his fat baby legs. I follow behind, turn him back when the water reaches his naked belly. He is too young to know the sea gets deeper, that eventually it rises above your head and you must swim so as not to drown. I am prepared for nightmares as he grows and learns about the vastness of the ocean and the monsters real and imagined that swim there. He will soon know that evil things lurk in the deep.



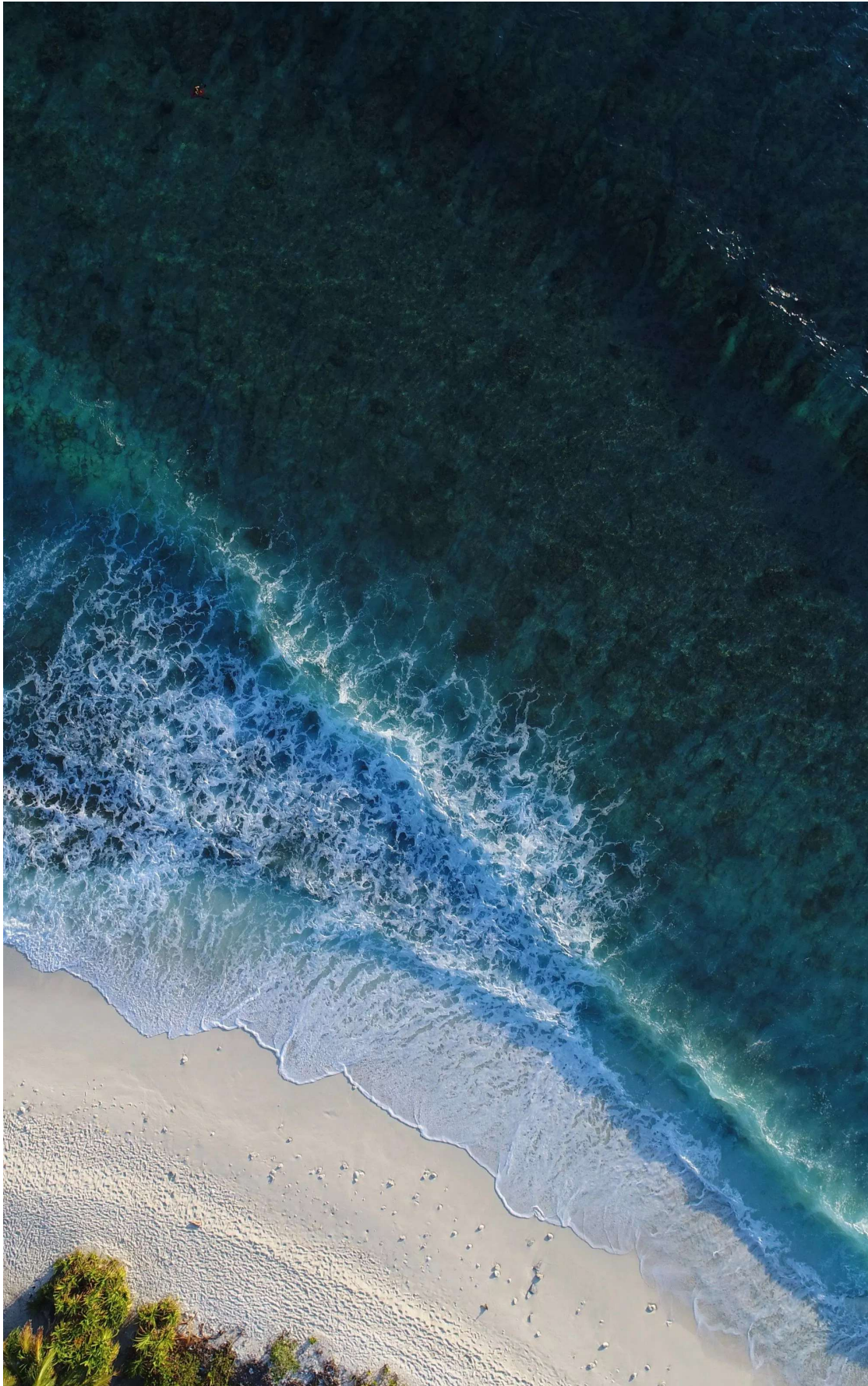


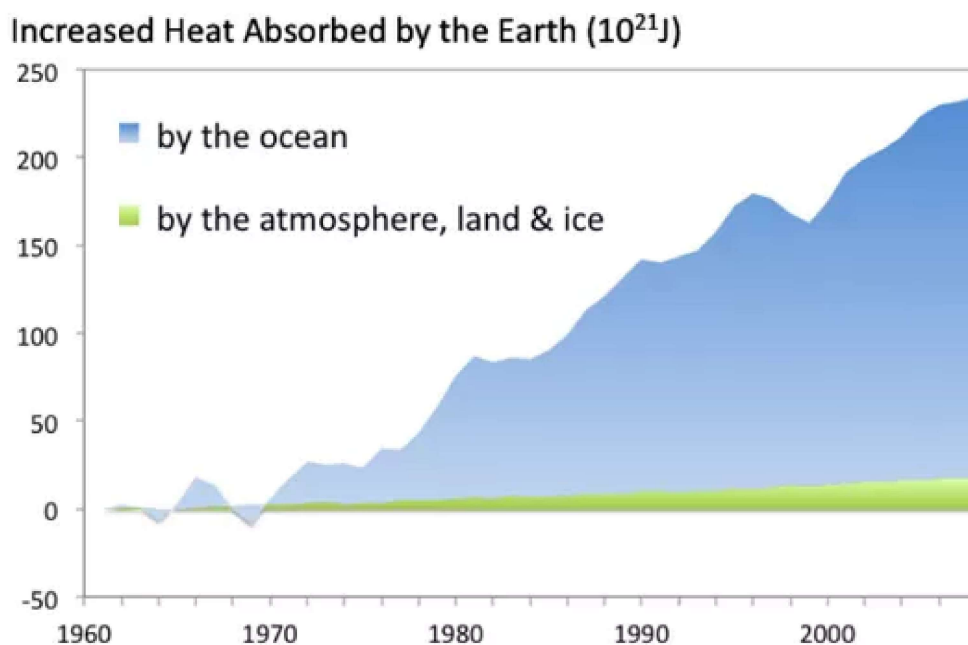
Photo by [Shifaaz Shamoon](#) (Unsplash / Public Domain Dedication (CC0))

[I am a climate scientist](#), a computer modeler studying the things we put in the atmosphere. On first glance, my work seems confined to a realm wholly above and separate from the underwater world. But the ocean and the air are the great conspirators of our climate. The motions of the atmosphere, the rise and fall of air above us, are dictated by the temperature of the sea surface. Much of our weather is shaped by the back-and-forth slosh of water in the tropical oceans.

Some years, around Christmas, the waters of the Eastern equatorial Pacific become abnormally warm. This [El Niño](#), an imaginary visitation from the Christ child, feeds violent tropical thunderstorms above the warm pool of water. The tropical East floods; drought comes to the West. Indonesia and Australia burn.

The atmosphere is listening, and it carries the sea's messages far afield. The trade winds weaken, barometers measure drops and rises in pressure, and air currents are re-directed. El Niño brings rain to the American Southwest, mild winters to southern Canada, reduces hurricanes in the north Atlantic. The average temperature of the entire planet increases. We, all of us, are at the mercy of the ocean.

Before we existed, and after we are gone, the ocean will continue to whisper to the atmosphere. Weather patterns will change back and forth with the natural oscillations of air and water. But we *do* exist, and we are treating the atmosphere as a limitless dumping ground. A signal of our handiwork is emerging against this cacophony of noise. Things are changing.



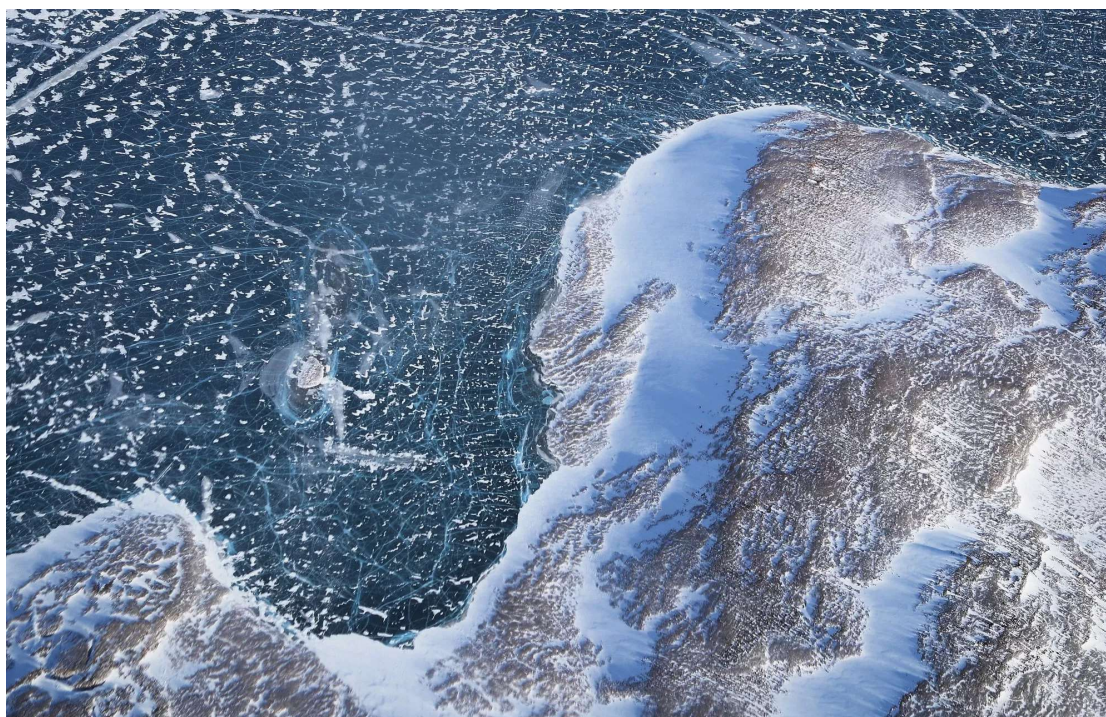
A chart showing where all the extra heat is being absorbed by the Earth. (Credit: Katherine Hayhoe)

Dive into the ocean and there is no immediate impediment to progress. At some point your ears pop. Stray too deep or too long and [gases make bubbles that pop in your joints](#). To dive into land requires mechanical assistance: dirt beneath fingernails, shovels in sweaty hands, a screw turned by internal combustion. Deep in the ocean you may find a wrecked ship, tarnished gold,

dissolved clothing threaded through buried skeletons. Deep in the earth we find fossils, the compressed detritus of primeval death. Burning these gives us light and energy and heat. Some of this is deliberate and localized. Some, however, is not.

We find [greenhouse gases](#) difficult to understand. Accepting that gas means danger is a sad condition of modernity. But we imagine rancid air that tickles then chokes, yellow clouds on a battlefield in Flanders. We accept that burning is warmth, but that its byproducts may linger and mix without color, odor, or taste seems too strange. Linger they do though. They trap the thermal effluence of the planet and, in so doing, warm the planet.

The warming is not immediate. Delays are built into the system: there are different forms of inertia here. The air warms first, then the land, then surface winds mix the shallow surface layer of the sea and finally the abyssal reaches of the ocean. The heat slowly trickles down to the deep, churned by slow overturning ocean currents. The ocean is slow to warm, but it will receive the message in time.

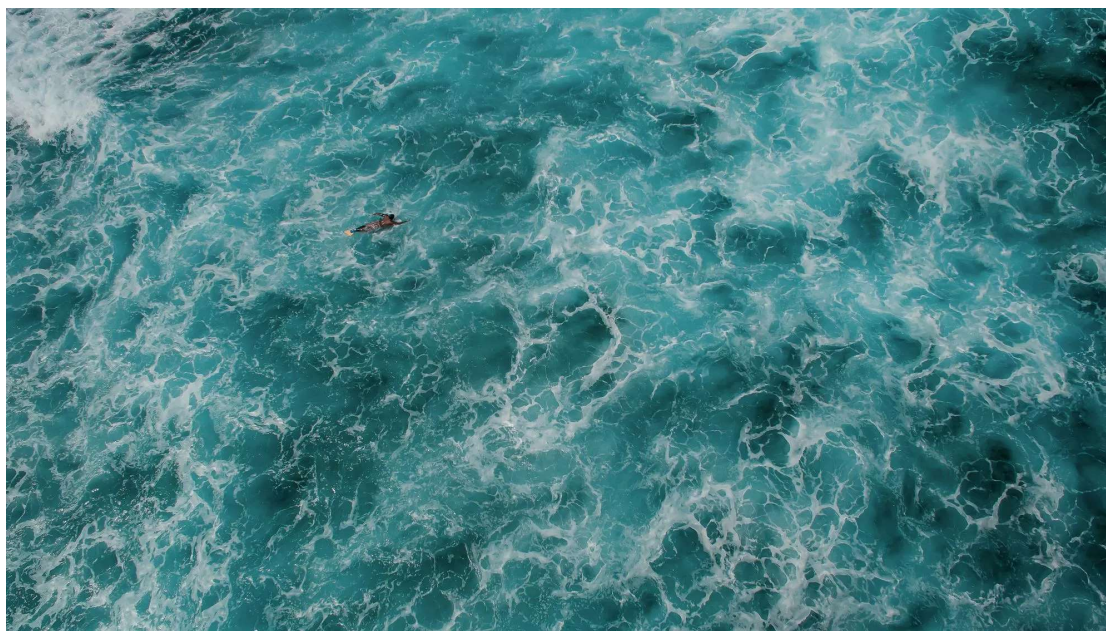


Sea ice (at top) meets land as seen from NASA's Operation IceBridge research aircraft along the Upper Baffin Bay coast above Greenland. NASA's Operation IceBridge has been studying how polar ice has evolved over the past nine years and is currently flying a set of eight-hour research flights over ice sheets and the Arctic Ocean to monitor Arctic ice loss aboard a retrofitted 1966 Lockheed P-3 aircraft. According to NASA scientists and the National Snow and Ice Data Center (NSIDC), sea ice in the Arctic appears to have reached its lowest maximum wintertime extent ever recorded on March 7, 2017. ([Mario Tama](#) / Getty Images / © All Rights Reserved)

Someday I must tell my son what I have done. My comfortable, safe life is in large part a product of the [internal combustion engine](#). Fossil fuels power the trains that take us to the beach, the factories that make his plastic bucket and spade, the lights I switch off when I kiss him good night. We can make small adjustments: recycling, buying reusable bottles for our water and ice coffee, foregoing the occasional plastic bag. But these small things, even multiplied by a large population, are still small in the end.

I cannot deny my son or myself the ease of modern life, and I have no wish to isolate him from friends and family by insisting on radical changes. A carbon-free life seems a solitary one: no travel to see grandparents, awkward refusals of invitations, precious time with friends replaced by gardening, canning, mending, building, working. I search for political solutions, an advocacy muted by the cowardice of my personal choices. In the end, I am responsible for the gases that are changing the climate and, in raising my son in comfort and convenience, am passing on that responsibility and guilt to him.

Greenhouse gases are indisputably warming the whole planet. We are moving toward a future where the natural variations of El Niño are swamped by rising ocean temperatures. There will be no weather that we have not somehow touched. And our legacy travels deeper than we think: We have left to our children a time bomb of warming. Even if we somehow managed to halt the increase in greenhouse gases, freezing them at today's levels, [the planet's temperature would continue to rise](#) as the heat trickles into the deep, slowly creating a new equilibrium. The ocean will eventually know what we have done to the atmosphere. The process is slow, but inexorable. We have committed ourselves to this warming, a legacy to future generations.



To be a climate scientist is to be an active participant in a slow-motion horror story. These are scary tales to tell children around the campfire. We are the perfect, willfully naïve victims: We were warned, and we did it anyway. Dark fairytales, of course, are as old as human history, and [we tell them for a reason](#). But here, the culprit is the teller, both victim and villain.

The moral of this fable is murkier than the simplicity a children's tale demands. At the end of the story, the fear persists. We continue to burn fossil fuels and the gases they make continue to trap heat, warming the air, the land, the shallow seas. The heat is mixed deep into the ocean, a long slow slog to equilibrium. There is no way to stop it.

What do I tell my son? A monster awaits in the deep, and someday it will come for you. We know this. We put it there.

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CONTRIBUTORS

KATE MARVEL

is a climate scientist and a writer. A theoretical physicist by training, she is now an associate research scientist at NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies and Columbia University's Department of Applied Physics and Applied Mathematics. Kate's research focuses on how human activities affect the climate and what we can expect in the future, using satellite observations, computer models, and basic physics to study the human impact on variables from rainfall patterns to cloud cover. She lives and works in New York City.



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Scott Lankford • a year ago



As someone who teaches both "how to write" and climate change studies to college-level students, I found this to be among the most memorable essays on the crisis I can ever remember reading.

22 • Reply • Share ›

**Jane England** • a year ago

Sad, quiet, brilliant.

11 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**adam lucas** • a year ago

You've beautifully captured exactly how every climate aware individual feels...the impending doom and the hopelessness of making 'eco' choices. I do so just to make myself feel better rather than to think i am making any worthwhile difference. I would be interested to know what you think of the book 'The Yin and Yang of Climate Crisis' by Brendan Kelly. I found this the best way for me, as a Chinese medicine practitioner, to understand what is happening in our world today.

Thank you for sharing such conscious and down-to-'earth' thoughts

10 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**elizabetta** • a year ago

Climate scientists have been doing studies and publishing the results of those studies in scientific journals for decades, and yet probably less than 5% of the general population has ever read a single scientific paper on climate change. At the same time, almost every day they have listened to FOX News misrepresent the results of climate studies and denigrate the scientists who did those studies, and they've heard lies and pseudoscience spew from Heartland Institute and Heritage Foundation. Actual climate research MUST be made available to non-scientists. No conservative who does not have a science background is going to spend \$100 for a subscription to a scientific journal just so they can be more informed about climate change, especially when they believe they are being educated already by FOX news, Breitbart, Wattsupwiththat and other anti-science propaganda outlets. There are a lot of people who wouldn't read scientific studies under any circumstances, but at least there would be a chance if all climate science could be accessed online for free. Also, when new studies are published, the media should make the public aware - perhaps scientific journals should be sending out press releases describing new research EACH TIME new climate studies are published in their journals. Now all we see are articles and op-eds from "think tanks" talking about how the climate has always changed and maybe a warmer climate will be good for us.

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Gerald Larey** → elizabetta • a year ago

You forgot religion and rapture and salvation and nirvana and paradise... You could put books of science in every person's face on the planet, you would still get the same result.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Real Lehoux** → Gerald Larey • 10 months ago

You may believe rightly or wrongly that we would be miraculously saved from our part of the polluting and destruction of this planet but it does not erase our responsibility not only to repair but saved it for future generations and animals

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Gerald Larey** → Real Lehoux • 10 months ago

It would only be accomplished by removing toxic religiosity from human culture, is what I'm saying. If 5-6 billion people don't care about the planet, (because their "faith" destines them to go someplace else) whaddya gonna do?



1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Real Lehoux** → Gerald Larey • 10 months ago

- | 🗨

Agree! Remind me a true story of a friend of mine who was travelling by bus in a remote area in one of the big islands of Indonesia. She expressed her concerns while talking to a group of passengers around her about the deforestation and the disastrous consequences on the ecology that will cause big calamities on them and so on. The people around answered that Allah will protect them and all will be fine, they did not seem to understand the human responsibility for their actions and domino effect...Just as she said that from a distance they saw the road they could see on the other side of the valley on the now naked hills slopes suddenly being covered by a huge landslide of soil, mud and debris as no more trees and roots systems could retain it...All on board the bus thought she was a sort of one of those prophets of doom despite her saying that it was only logical science...Ignorance, religions and superstitions mixed together are the biggest obstacles to our own salvation and the planet.

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Shodo** → Real Lehoux • 5 months ago

- | 🗨

The Christians who are hoping for the apocalypse are really the problem. They don't want physical saving. (I do wonder whether she said anything about the mudslide. It would be great to have the details on that story.)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Shodo** → elizabetta • 5 months ago

- | 🗨

Press releases would be a good idea.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Kenn Orphan** • a year ago

- | 🗨

Beautifully written and expressed. "A monster awaits in the deep, and someday it will come for you. We know this. We put it there." Indeed, we have.

5 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Real Lehoux** • 10 months ago

- | 🗨

You say it so much better that I could ever say myself...We put ourselves in not only a conundrum but in a trap.

We forgot that we are not in an open system but in a closed system akin to a gigantic glass snow globe...and being out of it is not a viable option...The process started when we started using fire and then used more of its equivalent energy for all artificial things we create and use. Then worse we are wasting things and think that the system is too vast to be affected as if there is an exhaust pump or fan...We literally are going to suffocate in our own sewage. The Modern age will be followed by the Sewer age.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›

**Susan Tideman** • a year ago

- | 🗨

The article is a beautiful statement based on the assumption that the greenhouse gases that went up can't be got down for ages and ages. The recently published book *Drawdown*, by Paul Hawkins, reports on currently available methods to get the greenhouse gases back down, and (in the back of the book)

studies that show that if we use those methods aggressively, we can get the greenhouse gasses back down soon. I hope that we do use those methods aggressively. And that within the author's lifetime, if not mine, she can write another beautiful statement about how we did that. How the UnderToad (to refer to another commenter) did not get us.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Teresa Ganna • a year ago



So, here we are now. We have unlocked many of the secrets of the universe. We have shaped the Earth to meet our needs. A nano-second of geologic time ago, we discovered the treasures of energy lying just below the surface, and we found a way to exploit them. We learned how to extract for our use the powerful energy contained in those resources, and in so doing to release the long sequestered carbon within them back into the atmosphere.

The moon could have told us, if she could speak, that we were letting the genie out of the bottle, and that the ancient fossil fuels contained the power to change the very climate that sustains us. Our big brains saw only the riches such energy could provide. We took fruit from the tree of knowledge, though we had no understanding of the consequences. If only we could have had a few more thousands of years to evolve, we might have been able to see that the way we chose to supply our needs and wants was only one of many paths, and was the most destructive.

We might have chosen to treat the precious reserves of irreplaceable energy with respect, knowing that humankind would need it far into the future. In our frenzy of greed for more and more toys and comforts, we ignored the more sustainable paths and, instead, chose to plunder the Earth. With no thought for our grandchildren, and no care for the other creatures of the Earth, we have torn the web of life. The moon will be there through all the years to come, carrying the footprints of man, the memory of humankind, and the sorrow for what could have been.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Catherine Thompson • a year ago



gorgeous, unnerving and powerful piece. Thanks for this.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark Chapman • 4 months ago



I think the problem is that, paradoxically of course, we think the world is real - and thus that our fears and hopes are real. In fact all we know for certain is that which makes us know things - consciousness. Everything else is variable - ultimately anyway. The point is we can achieve calm and happiness not despite this coming catastrophe but because of it - that a feeling of wholeness can be found in the political struggle against the powers which are creating this meta crisis. Indeed I think in the present context that is the main and even the only way we can achieve the wholeness we all desire. I have just completed three years PhD research into effective activism. I started off a solid behaviouralist and then did a 100% turnaround - I know believe only a spiritual revolution can save us - and that a spiritual revolution in this moral context can only be authentic and real when undertaken in the field of political struggle - not , as presently constructed - in some escapist space away from it (the retreat weekend, the church service, the yoga class). Spiritual growth in a transcultural sense is basically the overcoming of the fear of death. And the most potent political weapon is to use this fearlessness in nonviolent struggle to bring down regimes. Empirical support - last year I went on a two week hunger strike and won the fastest ever divestment campaign - getting my university out of fossil fuel funds. It won in just eight weeks. I have never felt so whole and free from guilt and stress than when I was doing what I

know I - and all of us - now need to do. I am a political scientist - I'm a numbers man - a thousand people in prison can change a major policy of an average sized western democracy - work pro rota off that. A few thousand people can - and I believe shortly will - bring down the fossil fuel regimes using the tactics which have always successfully brought down regimes - blocking the roads of mayor cities, destroying offensive property, going on hunger strike , filling up the jails - and yes dying for the cause. This has nothing to do with the NGO world of performance protest. So it can be done. Of course it doesn't guarantee we will be in time to save ourselves - but as they said in the Warsaw ghetto in 1943 - its better to die with honour rather than to die like sheep. The concentration camp is now the whole world. We face the same choice.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



trees2296 • 7 months ago



Wouldn't it be more correct to say that the earth heats first? The sun directly heats the earth, which for the most part heats the air. It is the heat radiation from the earth that is absorbed by the greenhouse gases.

What's so hard about becoming carbon neutral? It takes some money. Get some solar PV. Buy an EV. Insulate. Use heat pumps.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Shodo → trees2296 • 5 months ago



We need to become carbon negative, not just neutral. The numbers have been done - technology will not save us. But if it could - the industrial growth economy has decided we should die instead. Taking most of life with us. The opposition to saving ourselves is vicious. In the U.S. anyway; some countries are making progress. Above, I mentioned miracles.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Patricia Phelps • 10 months ago



If the public would demand it, our government resources could be put to work on scientific solutions to our climate change dilemma ("geoengineering", "carbon sequestration"). Scientists have demonstrated that soil biology, for instance could have a significant impact on carbon removal from the atmosphere. It is within our reach, but we need to reach.

Our policy makers could also support efforts to prevent or at least reduce our release of greenhouse gases.

I agree that we need to make sure that when we discuss the state of climate change, we include a discussion of what can and should be done to counter it. To do otherwise, especially when children are involved in the discussion, is terrorism. Yes, humans have big brains and we also have instincts for collaborations and self-preservation that have gotten us to the anthropocene. We are now being tested by our success. Will we pull together to solve our problems or will we not?

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Chris Diprose • 10 months ago



"Someday I must tell my son what I have done" .. powerful and brings everything back home on us being responsible.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Angie Cordeiro • a year ago



We Should Never Have Called HEP Earth - not "it" HEP!



we should never have called HER Earth...NOT it , HER!

We all come from the Goddess and to HER we shall return, like a drop of rain, flowing to the ocean...

3 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Vincent Pieri • 5 months ago

Thank you Kate Marvel for a surprisingly powerful, poetic, and poignant essay!

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Chris Volpe • 2 days ago

Well.... yes, a lovely meditation, but it would have been much more substantive if it had included at least one link to a description of the terrestrial consequences of the inevitable warming! That's what the average person doesn't actually grasp yet - what the "monster" will actually be and do - that is, what climate change *will mean* to said "children."

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Mark • a month ago

Thank you, a wonderful essay. Comment: "My comfortable, safe life is in large part a product of the internal combustion engine. Fossil fuels power the trains that take us to the beach, the factories that make his plastic bucket and spade, the lights I switch off when I kiss him good night..." It does not have to be this way, even today. We purchase electricity generated using wind turbines (at New Jersey's only wind farm In Atlantic City; via Community Energy, Inc.) and use it to power our home and (modest, fantastic, VW e-Golf) EV. I prefer to bike to work anyway, weather permitting. Trains can be electrified. Air travel is more problematic but its climate impact might be mitigated using algal biofuels. We can have comfortable, safe lives and not radically alter our planet -- if we can get past vested interests, the lies of cynical politicians, media stooges, and magical-thinking libertarians.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Navdeep Singh Thind • 2 months ago

Woah ! Just came here to read about the fascinating knowledge about climate science delivered by The Incredible Dr. Marvel (actually the last episode of Star Talk brought me here ;-)).

It's too perfect to grasp this deep insight as a normal citizen of The Planet Earth and the good thing is that so are all the essays and articles featuring exclusively here !

CHEERS DOCTOR !

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Shodo • 5 months ago

This is a beautiful and sad essay. I want to invite the writer to the resistance. Not just political solutions, but really acting against the powers that be, which include all of modern civilization and particularly its owners. Includes capitalism. Imagine a different life - and know that we require miracles to turn things around.

Without promises, I mention www.MountainsandWatersAllia...

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Student • 8 months ago

You are missing some possibilities.



^ | v • Reply • Share ›



Les Kuzyk • 10 months ago

- | 🗨

after academic papers, I switched to climate stories ... storytelling being inherent in human nature more so than science

[https://ournearfuture.wordp...](https://ournearfuture.wordpress.com/)

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



LindaE • 10 months ago

- | 🗨

In the course of human evolution, it was inevitable that the planet would be forced to respond to our need for progress and efficiency. At what point could we have said Stop! to this drive for performance and "success?" Would society have accepted the answer that we had reached Enough? As the planet's population increased, the frontier reached its maximum capacity. The pioneering spirit went inward to create and develop new processes that would bring us to the tipping point of environmental disaster. But who can we blame? How far back can we point the finger? Who and where would we define the moment when mankind's destiny was cast in stone?

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



notabilia • a year ago

- | 🗨

To be technically correct, "we" did not put the monster there. No one individual, including one's self or one's children, has anywhere near that power, or anywhere near that effect. Death and destruction are our legacy from fate and circumstance, not from any personal failing of any one child or person. The universe has no caring capacity - it will not utter warm cockles of sympathy for folks who assume all the horrors humans have wrought over their collective history of fear-based plunder.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



shastatodd → notabilia • a year ago

- | 🗨

the person in my mirror has contributed plenty of carbon into the atmosphere.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



notabilia → shastatodd • a year ago

- | 🗨

Yep. That goes double for everyone (joke somewhere in there, if you want one). That's the nature of humanity. We all participate in the grand fossil fuel drama of our inherited social reality.

Tell that person in the mirror it was by no means a "fault" of that person, but just the nature of fate. Let the shadow you have a night off from your self-recriminations - the universe is not going to award caring points to that self-castigating brain.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



shastatodd → notabilia • 10 months ago

- | 🗨

you are correct that we all need to consume resources and create pollution to exist, but i dont feel that gives me license to be a wasteful, greedy glutton.

on our finite planet. facing resource depletion. overpopulation and the

climatological impacts from our behavior, the more any of us uses the less there is for others... so i feel compelled to consume as little as possible because it is considerate of the rest of the population.

in the big picture it really makes no difference other than to my personal ethics and integrity. mostly i try to enjoy these remaining good days because our attempt at infinite growth will not end well.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share ›



River Tooth • a year ago



Thank you for these words. In an effort to tap storytelling as a way to inspire kids (and their grown-ups) to start seeing CO2 and then taking action, I wrote the illustrated book "PLEASE DON'T PAINT OUR PLANET PINK! A Story About Climate Change for Kids and their Adults," which explores the question: what might happen if we could SEE carbon dioxide (what if it were, say, pink)? I hope it might inspire you son, Kate. More here: <http://cloudburstcreative.c...> Thanks again.

^ | v • Reply • Share ›



monica • a year ago



Why there is nothing here about Geoengineering? why to pretend that is not happening because is not in mainstream media. Why to keep pretending that most people are not aware of the climate assault courtesy of the big shot corporations, the military industrial complex, NASA and others. Time of truth is inevitable and here- the climate assault is getting exposed and then, when we leave mother earth

ABOUT THE ON BEING PROJECT

The On Being Project is an independent non-profit public life and media initiative. We pursue deep thinking and social courage, moral imagination and joy, to renew inner life, outer life, and life together.

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