



# Our People, Our Planet

## Survival Wisdom of the Ages

by

 [Anne E. Farmer](#), Ph.D., Ecological Anthropologist 



*"I'd put my money on the sun and solar energy. What a source of power!*

*I hope we don't have to wait until oil and coal run out*

*before we tackle that. I wish I had more years left!"*

*~ Thomas Edison, to his friend Henry T. Ford, 1931*

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## About Dr. Annie Farmer

Born in Independence, Kansas in 1985, Anne E. Farmer, Ph.D. grew up in the American heartland of South Central United States. She completed her graduate work at University of Oklahoma where she studied ethnobotany and archaeobotany with Professor Paul Minnis. Farmer's doctoral research investigated sustainable and resilient plant use by Indigenous Andeans living in the San Martin Province of Peru. During her career she's worked in regions throughout the world, but her core interests remain in the Americas.

As an anthropologist, Dr. Farmer frames her blog posts from a holistic perspective. For example, in her reflections on the Great Collapse, she outlines multiple lines of evidence that caused scientists to issue dire warnings, which tragically were dismissed, downplayed, or ignored by most Americans and the media. Farmer's blogs offer another dimension by interjecting social, political, and economic factors that further accelerated the rate of change during the early 2020s, and ultimately led to the cataclysmic Great Collapse and the subsequent Big Sort.

Throughout her blog posts she provides links to her sources and additional information, definitions of technical terms, and images to help readers visualize and understand more complex ideas. Her agenda is to provide information and solutions from her areas of expertise, with the goal of helping people find relief from their pain and grief and also may help Americans learn from the missteps and mistakes and begin the process of rebuilding America as a somewhat united set of durable and sustainable communities. Dr. Farmer hopes her posts spark robust discussions.

- Her first set of blog posts offer a basic understanding of our species, and how our unique adaptations helped us to thrive when others failed, with particular attention to the last 10 thousand years, or the Anthropocene.
- The second set identifies social behavioral dynamics that set the stage for us to exceed the sustainable equilibrium we had enjoyed through most of the Anthropocene.
- A third set identifies intersections between humans and the environment that led us to the Great Collapse, perhaps even near extinction.
- The fourth set discusses the social political context and infrastructure underlying the Big Sort less than a year ago. Together the four sets of blogs represent Dr. Farmer's take on our collective history vis-à-vis the planet.

Farmer wholeheartedly believes that an exchange of ideas is critical for rebuilding our communities, with a mind toward better, more durable communities and a more sustainable quality of life for generations to come. With a keener understanding of our past mistakes and our current dynamics, we stand a better chance of creating a sustainable and rewarding future. Hers is a righteous and time-honored cause. Let's hope she succeeds.

9/28/2030

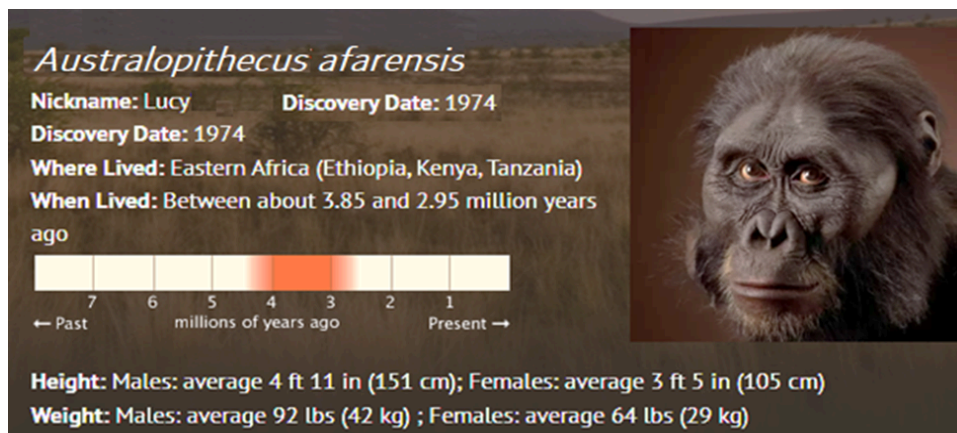
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## Blog Set 2030-101: Beginnings

### 101.1. A Brief History of Human Impacts on Earth

The climate has contributed significantly to our recent Great Collapse, for sure, but we should take our fair share of responsibility as well. In fact, we primed the pump. It's unlikely our recent trend toward extinction would have happened when it did had we not impacted the climate as severely as we did. If there is one primary cause for the catastrophe, it's we humans. Reflecting back, we can see how much we humans have stressed the earth and the climate over these last 10,000 or so years.

In 2030, it's moot to say "**a new historic record**" or "**a record was shattered**" because since around 2022, all we've done is break record after record for toxins, temperature, water levels, etc. It's been estimated that we broke over 100k environmental records in the five-year period between 2022 and 2027. One record is worthy of note here: the last time the CO<sub>2</sub> levels were this high was about 3.5 million years ago, and our genus *Homo* hadn't even emerged. Our distant hominid ancestors who lived at that time were Australopithecines, in particular [\*Australopithecus afarensis\*](#), nicknamed [\*Lucy\*](#).



Since Lucy went extinct, about 3 million years ago, roughly a dozen hominid species have emerged, and all but one also went extinct. Only we have survived, and apparently even thrived on extreme climate fluctuations, but the other hominids' failures and successes can serve as lab experiments that selected for our specific evolution and survival. This is noteworthy.



According to [Dr. Rick Potts of the Smithsonian Institution](#), there are three possible outcomes our hominid ancestors had, when dealing with [extreme climate fluctuations](#): they became more **mobile**, they **adapted** which sometimes led to evolving through natural selection, or they went **extinct**. Apparently our ancient hominid ancestors did some of all three. Over 3 million years a [dozen species](#) of hominids emerged and all went extinct except for us, *Homo sapiens*. All adapted behaviorally and evolutionarily to a degree, and a few migrated from Africa to Europe and Asia. Their failures led to their extinction while we emerged as [their descendants](#), having inherited their most adaptive innovations, the very best of them.

Some evolutionary innovations over those millions of years include our ability to stand upright, to walk on two legs, and even to run. Unlike any other primate, we are fully bipedal. This increased our mobility and freed our hands to create, invent, and carry tools, weapons, and essential items, like our young. Because of our increased dexterity, and because of our enlarged brains we developed a greater ability to analyze, plan, and invent. We also made increasingly more sophisticated tools for processing food and manufacturing craft items. In every age we've invented new tools to help us harness and burn more energy, produce more food and commodities, and expand the global supply train and the built environment. This growth mindset finally caught up with us in the 2020s.

One of our most important innovations has been our ability to communicate symbolically so we can tell meaningful stories to pass information generationally in over 6500 languages worldwide. Writing came along over [5000 years ago](#). At first writing was limited to legal and accounting purposes. Gradually writing became more common until worldwide literacy exceeded [80% by 2000](#).

Perhaps our sense of superiority over other organisms comes from our recognition that we can control our destiny more than others. We have the capability to dominate, exploit, and displace other species or even drive them extinct. Perhaps at a base level this is also the mindset behind one group of humans dominating another.

While this is much debated in the literature, we simply don't know how old this kind of predatory mindset is or even exactly [what it means to be human](#), but we know we're here and the other hominids are not. No doubt our survival is tied to our ability to be self aware and to effectively steward and manage resources until quite recently, when our arrogance, or ignorance or naivete caused us to stop minding the store.

Over 3 million years ago, during the Quaternary, hominid species evolved physically and adapted behaviorally in response to their conditions of life, which included many climate fluctuations, periods of extreme heat and cold, and of wet and dry. Some hominid species migrated substantial distances to new regions or even continents, encountering entirely new plant and animal life necessitating new techniques for obtaining food and shelter.

Of all the hominids, only our species, [\*Homo sapiens\*](#), emerged as survivors to this time. We are the cumulative sum of our unique adaptive traits, related to mobility, our ability to communicate with language, and to solve problems, devise plans, and innovate and invent tools. Our combined social and biological adaptations have been tested during previous climate extremes, which should have given us an advantage. But this time is different.

The damage we'd done to the earth was so extensive that by the mid-2020s, severe weather events happened almost as often as mass shootings in the United States did. The only distinguishable weather patterns were constant change and extreme events. This could also be said for our social climate. It begs the question, could there possibly be a correlation between our societal ills and the extreme weather events? My answer is yes.

Every single state-level society that came before us has failed. Is this an inevitable outcome by the very nature of state-level societies? Was it only a matter of time until our current state-level societies destroyed their environments and came crashing down? In 2025, the stakes were so much higher, because we seemed to have triggered a mass co-extinction event, at least one. Our human species' [resilience](#) has allowed us to be here today, when the rest of our hominid ancestors went extinct. But the question remains, do we still have the resilience to survive this time? I hope we do, but look how many didn't.

The following blogs will "drill down" into some of the social and environmental dynamics leading to where we find ourselves today in 2030.

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## 101.2. How Our Human Environment Got This Way

Self proclaimed Alpha species on earth, we are self-professed architects, stewards, conquistadores, and rulers, and as such we rightfully must pay the price for our reckless neglect and exploitation in the past.

All species are interconnected through the Web of Life. Organisms provide services for supporting each other in a sustainable ecosystem. We benefit infinitely from our relationships with nature, but we really haven't been the best of stewards, particularly with our state-level societies that emerged over the last 10,000 years.

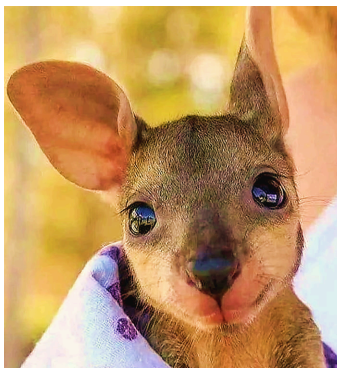
Tragically, tens of thousands of species have gone extinct on our watch, including a substantial number over the last several years. As Alphas, we haven't always considered our impact on the planet we call home. At times in history, including the recent past, we have caused substantial numbers of [co-extinctions](#) (to be discussed further in a later blog). The loss of any species can lead to gaps in an ecosystem's lifecycle, but the impact of co-extinctions is inevitably catastrophic for an ecosystem. This is our planet, and the time has come for us to embrace responsible stewardship with compassion for eternity.





In order to understand how an ecosystem works, and how physical and spatial dynamics interplay off each other within a landscape, I am adopting the term [intersectionality](#) from Feminist Theory. I will discuss the term in more detail in a later blog, but for now, think of it as a theoretical framework for understanding the synergy between interconnected factors within a system.

As we humans have impacted our physical world, we have dramatically altered landscapes and habitats and impacted millions of other lifeforms. Because of the interconnectedness, or [intersectionality](#) of virtually all life on earth, scientists had warned us that extreme climate events could cause massive [co-extinctions](#) that could lead to the [annihilation of planetary life](#). [We were warned](#), and the scientists were right.



*Wallaby Joey (candidate for cutest baby ever) swaddled after being orphaned and rescued during Australia wildfires (bushfires). The origin of this photograph is [unknown](#), other than the youngster is a rescue. The photo is believed to predate the [2019-2020](#) mega-wildfires, which are estimated to have killed at least 33 people and over 3 billion non-human animals.*

Our wanton destruction of wildlife through deforestation, mining, urban sprawl, and warfare was deplorable and unconscionable. To expand our global supply chain, rivers were channeled, we dug canals between continents, tore down mountains, built highways and railways through fragile ecosystems, and we altered shorelines worldwide. We mined coal, and drilled, pumped, and piped oil and gas thousands of feet below ground and the sea floor, we spewed chemical toxins and particulates into our atmosphere during refinement and while burning fuel. And when oil, gas, and coal reserves began to run dry, we doubled down and fought wars over these fuel resources. In time, these same fossil fuels driving our economy, proved to be our state-level society dismantling. First we grew and grew, like cancer on the land. But we eventually ran out of stuff and there we were, on the brink.

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### **101.3. Fossil Fuel Follies: Horizontal and Deep Water Drilling and Fracking:**

Our first exploration into fossil fuels began with coal which had a [storied history](#). The extraction of coal began in the British Isles by occupying forces of Romans in the late 2nd century A.D. Records are spotty until the end of the 12th century, indicating during that

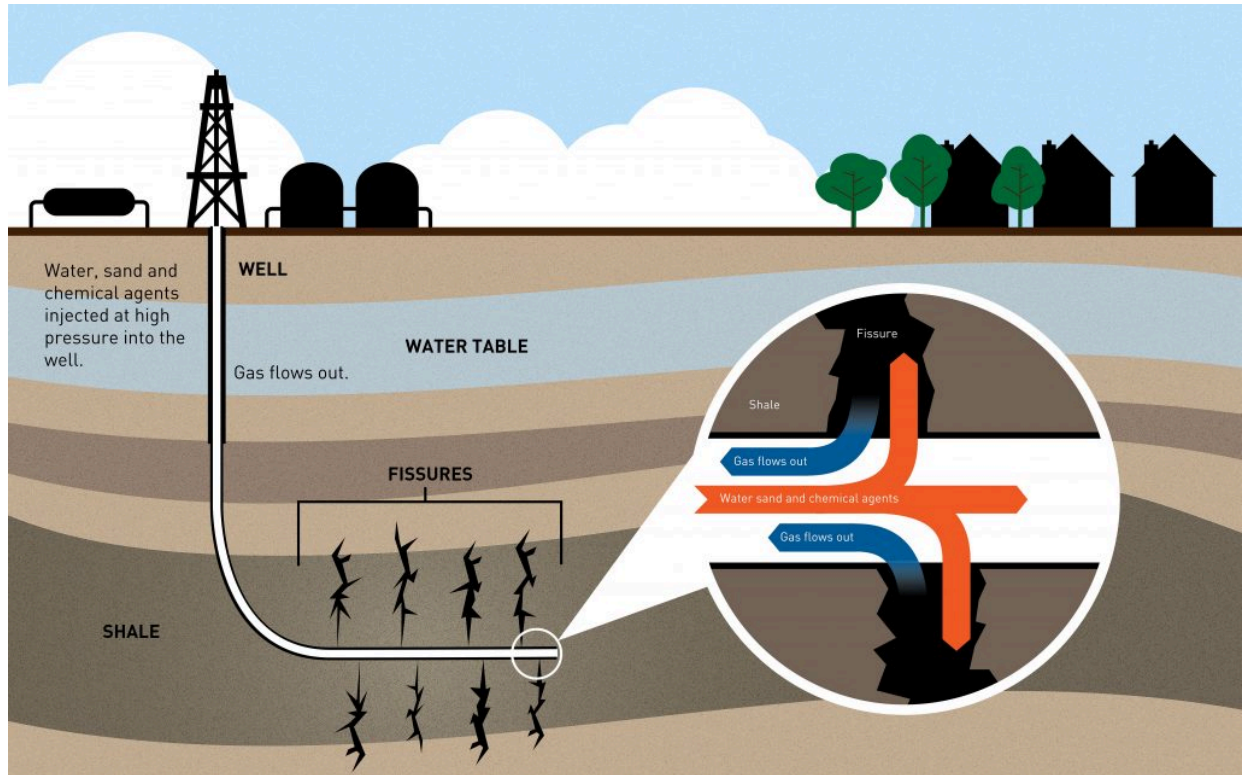
time, it was something of a cottage industry in various parts of the British Isles. With the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215 coal became an important aspect of the British economy and was traded to Scotland and North East England. Overtime coal became king in Great Britain as their empire expanded worldwide in the 1700s and 1800s. The sun never sets on the British Empire was as much of a mantra for them as Manifest Destiny and Westward Ho were for people in the United States. Coal was never good for workers. The British forced people into the coal mines as punishment for some, and through sheer poverty for others, including Irish and Cornish people. There were so many deaths in mines, due to poor working conditions that they took canaries in the mine to warn them about bad air. Cave ins were not uncommon. The exploitation of workers to pull coal from the ground expanded into the United States in the early 1700s. Over time there were better protections for workers, but it was coal mining was never truly safe or healthy for workers anywhere in the world

As we ran short on oil in North America we began the intense use of some of the most dangerous energy extraction methods ever. One was [Horizontal Drilling](#) which allow drillers to push pipe horizontally underground for up to 2 miles which can permanently poison water tables and soils. Another was [Fracking](#), or the fracturing of bedrock using pressurized fluid including water and various thickening agents. The third was [Deepwater Drilling](#) offshore.

In some cases offshore drilling could be done without significant negative impact if the right equipment was used, including double cases for the drilling holds. Fish and other sea wildlife find the rigs to be protective for many species. The structures themselves are not always a detriment. Typically, [abandoned rigs](#) gradually become essentially reef habitats that support productive sealife.

But the Deepwater Water Offshore Drilling was a pretty awful development, particularly in the case of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill off the coast of Louisiana and Mississippi in the Gulf of Mexico. At a depth of 35,500 feet, or nearly 7 miles, it took over three months to cap the well and two more before they could declare it effectively dead, and countless years more of cleanup including an unknown, but significant amount of proprietary chemical dispersants to scatter the oil blob in the Gulf. It is believed these impacted the AMOC some 10 years later.

These technologies were used intensely over the last decade until the Great Collapse. For our last few drops of oil we discharged [toxins and dispersants](#) into waterways and water tables throughout the heartland, we transported that unrefined oil and gas and chemical dispersants thousands of miles to coastal refineries, mostly for gasoline powered engines. This doesn't even touch the damage to our own health, to other organisms, or to the climate by the production and release of carbon and other toxins into the air.



Oil execs knew about these costs to people and the planet, all along. In 2016 we uncovered documents that confirmed the oil industry knew as far back as the 1960s about the [harmful health effects of fossil fuels](#), and their [environmental and climatic effects](#). Some of us knew where the fossil fuels were taking us, but we didn't know how to stop it. The Fossil Fuel Industry and their lobbyists had control of many elected officials. The [Military Industrial Complex](#) doubled down, arguing for the critical need for our National Security, and also engaging in wars in oil-rich countries, such as in the Middle East.



*"I'd put my money on the sun and solar energy. What a source of power! I hope we don't have to wait until oil and coal run out before we tackle that. I wish I had more years left!" - Thomas Jefferson, speaking to his friend Henry T. Ford, 1931*

Understandably, Thomas Edison's ideas about solar energy and other alternatives got off to an incredibly slow start because the oil industry was so entrenched they were impossible to displace.

But our destructive use of fossil fuels was hardly the starting point for humans being on the wrong side of history. In other blogs I detail our beginnings, our historical path, and the many factors leading to what became known as the Great Collapse of our existing climate and our way of life prior to 2030.

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## 101.4. The Anthropocene and Anthropogenic Landscapes

Over the last two decades there has been a growing consensus of scientists to call the last 10,000 years the [Anthropocene](#), an unofficial planetary time period that marks this most recent period in Earth's history, when human activities have caused significant changes to the world's climate, ecosystems, and landscapes. [Anthropogenic landscapes](#) are defined as those created, altered, or maintained by humans. This blog will focus on some of the unique ways that we humans **intersect** with the environment and in turn, all other species, and how we can use this information to inform our actions as we strive toward a more sustainable future.

Part of our "secret sauce" is that we humans thrive on a certain degree of **disturbance**. Ecologists talk about three basic levels of disturbance: low, intermediate, and high or catastrophic. According to the [Intermediate Disturbance Hypothesis](#), the highest degree of diversity richness in terms of numbers of organisms and available resources, are at the intermediate level. So like us, many mammals and other organisms thrive at these levels.

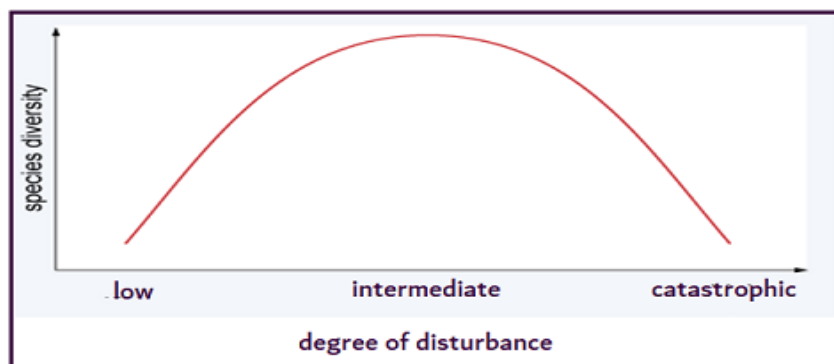


Chart Illustrating the Intermediate Disturbance Hypothesis

Systems with lower amounts of disturbance tend to have a few more dominant organisms that tend to outcompete others. In ecosystems with high (catastrophic) levels of disturbance, all organisms are at a high risk for extinction. So organisms that are most adaptable, such as humans, tend to thrive in ecosystems and landscapes with more intermediate scales of disturbance. By our very nature, we thrive in more diverse environments. Many of our food and medicinal plants (such as fruiting trees, berrying shrubs, herbs, seeds, and roots) and many food animals we rely upon also thrive in intermediate disturbance environments.

About **12,000 to 10,000 years ago** we humans started learning how to increase productivity of many foods, even domesticating some plants and animals that thrived in environments with **intermediate disturbance levels**. It is not fully understood why this

time period was when we began to manipulate the earth. There may have been underlying climate events at this time that humans adapted to, alongside starting to take the wheel, much of this still needs to be sorted out, but regardless, it is fair to assume there was a strong climate component in this new set of human adaptations and a degree of synergy between them, until there wasn't.

One of the earliest places known for early domestication was the so-called [Fertile Crescent](#) region between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers where we have our earliest dates for domestication of plants and animals and also early city-states such as [Ur, Eruk and Eridu](#). Symbiotic human/plant relationships were evolving over time on six different continents. I suspect the sparse reporting is a lack of research on this subject in some regions. For well over 2000 years there is evidence of mutual benefits exchanged between humans and various plants and animals, and there is solid evidence of domesticated species in Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and the Americas. but there are numerous plants and animals exploited in virtually every continent on earth.

Upon our initiation of landscape modification for small gardens and burning and clearing small patches for hunting and gardening we were changing the landscape. As our populations grew, we created city-states and later nation-states. The impact on the earth's landscapes was profound. We can now look back and see how we impacted the earth, through our insatiable political games and quest to grow economies. For example, much of the original [Fertile Crescent](#) area was [dead and devoid of most lifeforms](#) by 2023.

**Anthropogenic landscapes** are constructed by and for humans. Ideally [Anthropogenic environments](#) should be built with a regard for sustainability and resilience but they rarely have been, in the history of humanity, with the rare exceptions of Indigenous societies and some other smaller-scaled societies, where landscapes are consciously maintained to provide food and shelter at a subsistence level for that community. Larger-scaled societies have tended to develop landscapes with growth in mind. As the earliest larger societies produced surpluses, there became a need for trade centers and then cities. With a surplus there was also a need for a standardized form of currency, or money for trading large quantities of goods. This was the beginning of [Capitalism](#). Two other basic characteristics of state-level societies are **bureaucracies**, to help manage trade and regulations, and a **standing army**, to protect their wealth. Both consumed a significant amount of resources just to maintain their roles within societies. Both are now obsolete as neither proved to be sustainable.

Back in the ancient world, it wasn't too long before early city-states began competing for land, resources, and labor. Soon there were wars as various historic figures vied for control and expansion of lands and people under their jurisdiction. More people meant a need for more food, resources, and security. Before long we [overshot](#) local city-state landscapes and microclimates, with our insatiable hunger for more of everything. [Ancient Roman and Greek writers](#) describe how they expanded and colonized to obtain

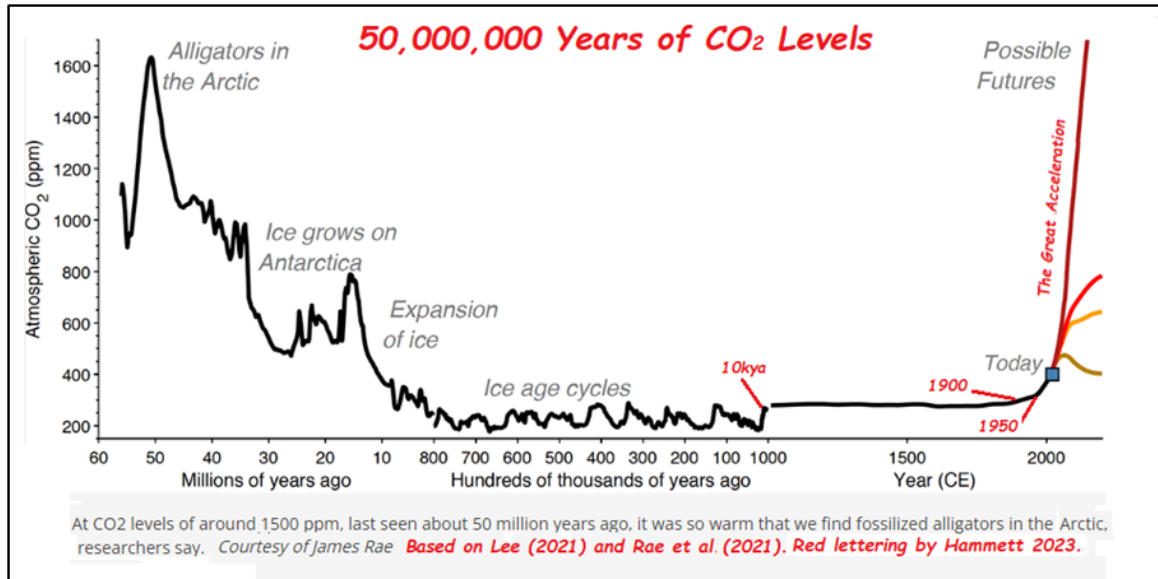
more goods, labor, and forested land because local resources were exhausted. They helped extend global supply chains along with Vikings, Mongolians, and many others. Instead of stewards seeking balance, many of us species became overzealous consumers and takers.

Most anthropologists who have studied the current [anthropocene epoch](#), think it dates back about 10 to 12 thousand years ago, around the time of plant and animal domestication. There is evidence of the carbon record from then, probably from the clearing and deforestation when people began to cultivate plants and herd animals in the Middle East and elsewhere. Stewardship by the ancient Greeks and Romans and their impacts on the earth in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., were considered by Socrates (quoted in [Xenophon](#) ca. 362 B.C. in [Oeconomicus 5.12](#)):

*"The earth willingly teaches righteousness to those who can learn; for the better she is served, the more good things she gives in return."*

Our species has significantly impacted the earth for at least 10,000 years. The climate record indicates an additional uptick in [carbon dioxide concentrations](#) during the Industrial Revolution (1700-1800s), although it doesn't appear on all global Ice core profiles, and yet another around 1950, characterized by researchers at the Stockholm Resilience Centre as the [Great Acceleration](#), which is when many climate scientists think should mark the beginning of the Anthropocene.

To sum up, in my view there are three basic eras or phases within the Anthropocene: **1)** beginning roughly 10,000 years ago, with early plant and animal domestication and the formation of city-states; **2)** in the late 1800s with the Industrial Revolution, and finally; **3)** the boomer age marked by the end of World War 2. All changed the trajectory and the rate of change in our path into the future in terms of technology, industry, Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) levels, and temperature.



The **Anthropocene** is roughly parallel to the [Holocene](#) in large temporal scales. But use of the term anthropocene also signals the role of humans in the changes to the climate. Perhaps the most notable difference between the two is the type of evidence used to date these epochs. I don't think it's clear whether the Holocene was entirely physical, or environmental forces, or if humans caused an impact. What is clear, is that never have we ever been closer to complete extinction than we were during the current climate emergency flanked by recent pandemics and massive waves of violent rebellions and insurrections.

It's important to consider why most people ignored the warning signs. Many Indigenous groups worldwide were some of the first to sound. They tried to sound the alarm and tell the rest of us that something was dramatically changing. Again and again they told us that we all needed to focus on protecting our water, our air, and our forests, as well as many species we relied upon for food. But for the most part, their warnings were ignored.

In the United States Indigenous people stood on the front lines protesting against new oil pipelines being built in order to protect water which they consider sacred as a fundamental source of life. They built a "[Water is Life](#)" movement with thousands of Indigenous Water Protectors and millions of allied supporters. Not a single President, nor did the Congress dare to stop the flow of oil, even well after the damage to [our health](#) and to the planet were understood. Americans, even those supporting the Water Protectors, were too hooked on oil, plastics, and pop culture to change course. until well into the 2020s when the global temperatures started to overshoot.

By 2025 our “climate” really went off the rails, and we simply didn’t have the bandwidth to shore up vulnerable spots, so many ecosystems collapsed. Our historical actions had caused the creation of the **Anthropocene on steroids**, but we hadn’t done it mindfully. We were told again and again that climate scientists predicted a catastrophic outcome if we didn’t drastically reduce emissions of toxic gasses including methane and CO1 and CO2, but Americans had no appetite for limiting our use of fossil fuels in any way.

Even after scientists sounded the alarm that we had a real chance of going extinct along with much of life on earth, most Americans doggedly stayed distracted with pop culture and still burned oil for fuel and consumed lots of imported unessential merch. Not until social upheaval led to collapse of the government did we face the hard truth that we had lost all government institutions including all emergency services. That was 2025 and 2026 when we desperately needed our infrastructure to hold us together in the face of the superstorms and the rioting and looting but they were gone, all that was left was chaos. We were on our own.

Ironically we had finally realized we were living in the anthropocene and how we had changed landscapes and built environments. But it was too late. America was born out of colonial invasion of refugees from Europe seeking freedom from religious persecution but as we declared our freedom in the Declaration of Independence 250 years ago. In 2026 we should have been grooving on our Semiquincentennial but we were dug in just trying to survive, so oddly no one seemed to remember. This ultimately led to our addiction to Capitalism and an economic growth mindset. The role that corporations and the [megarich](#) in our governance kept us from ever taking the steps that were necessary to prevent the planet from catastrophe. It wasn’t just gasoline for fuel and coal and oil for heating but all the junk we constantly bought, which so many social media outlets urges us to do to grow the economy. We never created any sort of comprehensive plans to mitigate the tremendous wave of [superstorms](#) we faced. Fires, floods, winds, and earthquakes took their toll, destroying hundreds of thousands of homes, hundreds of roads and bridges, and most of the transportation hubs throughout the U.S.

Mother Nature wasn’t waiting any longer for humans to get their acts together. Permafrost ceased to exist. Icebergs were melting, and when the methane gas that was frozen in them back during the last ice Age was released, literally all hell broke loose. It was what scientists call a **self-perpetuating feedback loop**. No longer could any human put the lid on it, as we had done when we learned there was a significant ozone leak back in the late [1970s](#). Pulling the plug on aerosol chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) may be about the last, and perhaps one of the only smart moves regarding the climate that we ever made.

[Superstorms](#) wreaked havoc, not only in coastal areas, but also in the heartland, and wildfires stretched from the western coast of the U.S. northward through boreal forests of

the subarctic to the Northeast United States where Americans suffered the same kinds of severe droughts as the Spaniards and French on the other side of the Atlantic.

By 2025 **self-perpetuating feedback loops** were uncontrollable, so much so that massive stretches of coastlines worldwide, including the majority of major urban centers and global ports were deemed uninhabitable. For the most part, all we could do was ride it out. Those who were lucky, found refuge from the storm, at least for some of the worst of it. Humans do have ingenuity on our side, and remarkably millions did survive, even if it was due to luck as much as anything else.

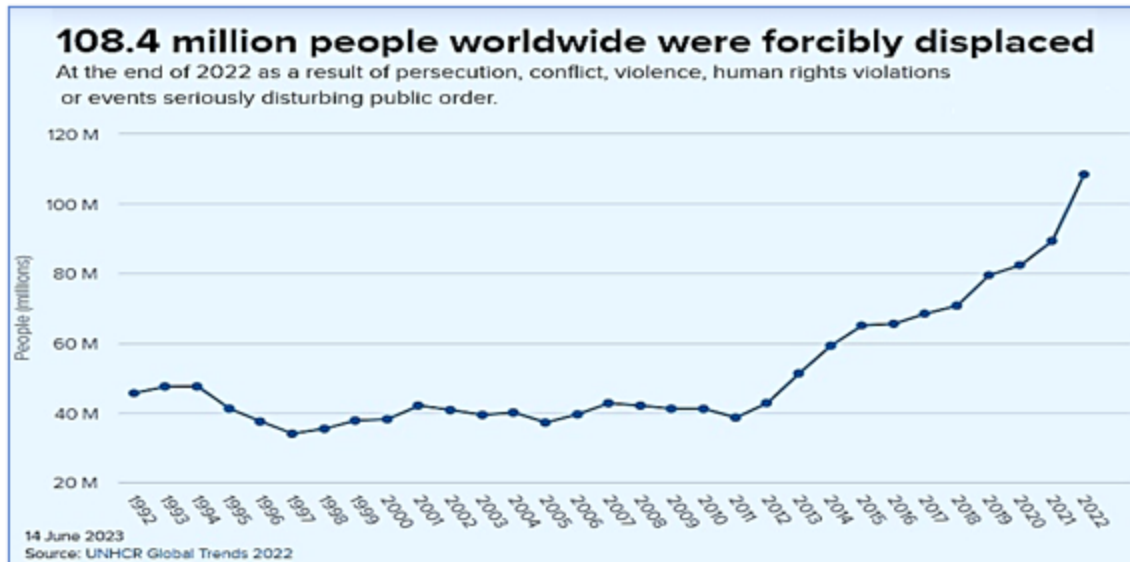
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## **101.5. Refugia: A Safe Space for Refugees (talk about borders)**

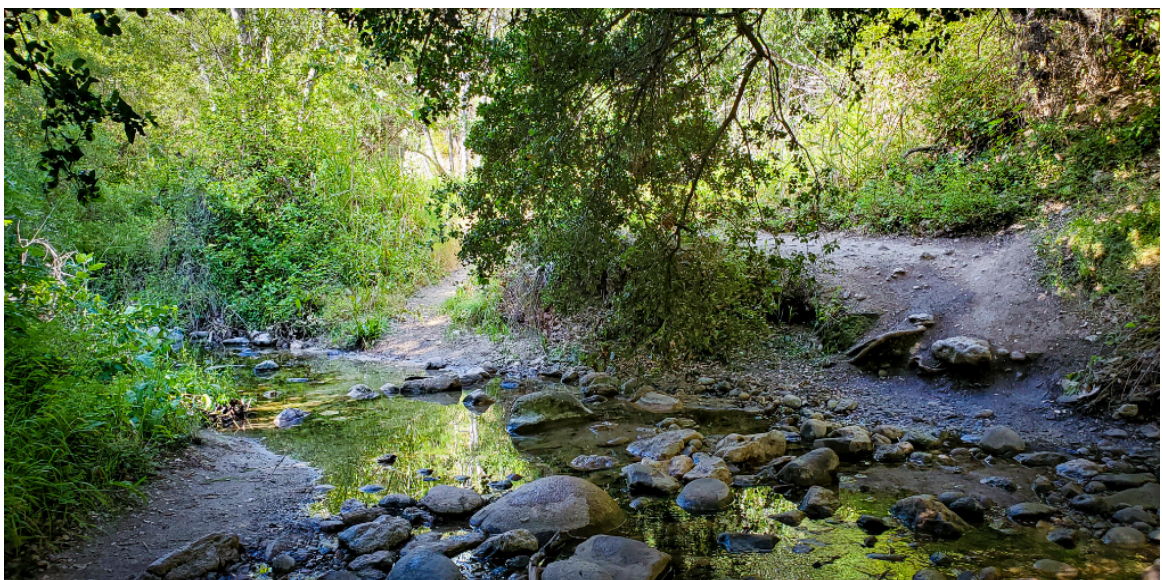
Most survivors found and “secured” a place or places to ride out the political, social and atmospheric megastorms with sufficient food, water, and supplies to go the distance which ultimately ended up being years. In a sense, this was the classic quest for food and shelter begun long ago, in the primordial mists. It wasn’t quite like any of the numerous survivor-type virtual reality shows over the years because none of them had the statistical likelihood of being bombarded with live ammo again and again, or even being badly wounded or dying. There weren’t enough safe havens for all of us, even from each other, so it was inevitable that a large number of people had to die.

Most people living in industrialized nations thought they were past having to struggle to survive, that their ancestors had to worry about it but it wasn’t for modern populations, that was something of the past. Of course this totally ignores the fact that every single state level society has had members in desperate need for the basics, long before environmental and social conditions severely deteriorated the standard of living in the 2020s. Most disregarded all the signs including the massive acceleration in the number of displaced people, far exceeding the post-WW2 record held until 2015. All the signs were there, that like all historic state-level societies, ours would surely fall, but this time it would be epic, as a collectively global event due to our interconnections.





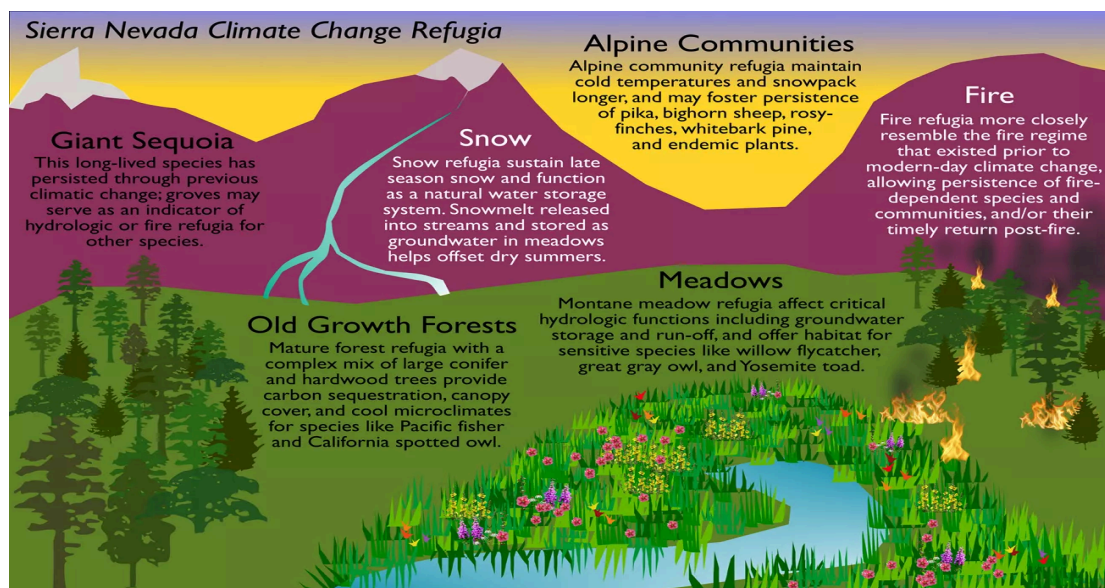
Some luckier survivors avoided much of the worst chaos and hand to hand combat by escaping the urban and suburban areas, and obtaining refuge in naturally occurring [refugia](#), isolated relic habitats that had the key ingredients for human survival. They would vary in different regions, but they would often have a good, reliable water source, natural protection from the elements, like a shelter or a cave, and a variety of vegetation to provide fuel, shelter, tools, and hopefully even a little gardening and perhaps raising of some animals. These naturally occurring habitat remnants might have been relatively stable for hundreds, even thousands of years, with long records of wildlife taking sanctuary through bad times over the ages. Finally, after hundreds or more years, it was our turn again, but only for some of the luckiest and smartest of us who had the skills, know-how, and resources to truly get off the grid for a while.



Most successful survivors who stayed near former urban areas had to respond to the crisis using a collective model because individuals would easily be overrun. In some cases where several families banded together like a bubble during COVID-19. If someone claimed a refugia space too close to a former urban area they had to constantly defend their refugia for months, if not years.

In many cases, refugia accessible to larger urban populations were already occupied by preppers and survivalists, some who bugged out decades before the Great Collapse. Typically some forceful group established cultural boundaries around prime resources. Many have small arsenals to protect them and stockpiles for disaster scenarios. These refugia are often called camps or reserves. They quickly became subject to power grabs by despotic camp leaders who compelled people in their jurisdictions to play by their rules.

In densely populated areas, such as in Southern Coastal California, well known refugia in the Santa Monica Mountains became places of contention that were fought over in near feudal war like pieces on a game board. I hope a historian tells their story someday.



In the end, most refugial areas adjacent to large urban areas were destroyed by explosives, earth movement, depleted food resources, and in local springs and creeks the water was fouled by human refuse and other toxins. In most cases, the better choices for refugia were located far from urban areas. The [megarich](#) identified many of these “islands” of key resources and created fortified bubbles for their families and their extended support staff. In fact some of the megarich had engineering and design experts who helped the patriarch seek out existing [climate change refugia](#) that were preadapted for the purpose of



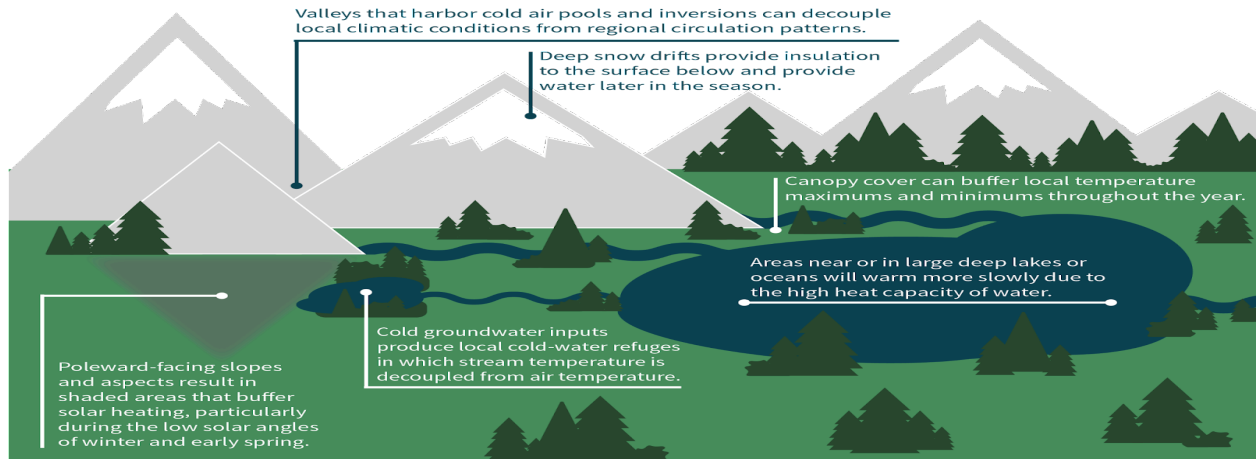
creating bubbles. Once the megarich secured these areas with their private police, access was restricted.

Without sufficient sanctuaries in the form of naturally occurring refugia, most people were left to fend for themselves. Many had to keep moving from place to place trying to avoid the looting and the violences. One option left to those living in the wildlands with the proper set of skills and knowledge was to [construct a niche](#), to rebuild an ecosystem as a small-scale anthropogenic landscape. This had essentially been the goal for decades of many [preppers](#) and those trying to live [off the grid \(OTG\)](#). During the Great Collapse, when we lost our global supply chain, we were suddenly forced to live within their means, which meant what was available within the local region and nearby landscapes. We were essentially all OTGers at that point in time.

Lots of people tried to survive in more urban areas but even then they were looking for some kind of shelter where they could camp with some access to food and water. And a good number of us had no reliable shelter and had to move around, either in urban areas, or camped in what used to be suburbs or even more distant wildlands.

It came down to what kinds of skills a person had before the Great Collapse or how quickly they could gain those skills. Those clueless souls who tried to rely on the skills of others or thought they would shoot to get what they needed with guns mostly ended up dead. Most of those who had the basic skills of camping, and reading landscapes and maps managed to find or make a refuge and survive. The other major group of survivors just had to stay mobile. Many still are in 2030. We should also never forget the tens of millions of people who were already on the move worldwide, more than ever in history, displaced political, economic and climate refugees. I'll talk more about **mobility** in a later [blog](#).

Some of the best, most sustainable anthropogenic landscapes replicate naturally existing land features such as refugia, and have healthy numbers of native species of plants and animals. In a sense it is only possible to construct a sustainable niche by living in balance with many other organisms within that ecosystem. This goes counter to what many human groups, particularly state-level societies have done in the past. States and some chieftainships had a long history of exceeding their existing landscapes and expanding into new areas by relying on growth-based economies, or by "conquering" a land. This more forward-thinking strategy with sustainability as core value, requires living within one's environmental means, something thousands of Indigenous nations worldwide have done for many generations.



So long as these new groups of humans, either extended families, or small communities lived within their means and didn't extract resources from other areas, they could potentially remain sustainable indefinitely. Refugia would have been used during climate crises and perhaps to stay hidden from other people at various times in the history of human occupation in North America. These spaces could end up being ranches and farms, and even small communities over time, depending on their size. Some refugia were so small that they could only be temporary and support a very limited number of people.

Of course we all hope that at the very least, some of these OTG anthropogenic experiments in using **refugia** and other remote places in the wildlands will have proven successful. It is evident that many nearer what had been larger population centers, were overrun by the same kinds of violent gangs of disruptors who brought down much of the surviving suburban areas and even many communities living in Small Town U.S.A. But by what many consider a miracle a number of us managed to move around and find shelter and manage to still be here when so many are not. This is an important time to take measures and write down some of the lessons we have learned the hard way.

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# Blog Set 2030-102: Being Humans

## 102.1. Being Humans in the Modern World

As humans, we have a sense of how we operate individually, and to a degree, we can grasp how we are perceived by other humans and even other creatures. However, perhaps in the past we too rarely considered the views of others, especially other living organisms subject to the games we play.

In a previous blog I discussed how our species thrives in **intermediate levels of disturbance** and how we create **anthropogenic landscapes** tailored to our needs, but we've utilized many other adaptive strategies in our history that factor into our evolution, our decision-making, our mobility, our communication skills, and how we play the game of life, not just for survival or subsistence, but to maximize our return in any given situation, to gain competitive advantage. Three social tools we humans use are [Intersectionality](#), [Mobility](#), Communications, and the [Great Game](#).

## 102.2. Intersectionality

What made this time so different from other times in human history and our evolution? Was it simply the totality of what had come before? Or was there something unique about this time? I think the degree of **intersectionality** we had achieved globally prior to the [Great Collapse](#), for better and worse, made a big difference.

I'm borrowing this big idea from feminist theorist and Civil Rights Law Professor Kimberlé Crenshaw who introduced the concept of [intersectionality](#) back in 1989. Crenshaw characterizes [intersectionality](#) as a theoretical framework for understanding people's various social and political identities and how various identity attributes (e.g., class, ethnicity, race, and gender) "**intersect**" with each other to both empower and oppress.

Intersectionality is an ingenious way of characterizing relationship dynamics, not simply as interactions which may occur at a single point in time, or interconnections which are more structural than action. [Crenshaw's](#) robust concept of **intersectionality** can be adapted to other disciplines, such as the study of ecosystems and global dynamics, so long as newer applications don't undermine or disrespect the righteous and important struggle for social justice, which came under fire during the culture wars before the Great Collapse.

Just as social factors **intersect** dynamically, within a person's sense of identity, [environmental conditions](#) intersect within the dynamics of anthropogenic landscapes. For example, the [severity of a thunderstorm](#) is dependent upon the dynamics between relative humidity, air flow instability, wind shear, and temperature, among other factors. Environmental factors impact the basic conditions for life or death within every living

system. Seriously, what is our global living space without the dynamic relationships between the physical conditions that generate our weather within the context of the atmosphere and the planetary climate that creates our living spaces?

Prior to the **Great Collapse**, anthropogenic landscapes were essentially the cultural incubators we created, consciously or not, over the last ten thousand years. We've always had structural and systemic problems to solve and far too often we relied upon power relations and class distinctions to determine resource allocation. For example, within urban (**anthropogenic**) landscapes there were a number of food deserts, toxic zones, and other properties that led to the "double bind" [Crenshaw](#) discussed.

By the 2020s the climate crisis had [disproportionately impacted](#) marginalized groups and more vulnerable populations such as people of color, people in poverty, people with disabilities, and refugees. Many remember how [sacrifice zones](#) existed long before the Great Collapse. People of color in particular were exposed to toxins and pollution in too many communities worldwide to count. Often these groups lacked the political power to help them escape or defend their communities from becoming **sacrifice zones**.

When this aspect of state-level societies is considered, this may be one of the silver linings for post-Collapse times. Today people rarely think about segregating communities along the lines of ethnicity or race, and thankfully it seems much of that backward thinking was relegated to history. However, there is still a form of segregation due to the [Big Sort](#), and one might argue there are still "haves and have nots" in the world. But to a degree, it was by [choice](#) whether people ended up in pods or in the peripheral areas. It wasn't simply eligibility but also each person's inclination. Unfortunately, these differences are the source of some people now considering people in an "us/them" paradigm, which is the source of most [xenophobia](#). Perhaps tensions over difference will resurface sometime in the future, but it is unlikely to ever be as impactful as it was pre-Collapse because it will no longer be embedded in multiple generations of some time honored tradition such as the patriarchy was.

When we link this idea of intersectionality with other social factors as well as environmental conditions we can craft a better understanding of the dynamics between humans, other organisms, and the physical world around us. For hundreds of thousands of years our species coexisted with other organisms including our prey and other large mammals that saw us as prey. Then that hallmark moment in earth's history happened about 12,000-10,000 years ago when we humans began to take control, by clearing land and domesticating plants and animals in several regions worldwide. It wasn't all intentional, especially at first, but over a number of millenia competition and exploitation and in some cases, thievery emerged. Due to our species' over exploitation of resources, many organisms have gone extinct directly while others have been severely threatened and their numbers decimated. In other words, during the end of the Holocene we have become the most dominant predator worldwide.

From then on we humans have never stopped trying to expand competitive control over resources, and landscapes, and other people. After city-states, there was industrialization, and many wars throughout our history which to a great degree was related to an expansion of global trade. Much of our expansion was done by exploiting and marginalizing groups and individuals with less power. It's doubtful that most state-level societies thought there could be an end to the possibilities of expansion and economic development. Even in 2024, when it was clear that something had changed, that a threshold or **tipping point** had been reached, billionaires were still trying to fly rockets into space with dreams of colonizing the moon and perhaps other planets. This past decade has been marked by sudden catastrophic disruptions, both social and environmental, while the bands played on, and some stubborn souls still rearranged those chairs on the [Titanic](#).

The fluid and dynamic interactions within our increasingly expansive global economy, along with all the infrastructure required for satellite and internet communications necessitated immense amounts of energy consumption. The continuity of the supply chain and global travel and commerce all increased **intersections** between people while these state-level activities released carbon dioxide and methane gasses in sufficient amounts to trigger major environmental events which in turn caused more societal disruptions. With the advent of ChatGPT, the significant [expansion of AI](#) use was said to have consumed sufficient energy for a small country within the first year of its release.

Looking back we can now understand how our cumulative missteps and voracious appetite for increasing amounts of energy disrupted the climate patterns we'd thrived upon for the last 10,000 years. [#ItsTheClimateStupid](#) yes, but it was a whole lot more. It could be argued that humans are essentially superconductors, when it comes to **intersectionality**. It could even have been a superpower for us had we comprehended the connections and understood their reciprocal, dynamic impacts on the world around us. Conversely, our failure to comprehend our hyper-interconnectivity surely played a role in our collapse.

We also watched as our partisan bickering caused us to backslide into Culture Wars that **intersected** perfectly with the interests of anarchists and corrupt politicians. During the 2010s/20s, the U.S became the perfect breeding ground for grifters and fascists, just as it had during 1930/40s. But in the 2000s these **intersections** were in the form of shadow networks, aided by external hacks, AI manipulation on every level, while the white supremacist militias, backing conservative politicians, grew in their red strongholds. President Trump amped up his coded hate speech, campaigning in [2023](#) on an extreme expansion plan for massive deportation of millions of immigrants if reelected and sending out dog whistle messages with his [statements](#) in 2020 and again in 2024. Trump's right-wing agenda for the mid-2020s was released online in his [Project 2025](#) playbook, essentially in plain site, which promised/threatened a return to a 1970s-style far right agenda, with a twist of a SCOTUS who would play along and provide cover.

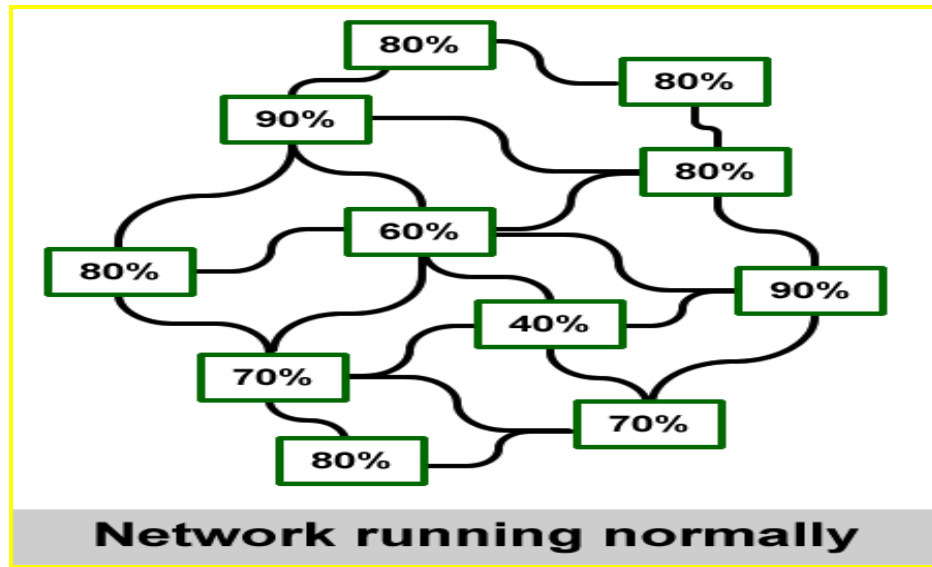
These **intersecting** social networks allowed former and some current military intel experts to connect with techy anarchists and white nationalist militia all under the radar, shielded by local police force allies. Perhaps it was inevitable, in that social climate, that a weapon was used to create an [EMP](#) triggered [Black Sky Event](#) on July 4, 2025.

By the time scientists sounded the alarm of the cataclysmic risks we were facing, scientists had already lost too much influence from the anti-science Culture Wars, and 2020s American scientists were discredited, doxed, threatened and prosecuted, just as they were during the [Chinese Cultural Revolution](#). By the mid-2020s these modern academics were essentially considered partisan enemies and their ideas, whether it was about urging the use of masks and getting vaccinations during pandemics, or trying to slow growth and development encroaching on sensitive environments, or the warn people about the use of highly polluting and destructive fossil fuels and their impact on the climate. Their ideas were consistently dismissed by half of Americans. To further avoid any awareness, news agencies rarely mentioned the risks, disregarding scientists' concerns about these issues until it was way too late to change course.

One reason many scientists hadn't grasped the impact of **intersectionality** was because most are trained to specialize in one type of data or region. While earth scientists understand how positive feedback loops work, they rarely compare datasets over time and spatial scales, or between disciplines. Few saw the bigger climate patterns, or how controversies leading up to the 2024 elections would serve as catalysts, fitting together seamlessly like pieces of a cataclysmic puzzle, setting the stage for a perfect storm of human [societal collapse](#), now called the [Great Collapse](#), dovetailing with the [Climate Overshoot](#) (to be discussed more fully in another blog post). Together these events led to the loss of billions of lives worldwide.

Even social and political activists who claimed to be "woke" and ranting about [intersectionality](#) focused only on small sets of socio-political problems with a partisan viewpoint. Like scientists, "woke" folks didn't see how biases blinded them, or how their mindsets restricted freedoms for those not in their camp, or how emerging Culture Wars, and interpersonal conflicts would prove to accelerate the entire system failure, by generating an epic cascading failure.

Had more of us seen the whole game board, we might have seen how the so-called existential threats of day **intersected**, and how collectively they would trigger this catastrophic [Great Collapse](#) of our entire infrastructure, economy, and government.



How system failure works within an **intersected** network.

For the most part, we stayed in our respective lanes and let ourselves be distracted by pop culture and the Culture Wars. With so much fear and loathing and judging of our fellow Americans, there was little collective energy for trying to work toward the Collective Good, a future where everyone could have a decent quality of life. Before the Great Collapse we couldn't even agree on what that meant.

Only after we slipped into full scale dystopia, with mob rule in many communities, street violence throughout, and after millions had died, did we finally see the big picture with all the **intersections** at play. With most of our social media distractions behind us could we focus on our own survival and how we might rebuild more sustainably, for the sake of life on Earth and for the common good. Finally we began to see how our "us/them" dialectic perspective and our Culture Wars had destabilized our political system and we lost any hope of safe streets at home, or any way to help our allies abroad. For a while the United States of America as a **beacon of hope** seemed to be a thing of the past. It was a profound wakeup call for Americans.

***We may never know what it meant, but we know what it cost.***

In what seemed like just an instant America came down to those who wanted to help try to find a sustainable future for the [common good](#) on Planet Earth versus those who simply wanted to consume everything in their lifetimes, regardless of the impacts on future generations. By the time the [Big Sort](#) commenced, those differing viewpoints were no longer viable. Either you started thinking collectively or you fended for yourself on the outside. Even outside the pod sector, the Guilds were connecting people through skills and interests. In fact, in many ways they were more connected socially than in the pods. In both models self-obsessed narcissists, religious zealots, or those interested in



self-gratification, partisanship, status, or prestige were unwanted. Either help rebuild a sustainable society, or you're out in the wildlands trying to find a tribe.

From an environmental viewpoint, we should never ever disregard how many species we impacted and [sacrificed](#) during the human-caused climate emergency and our failure to see the whole board for the [common good](#). Our path began millions of years ago, and we took a fatal fork in the path leading to here at least 10,000 years ago. In the end, our frantic and desperate invasion into many climate refugia in the 2020a eliminated last chances for many other mammals and other species to survive. By adding our numbers to those refugia ecosystems we exhausted their carrying capacities, and probably reduced survival rates for many other organisms for the long run.

The extreme climate conditions made it virtually inevitable that most ecosystems would either collapse or fragment into smaller, often isolated, patches given the pressures we humans placed on them. Some of these ecosystem patches became a temporary fix for many local communities, by providing some refuge, but in the long term they struggled to maintain population levels and diversity within their gene pools. Simulating patch dynamics and the possibility of more modulated ecosystems is something scientists have now begun to explore in 2030. It is hoped that we can repair some of the damage and instability that our species has caused to others.

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## 102.3. Human Mobility

Mobility is a fundamental adaptation to extreme climate events for avoiding extinction. In a previous [blog](#) I talked about how mobility is a key adaptation to our survival as a species. Evolutionarily speaking, we humans settle down when a more sedentary strategy suits us and we become more mobile when it is more adaptive. Historically, many smaller, more traditional groups have remained mobile, even nomadic as part of their traditional lifestyles for generations, for some centuries, even right up to the [Great Collapse](#). There have likely always been a variety of mobility adaptations throughout the world at any given time, responding and adapting to local and regional resources, microclimates, and economic factors.

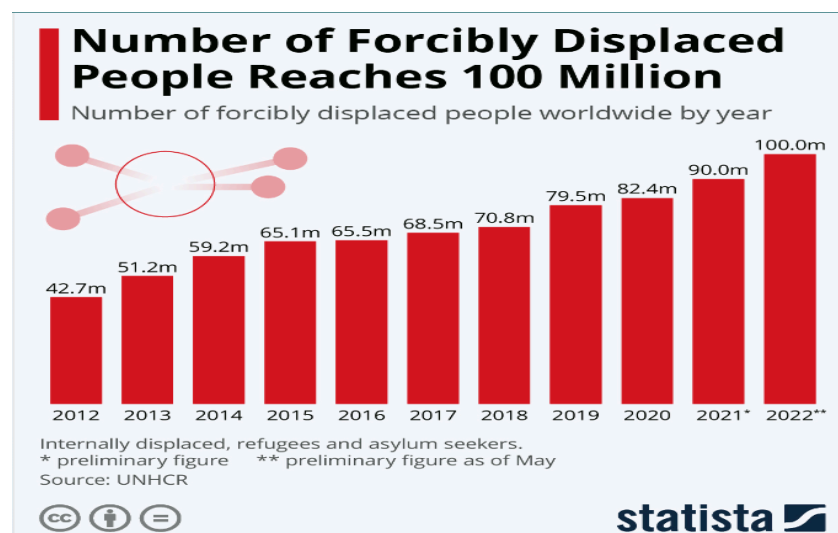
We still don't have much information as to the survival rates of those who ended up in more remote wildlands during the Great Collapse. Let's hope that many of them managed to avoid the worst of the climate and social catastrophic events by staying mobile until they found a safe refuge somewhere off the grid where they could survive away from the madding crowds.



Some Indigenous and more traditional groups maintained mobility as part of their adaptation for generations. For example, pastoralists such as Sami in Northern Europe and traveling groups like Romani. And of course until the Collapse, millions made a living through [transmigration](#), or working in a country where there were not citizens. Perhaps a flexible mobility adaptation is built into our DNA. But many of us who lived in state-level societies before the Collapse had become accustomed to the creature comforts of a more sedentary existence. Plus capitalism compelled us to accumulate unnecessary stuff further hindering our mobility. Most people living in sedentary communities rarely considered mobility as a practical adaptation, especially when things were going well. But when our economics finally fell apart, mobility was simply a necessity for almost everyone.

As the climate and state-level societies both deteriorated, more and more people were on the move. For decades most people living in larger societies who were removed from the daily task of obtaining food, failed to comprehend how the global climate impacted our ability to make a living from local environments, how it was driving more people to become mobile, or how it drove conflicts between people as resources were in shorter supply. All of these considerations **intersected**, but rarely was this recognized by those caught up in the trending pop culture.

By 2012 we surpassed [40 million](#) forcibly displaced people, which had been the world record established at the end of World War 2. Then, a decade later we'd surpassed [100 million forcibly displaced people](#). But still most of us didn't understand what was happening. We were still licking our wounds from the pandemic. In 2022 media and major [non-governmental organizations](#) were still painting increased mobility as a side effect of political conflicts and economic disparity. Rarely did anyone connect the dots and consider how increased mobility **intersected** with the climate, or how it was happening worldwide. #Itstheclimatestupid.



Perhaps it was difficult to pivot and acknowledge the role of climate in increased mobility because it would require a major paradigm shift. As late as 2020 the UN was still struggling to acknowledge the role of climate because of their [outdated language defining refugee status](#). This is where outdated bureaucracies and infrastructures fell into play to further obfuscate any attempt to resolve global concerns related to refugees and displaced people.

Just like disturbance levels, a certain degree of **mobility** can be part of a thriving and dynamic society, but too high a degree of mobility can cease to be adaptive, and even become catastrophic by triggering a chain of other cataclysmic societal ills. By the late 2020s, the majority of us were on the move, struggling to find a secure shelter, and that made the world more dangerous. But by 2030 much of the chaos had settled down, through the [Big Sort](#). Phones are now essential. Virtually everyone has one and it's their lifeline and mobility is viable for many, because their phone is essentially their home, or literally their lifeline.

## 103.4. Mobile Phones

Previously we discussed mobility and intersectionality as fundamental human adaptation. Another is our rather unique forms of communication. While many animals, trees, and perhaps other wildlife can communicate by various means, our ability to communicate with each other from a distance using a range of highly symbolic languages and complex forms of communication, is distinctive to our species.

Think back to that Biblical tale in Genesis about the [Tower of Babel](#). Remember the parable about how our pridefulness angered [Yahweh](#) (God) and we were punished by losing our common language and being dispersed throughout the world? Perhaps that happened, perhaps not, but it's taken us a long time to get to where we can communicate with everyone in the world, and just maybe our pridefulness has gotten us in trouble again.

Thinking outside of the tower here, one of the factors that made recent times unique from previous times was the degree to which people were interconnected worldwide in terms of communication, travel, resources through the global supply chains was a fairly new phenomenon. The standard global communications protocol we called the "internet" wasn't completed until [1983](#). It grew and expanded until everyone in the world had access. And then there were developments in mobile phones which got smaller and were no longer tethered or hardwired. Finally, there were smartphones which ultimately replaced computers and cameras in the lives of most people. Each of these developments changed our world and effectively erased the mythical legacy of Babel in the process.

The intersection between mobility and mobile phones is part of a larger trend of people having more fluidity in their location and their ability to communicate and conduct all kinds of business and other activities through phone apps. In a sense their phone

became an office, and for some, even a homebase, years before the Great Collapse. This remains true for many people today.

As mobile phone access increased, public pay phones and landlines in general, became less valuable. By 2020 there were way less than 100k public pay phones in the United States, a sharp decline from the peak in 1995 of [2.6 million](#). [Mobile phones and then smartphones](#) became essential to everyone by 2023.

In the 2020s social media from phones and webcams on cops suddenly exposed bad actors in many police forces nationwide. Their assaults and killings of innocent victims who were simply exercising their Civil Rights and [trying to breathe](#) became viral on social media.

Frankly non-White Americans knew the score, more often than not, people who looked like them were not treated fairly in many localities throughout our country and our history. Phone cams provided a degree of leveling the playing field by allowing everyone the opportunity to witness these incidents by police. No longer could anyone, with any integrity, claim they were simply isolated incidents by a few “knucklehead” cops. By 2025, virtually all Americans had mobile phones and 90% had smartphones. This meant that many parts of the revolution were being televised.

I don’t think most of us realized back then, how we had become more mobile and relied on our phones as our homebase most of the time. As technology became smarter they more and more served as mini-office computers. From the early 2020s on phones were consistently the singular most important point of contact 24/7 for most Americans. This continued through the years of the Collapse, when and where people could obtain a charge and a signal.

The same basic levels and types of communication and social media access lasted until 2025 with the beginning of the [Great Collapse](#). Of course at that time conventional access and services became unreliable until the communication corporations, the grid, and the wide web were all casualties. In a big sense, it could be argued that the loss of phones and internet access was so psychologically traumatic that it triggered a widespread panic with the inevitable realization that, for the most part, no one was in charge anymore.

At that time people developed cryptic emoji codes within their interest groups, not unlike the historic set of [Hobo Codes](#), a simple way to text, pass notes, or leave signs as needed. During the dystopian times of the Great Collapse, emoji codes were beneficial, not only for short messages during spotty coverage events, but it was unclear who or what might be monitoring people’s calls and texts. Most people lacked trust of any authority figure, but they wanted a way to communicate with their family or comrades. In time the Resistance movement embraced emoji codes because they were accessible on any phone and could be adapted to mean whatever a resistance cell wanted them to mean. Many people adopted codes for a variety of purposes, and they are still common today, especially

outside of the pod Sectors, by members of the Freedom League, who still are wary of the FEDS and their police.

With the **Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)** now in control of the Pod Sectors, it's really not clear what parts of the internet may still exist. Some of us working with funding or support from the FEDS have been given some access to enough bandwidth to do our work. We all have phone access within our regions, but outside of that most of us don't have much access. We must have lost hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions of programs and apps that existed before the **Great Collapse**. Frankly so many of them were tied to the old Consumeristic model of Capitalism, that we don't need most of that stuff. Turns out a lot of it was fluff, just more distractions at our fingertips, so good riddance.

As time progressed and chaos ensued in the mid-2020s, mobility was a basic strategy for dodging the police as well. It was tricky preventing cops with any tech support from ferreting out locations and even infiltrating messages placed through phones. Some apps helped with privacy, but as app creators and support staff dwindled, many in the resistance chose alternative routes and modalities for messaging such as couriers. Phones were still part of that mix, but the resistance cells quickly developed codes from more common memes found on most phones. Sometimes some nonsensical music or a verse from a nursery rhyme was used by resistance fighters could easily be Moms who were with their children during the final stages of the chaos. Because symbolic communication is so fundamental to our species' evolution it was hardwired for people to recognize the advantages of an ad hoc "borrowing" of common symbols with newly defined meaning, translated into the resistance emoji codes staying a step ahead of the cops, most of the time. It was widely known by the remnants the state military that the resistance was using a code but they had little recourse as the resistance cells had rights to change memes as needed with only a very few universal symbols.

In a sense phones were essential to some forms of urban guerilla warfare. When internet services were intentionally cut off from dissidents by the [megarich](#), the techies within the resistance found a work around, pioneered during the Israeli/Hamas War of 2023/24 by Egyptian journalist and activist Mirna El-Helbawi to provide [E-Sim Cards for Palestinians for mobile networking](#).

A lack of trust for those in authority was couched in a newfound recognition, brought about by ubiquitous smart phones and webcams, that the government served the needs of those in power first and foremost, and had all along. I'll discuss how this lack of trust in government and authority played into our [Great Collapse](#) in a later blog.

Now, after the [Big Sort](#), with virtually everyone having a smartphone, the number of people who are truly mobile is thought to have declined from the high water mark during the Collapse. This is partly because so many died and because means of travel are so limited without unfettered access to fossil fuels. Another issue is security concerns,

particularly outside the Pod Sectors tend to limit how far most people are willing to travel. The great majority have very little access to any kind of transportation now. This is a great boon for our goal of maintaining sustainability, so I have to wonder if this will every change substantially now. Most of those still mobile are no longer forced displacements, but those choosing a freedom not available in the Pod Sectors.

But regardless of where they ended up, phones are now essential for any social interaction. Some farther away from the Pods Sectors or those wary of the FEDs, still communicate with CB radios, but this is uncommon because the infrastructure needed for radio waves is somewhat different from cell towers for modern phones. For the most part, it's essentially universal today that phones are the primary mode of communication for all. And so far it seems the FEDS back that idea.

Now, of course, most people rarely even handle money in their day to day life. In some communities they created their own currency to subsidize the bartering system. The Electronic Credit (EC) app through their phones suffices for many transactions. There really isn't much to pay for these days but food and shelter, such as it is. There are still no in-person events or gatherings beyond coffee shops or local pubs. Most of us spend most of our days doing whatever type of work or service we have found to serve the [common good](#). Just rebuilding our lives and our communities takes all our energy most of the time.

While mobility as an adaptation helped us survive the Collapse, now many of us are trying to shift back to more sedentary lives, more like we had before. Many people view sedentism as a form of stability and sustainability. It may or may not be, but it certainly provided some mental health stability for those lucky enough to be in one place when we sheltered from the megastorms.

Then in early 2020 the COVID-19 pandemic hit and everything shut down for a while. It might have been called the pan-panic because after it started, everything got real crazy on every level. Donald Trump was president and folks started focusing on guns and prepping supplies so they could bug out on short notice. At the same time, social media and television the corporate news kept the focus on gossip and scandals surrounding politicians and celebrities and padded their broadcasts with shopping tips to keep everyone distracted, and the climate crisis took a back seat yet again.

During the pandemic, most people learned were more about their own wants, needs, and they saw the disconnect between celebs and their struggles to pay their bills., and their access to food, shelter, and other resources they had most of their adult lives. But that still didn't mean they focused on what really mattered. Politicians blamed each other and no one in power seemed to be held accountable for their misdeeds or their words.

By the early 2020s many people were living and working with a higher degree of more [mobility](#). People were working from home more or doing piece work. Jobs focused on crafts and trades using just hand tools became more popular. while many people began to

live off the grid or in more remote places for security reasons. An economy based on growth was becoming a thing of the past. Now the rich moved their game pieces around in their investment portfolios to stimulate the visible economy, but for an increasing number of Americans life was increasingly becoming a survival game. Lots of jobs went away or changed dramatically so that nobody could make a living.

Thankfully today even though there are definitely those with more, there is a general understanding of rights and liberties that all people have for the **common good**. Now, in 2030, phones are considered an essential part of **communication** and our right to basic access to postal, delivery and communication services. While many people strive to find a more sedentary way of life it is clear that a certain degree of mobility and transient living situations will be around for some time to come. This has always been the case for most working class people. Only the heyday post-WW2 boom gave them some reason to think they were done moving. But by the Great Recession, that false assumption was replaced by higher priced homes and by the early 2020s a [major housing shortage](#) in most of the country. None of this should have been a surprise because those in charge, who had their hands on the purse strings, had always played us for schmuck and [exploited our labor](#) ever since the beginning of the state.

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## 103.5. The Great Game:

One of the fundamental tenets of anthropology is [holism](#), the idea that to fully understand a culture, or any problem really, you should try to view it from as many aspects as you can, to try to see as much of the so-called “game board” as possible. A simple way to understand it is that a sum is greater than its parts. But like most other scientists, anthropologists have never had any political power to sound any real alarms.

For centuries, one group who did have political power, and fully grasped how resources, economics, labor, and the military all intersected, were the **oligarchs**, who were savvy enough to use the idea to their own benefit. They were using that knowledge to their advantage. In fact, they’ve caused many of the major wars over their craven desires for the political power to control the whole game board, meaning earth. While most people were dodging distractions and adjusting to the crisis du jour, those mindfully playing the [Great Game](#) were pulling strings behind the scenes, moving pieces around on the game board, increasing their supply chains and profit stream.

The people with political power, including politicians, oligarchs, and at times celeb influencers have been part of the true Deep State for over two centuries, hiding right in plain sight. The term Deep State, became popularized in the 1990s [American politics](#), first during President Bill Clinton’s reign, then George W. Bush, then Barack Obama’s administration. President [Trump](#) claimed the Deep State was after him, which went viral on



Twitter. Thanks to the help of his base they helped lead to the creation of conspiracy cults such as QAnon, but of course, the Deep State endured.

But it seems the term Deep State may have originated in reference to long term backroom political operatives in [Turkey](#), perhaps secret societies dating back to the Ottoman Empire, but other scholars now view this as broader, such as the [Mamluks of Egypt](#). I maintain they are the same ilk, if not actually players referred to historically as part of the Great Game. They are the plutocratic shadow government, a combination of political figures, in and out of office, and various other governmental officials, military leaders, and corporate and industrial leaders of the 19th, 20th, and 21st centuries in key industrialized centers of the world. Now, in 2030, the remnants of the Deep State who have survived are fully integrated into the FEDS.

In 2023 there were [735 billionaires](#) in the United States, roughly the same number as the next two countries, China and India combined. There were quite a few “top-level billionaires who had resources to lock themselves into bubbles and stay out of the fray. Throughout the chaos many of them stayed in communication with the remaining top officials, regionally, nationally, and globally. They preserved the internet and phones to assist with their plan for regrouping and monitoring communications of the masses.

The [megarich](#) began collaborating closely in 2025 just as the second insurrection occurred, when Trump wasn’t elected, again. By 2026 the megarich launched a new paradigm for the **Great Game**. They realized they couldn’t control everyone and everything everywhere, even if surreptitiously, as they’d done before. So, the Great Gamers decided to essentially pick winners and losers in a [Big Sort](#). The Pod Sectors were for their winners. But they also decided to leave alone some aspects of control on others.

Just prior to the period of massive civil unrest it was common knowledge that the very top 0.1% of Americans owned or controlled well over four times the amount of [wealth](#) of the bottom 50%. In 2026 the megarich still had the resources to restabilize many urban sectors, but not all of America. They selected remnants of former urban areas that had nearby resources, land, forests, and water, with the idea that they might try to connect these urban centers in time. At the same time these landscapes afforded opportunities for others, in the crafts and service areas to live outside the pods while providing some essential services for those within the pods.

Many less well educated Neocons and Neoliberals of the 21st century never fully understood the historical lessons to be learned from the “[Great Game](#)” of the 19th century and how the rivalry between the British and Russian Empires over Central Asia caused both empires to lose their focus on domestic issues to their peril. The irony is that neither saw the whole board even as they tried to control it. While neither group of Imperialists won a stick of gum back then, they persisted and taught their disciples to continue to play the “long game” version of the Great Game in global politics and economics, in other words, to control the game board in totality.

Great Game strategists sought control of the world's supply chains for essentials such as fuel, armaments, drinking water, food, and technology, and they leveraged through military action. Their continued reign of terror led to countless wars and police actions including WW1, WW2, Vietnam, Korea, Rwanda, the former Yugoslavia Iraq, Afghanistan, and Ukraine.

Ultimately the **Great Game** came full circle after the attack on the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in 2001 and landed players back in Afghanistan, where it had begun in the 19th century. This time Afghanistan was a front for the Cold War. Traditional infrastructures and economies were destabilized, just as players of the Great Game had tried to do and failed in the late 1800s. They had succeeded in resuming the Game in Afghanistan between the 1970s to the 1980s, thanks in part to the Russian's invasion and the American's clandestine response, known by the nickname [Charlie Wilson's War](#), when Americans infiltrated and supported resistance fighters known as the [Mujahideen](#). We remained clandestine for a number of years with secret forces supporting the Great Game. It was only a matter of doubling down in the name of fighting terrorists after 9/11 in 2001. And there the U.S. stayed, stuck, until President Joe Biden sent the troops home, in accordance with a scheduled plan advanced by Trump prior to his reelection bid. Our departure fully destabilized Afghanistan and brought great suffering among their people and shame on the United States. Afterwards, China stepped up to control that part of the gameboard and began bankrolling development projects for Afghanistan. Ironically their strategy was fundamentally Capitalistic rather than warlike as they helped Afghans and Taliban to rebuild Afghanistan's traditional agrarian economy as part of China's [Belt and Road Initiative](#).

While war is often posed as just, it is rarely considered thus in history. The U.S. military action in Vietnam and more broadly Indochina was particularly egregious because the U.S fought that tropical forest war by showering down defoliating toxins on civilians, allies, and their own ground troops. These toxins, namely Agent Orange, proved after the fact to cause multi-generational damage to the victims and their descendants, both overseas and in the United States.





Phan Thi Kim Phuc (center) running after a napalm strike on her village in Vietnam.  
Photographer Nick Ut. (© Nick Ut/The Associated Press)

One might think Americans learned their lesson in Vietnam, or Korea. But the **Great Game** persisted in the Middle East and parts of Africa played by Russians, Brits, Americans, Chinese and many others smaller players worldwide competing for control of fuel and commodity supply chains at all costs. Whenever working people squawked about the price of oil, there were inevitably some news articles, threats against the status quo along partisan lines, and then it all settled down and people accepted the new price, mas o menos. This was all part of the **Great Game**. Make no mistake there are still players today, in 2030. We have to remain vigilant if we are to achieve and maintain th sustainable way of life we agreed to honor during the [Big Sort](#).

We knew megarich were a primary source for the damage done to the climate and the economy that led to wars and poverty, but we still let ourselves get distracted. Our addiction to a world of fast cars and cheap merch was the biggest distraction of them all. Perhaps it was inevitable that the **Great Game** would lead us to the [Great Collapse](#).

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# Blog Set 2030-103: The Great Collapse

## 103.1. Defining the Great Collapse **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

**The Great Collapse** is defined here as the combination collapse of the climate collapse and state-level societies, in concert with the catalyst of generational Artificial Intelligence (AI), all **intersecting existential threats**, which ultimately **culminated** into one **Great Collapse**. We've done all sorts of damning things on our historic path, with all the hubris [Manifest Destiny](#) could muster. But the Great Collapse was one colossal calamity, which proved to threaten our existence on earth.

In this set of blogs I identify what I call the **Existential Trifecta**, which is essentially the climate threat, the threat of societal collapse, and the emerging threat of artificial intelligence (AI) which will serve as an accelerant for the other two preexisting threats. It took us 10,000 years to get to the point of abusing the climate with the expansion of state level societies and their global economy, but it only took a few years for the AI to lead to the brink of extinction. Together these three brought our species to our knees. They destroyed the state-level society in the formerly called United States of America (what we now simply call America). One fundamental problem we had addressing the trifecta was that few had the bandwidth to grasp all the threats simultaneously, let alone understand how they intersected. Only in hindsight can we really understand our role in what we lost.

It's hard to point to a single event that triggered the [Big Sort](#) (discussed in the next set of blogs), or even a starting point for the catastrophic events that led us to the **Great Collapse** and the brink of extinction. But many survivors would admit that, collectively, we had it coming. Perhaps looking for a single event or factor is just another distraction. Is it really about a single factor at all? Or is it about, as we discussed in a previous blog, the **intersections** between many factors and how dynamics in one issue or event can act as a catalyst for others? In this blog entry we investigate some of the key failures over the last decade that led to the **Great Collapse**, delving to a degree into their histories, but more specifically why we found ourselves, stuck and unable to save ourselves from our own demise.

## 103.2. The Climate Catastrophe **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

Both climate and social scientists failed to fathom how intersections between the various climate and institutional weaknesses would further cripple us on both counts.

National security experts and climate scientists warned that our interconnected infrastructure including our energy grid were extremely vulnerable from a number of events, such as an [electromagnetic pulse \(EMP\)](#) coming from the 2025 [Solar \(Flare\) Maximum](#). And President Trump continued to the end to say that the climate crisis was a hoax. He contributed to the perfect storm by being a great distraction in our time of need. He let our national security lapse as he redirected troops to the homeland arguing that cities in blue states were in chaos, while allowing Russia and other rivals to infiltrate our security network after the techbros let our guard down. True, even a small nuclear bomb could have triggered a [Black Sky Event](#) which could have taken down our grid. But those with political power chose to ignore every sign of warning. Making matters worse, climate scientists and ecologists who became aware of [collapsing ecosystems](#) were censored by the status quo. Many of our top military leaders as well as thousands of federal employees including many who served in various watchdog capacities, system-wide, were terminated by Trump and company during 2025. At the same time they removed leaders of major media networks and changed messaging dramatically. At every turn those in the know were silenced so the masses remained ignorant of much that we knew about the coming catastrophe.

Before long news organizations were, to a great extent, complicit because the private, for-profits groups had a vested interest in backing Trump's agenda and keeping hyper-Capitalism going. They continued pushing consumers to overbuy items that led to higher emissions and more toxins and trash worldwide. Almost none of the actions by those in power was the least bit consistent with the dire warnings of an imminent Collapse.

It is unfortunate that none of the Independent news/media sources or the non-profit news covered any of the urgent concerns in any detail. They'd report a climate story from time to time, but more commonly they spoke of catastrophic storm events as isolated, even though the intensity and frequency of catastrophic storms accelerated month by month. There were so many political, economic and other catastrophic events to cover, rioting, mass killings, bombings and none of them saw the need to consistently cover the climate melt down with any breadth or depth. They consistently focused on war fronts including the partisan bickering at home well beyond the 2024 elections. They just kept up the partisan bickering reporting on Democrats and Republicans nightly, even as 2025 marked a significant change in voter registration patterns. Even after over 50% of voters were neither Democrat or Republican, the news continue to sing their divisive tune of a duopoly.

No one was going to further upset Americans by telling them they needed to change their fundamental behavior. Environmentalists talked about it constantly from 2020 on, but they couldn't get any real political traction from the left or right. It seemed there was no group with less political clout than the bleeding heart tree huggers.

Frankly, I think a lot of Americans thought they could keep doing what they were doing and the technology would fix the problems. It was classic “whistling past the graveyard” behavior even as our good ship Lollipop began to sink.

In 2020 the [Institute for Economics and Peace](#) (IEP) predicted that by [2050](#) over one billion people would be displaced due to the climate and what they termed, trying to “cope with extreme ecological shocks.” By 2021 the **Department of Defense** produced a [Climate Adaptation Plan](#) indicating that “climate change is a **critical national security issue** and **threat multiplier**.” In other words, its **intersection** with other factors makes it an “**accelerant**” for bigger problems. They continued that “the Department must take bold steps to accelerate adaptation to reduce the adverse impacts of climate change.” But like so many others, this warning went unheeded.

We saw the [heat dome spikes](#) beginning back in 2022, but most news stations were focused on Trump’s court case as their lead story. Any fool could see the surface temperature of the ocean was off the hook, but most missed or ignored the flag and moved on.

By 2023, we saw serial record temperatures for [June, July and August](#). By [September](#) scientists reported some glaciers in Antarctica no longer had any buttressing sea ice barrier left. To break it down, when sea ice melts along the shorelines of glaciers, it can cause icebergs to break off. Such an event automatically raises the water level along the shoreline because the glacier becomes like a giant floating ice cube instead of being tethered to the land-based glacier. Drop a few ice cubes into a full glass of water for effect.

Another side effect is that once a glacier is exposed to more water (by definition warmer than ice), it starts to melt faster, and this can be exacerbated by any storms that make waves along the coastline. For good measure add in the fact that most of these glaciers have been in place since the last Ice Age, so there are all kinds of fun things that were exposed during the early 2020s, not the least of which was gaseous bubbles of carbon and methane that had been sequestered in the glaciers and icebergs since the last Ice Age. The increased carbon and methane warmed the air and increased the rate of ice melt, thereby creating a [self-perpetuating feedback](#) loop that can't be reversed until the next Ice Age.

Self-perpetuating feedback loops were in motion, but yet Americans did their very best to continue to ignore the emergency. In an official [Presidential Statement on Extreme Weather](#) August, 2023 President Biden noted: “Across the country, people are experiencing the devastating impacts of extreme weather worsened by climate change.” By 2024 President Biden was making “Severe Weather Declarations” several times a month. In May alone it was Maine, West Virginia, Iowa, and Texas. By [May 28, 2024](#), President Biden’s Press Secretary, Karine Jean-Pierre said:

"The federal government stands ready to support as needed. As we turn towards recovery we urge residents in the affected areas to remain vigilant and continue listening to state and local officials. We also want to encourage everyone nationwide to prepare now for severe weather in your area.

<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/may-28-2024-pbs-newshour-full-episode>." Then in November, Donald Trump, the world's climate denier in chief, was elected for his second term as President of the United States to begin in January, 2025.

By 2025 the [Overshoot](#) event was well underway, and all bets were off. A **Climate Overshoot** is when the demands on the biosphere made by humans or any species exceed that environment's regenerative capacity, or more simply when a population exceeds an environment's carrying capacity.

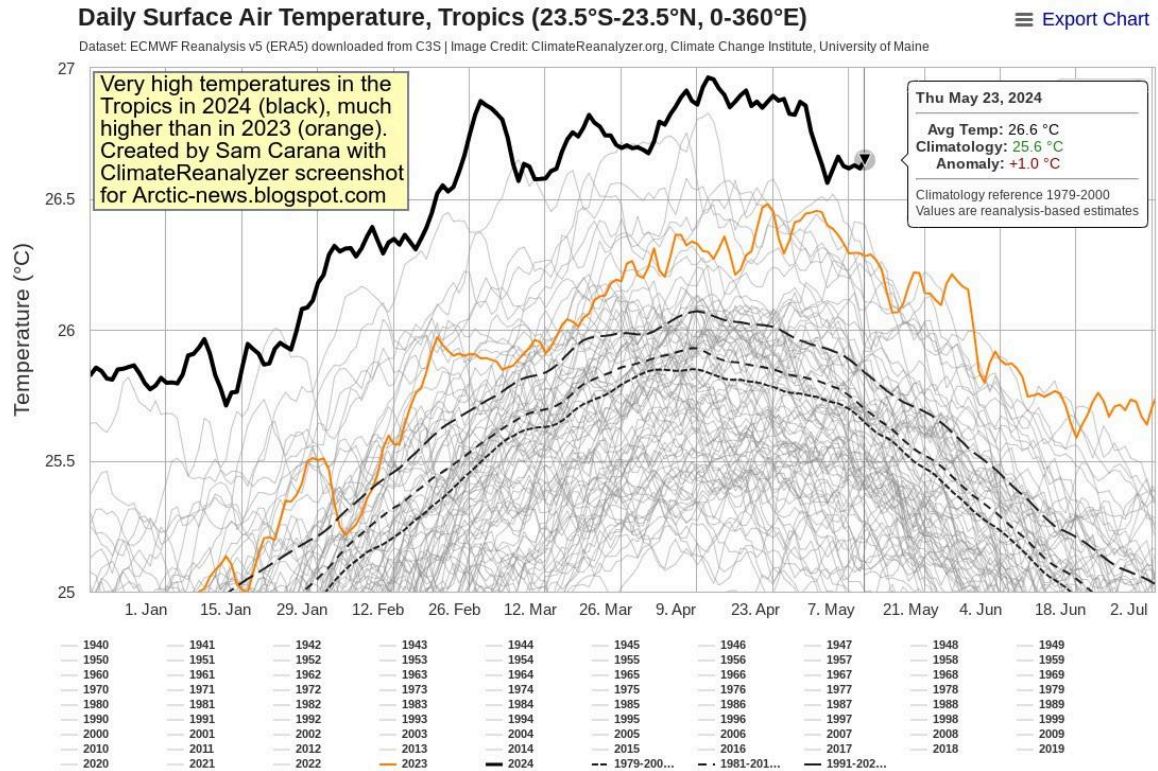
One important measure of an **overshoot** is the degree of carbon that can be absorbed by natural carbon sinks in the world, notably the oceans and the tropical forests. In 2020 we saw warnings about carbon sinks becoming fully saturated in the [Amazon](#) and with [Africa](#) following soon after. By 2021 there were large swaths of the Amazon in which CO2 emissions were already being [detected](#).

By 2023 scientists expressed concerns about CO2 overshoots in the [oceans](#) of the world as well. By then some regions well-known carbon absorption were shifting and turning into producers. Ocean heat was literally off the charts by then, with several dead spots too toxic for fish and other sea life to exist. Another concern pertaining to oceans is that increases in Carbon Dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) can lead to an increase in acidification, which can impact and kill many types of sea life.

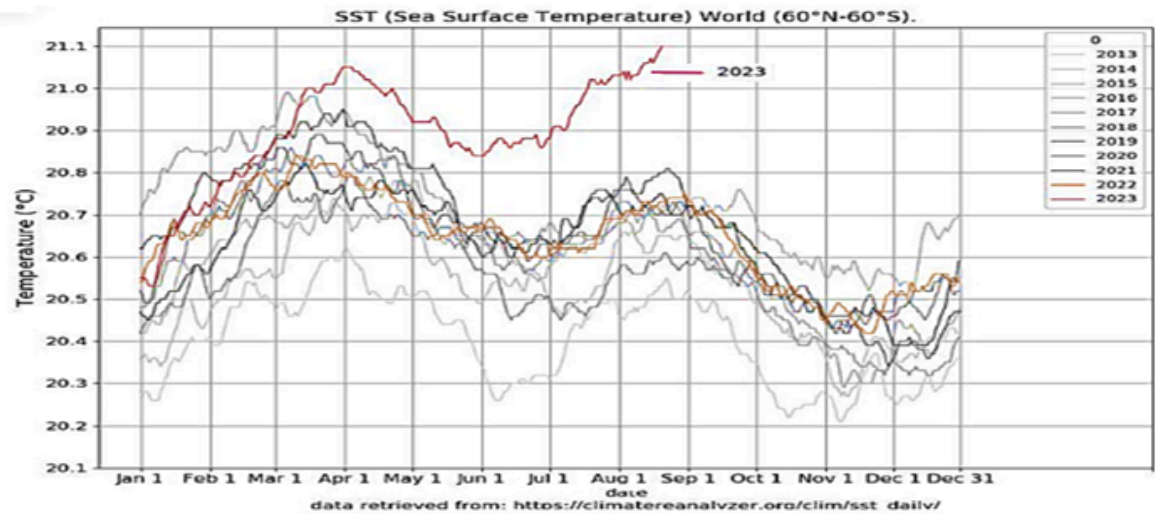
By the beginning of 2024, climate scientists acknowledged we had exceeded the 2-degree temperature boundary. So many planetary climate records were broken in 2023 alone, that Climate Scientist [Sam Carana](#) noted we were "careening toward social and ecological chaos." Even some of the Indie news outlets took up the mantle. [Truthdig](#) coined the term [Climate Death Spiral](#). Unfortunately, while an increasing number of people gradually adjusted to the news, the great majority stayed their course with distractions and some semblance of their former daily lives, even as they all experienced signs of chronic breakdowns in supply chains, bureaucracies, cybersecurity, and staffing shortages in the workforce. Upticks in respiratory viruses kept happening but were no longer systematically tracked as if public health no longer mattered in the greater scheme of things. Dramatic changes were happening and still the band played on.

By the end of May, 2024 the tropics were boiling, with a record temperature of [127 degrees F set in Delhi, India](#) in the northern and more inland part of the nation.





By 2025, ocean heat was driving extinctions, first locally, such as coral beds, and their ecosystems, then there were co-extinctions. [Killer hurricanes](#) and other horrific types of storms pelted and submerged what was left of the shorelines.



When a mass of cold water or air hits a mass of heat it generates energy and often becomes a storm. But temperature doesn't act alone. The bigger the temperature differences and the bigger the volume, the bigger the storm. So, massive enough temperature anomalies can drive their own weather events. In time people realized that all the **Arctic Polar Vortexes** and **Heat Domes** we were experiencing were not just rare weather phenomenon to suffer through; they **intersected** with many other variables to cause [superstorms](#) and contributed to polar melting. In the southern part of the United States and more so south of the border, these extreme factors also created numerous [extra-tropical tornadoes](#).

The [Antarctic](#) was also showing abnormal temperatures and thinning ice, as the Arctic was. Our land masses began essentially swaying back and forth in the storms and the rising waters from the polar melts, just like ships finding themselves in a "perfect storm." It was far too late to batten down those hatches.

2024 witnessed a dramatic uptick in a lack of critical care. Tens, then hundreds of critical emergencies every month. We were so overwhelmed and our workforce so depleted that we no longer had the capability to even count incidents, let alone to respond to emergencies. Even after military forces were deployed as emergency support teams, within our nation's borders it was not enough. Our lack of preparation and insufficient support staff contributed to many superstorm incidents becoming catastrophic events.

By 2025, we had exceeded seven of nine thresholds of the Planetary Boundaries framework identified by the Stockholm Resilience Centre. Nothing could be done to prevent tens of thousands of plant and animal species all over the world from dying off in catastrophic mass **co-extinction** events. Species die-offs impact other species because of the services that species provide for each other within an ecosystem. Even a well-integrated and [resilient ecosystem](#) can withstand only so much stress, and this also impacts our food supply. Our state-level anthropogenic ecosystems were neither resilient nor sustainable; they were toxic and caused massive die-offs and extinctions at the cost of threatening our own survival.

Into the mix came more epidemics from bad health conditions, food shortages, healthcare shortages, and marauding gangs of thieves and disruptors cutting out power supplies and communication networks. Soon violent disruptors appeared everywhere. There were violent rebellions and insurrections throughout the U.S. and most nations, on every major road. Supply chains totally collapsed, and any thought of stewarding the planet seemed irrelevant.

## 103.3. Our Societal Ills: Dystopian Dynamics of the Great Game

**MOVE FIRST TWO PARAGRAPHS UP INTO CLIMATE SECTION By 2025** it had become cliché to use terms like record-breaking or perfect storm. In 2024 we mostly just sat on our hands and watched them list off the records on the local TV news, often not even mentioning the climate. It wasn't uncommon for local weather reporters to act like it was a game, cheering for new records with no indication they understood what they meant.

The only ones who really understood the urgency were climate scientists and those who tracked their findings. Among their peers and their social groups there were discussions about the implications for new findings and sometimes colorful predictions about an end date for our survival. For example, one Arctic News Facebook member back on 3/15/24 posted, "There is so little time left and the world does nothing about it! Instead they talk about the future and many people don't know anything about it! It will be a brutal awakening when the climate disaster Strikes with full power! The world is unprepared and will be taken by surprise!" Another group member responded, "Time will tell, but you may have it. I suspect about the same time we'll be in the streets fighting fascists, just to make it interesting."

There were conversations like these, in select social media threads, but most had no real idea or sense of what was coming, either through the collapse of the climate or [societal collapse](#). Many Americans were concerned that Trump would become president again and all the ramifications for what that might mean based on the Heritage Project's Project 2025 playbook. There were some Americans who still thought the climate crisis was a hoax. Most said they "believed" in science, but the great majority didn't care to look at the data or predictions. They preferred to keep it abstract and to believe either it wouldn't happen for a long time or it wouldn't be that bad. Now in 2030 we realize how naive that thinking was, but was not forcing people to look at the data. Plus

Back in 2022/23 we Americans were just recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic when we rediscovered several other societal maladies. Racism, sexism, genderism, fascism and anti-science conspiracy cults all re-emerged during the pandemic shutdown, thanks to Trump's presidency. Frankly there were many triggers and accelerants which could have served as alarms: COVID-19, Trump, MAGAs, 3D printed guns, or the [Megarich](#) and corporate lobbyists controlling the federal government. All contributed to our collapse, and any one could have served as a wakeup call, but none did. We simply distracted ourselves past every warning flag or alarm. We had plunged into [Culture Wars](#) and everyone knew it.

Because of these accelerants, reactions to certain key events with oppositional reaction causing a chain reaction, such as the May, 2020 murder of George Floyd were significant. It led to the resurgence of [Black Lives Matter](#) (BLM) movement, with their non-violent protests and marches designed to bring awareness to a serious societal

problem and the need for urgent and definitive change. But partisan, racial, and class lines were all drawn in this conflict. To a degree both sides viewed the divide as about their own social justice. Then the grifters, the white supremacists and neonazis showed up created friction and incited major conflicts in various urban areas and violently attacked BLM demonstrators. Who was there to protect the BLM supporters then? The Police? The (in)Justice system? Trump had BLM non-violent demonstrators gassed in a park because they were in the way of his photo-op; he wanted to hold a bible up in front of a church.

Nothing made any sense any more. Americans overwhelmingly voted for Joe Biden because they saw him as steady and reliable, and no drama, and boring. Then four years later they were bored with him even while he got incredible infrastructure funding through to upgrade and to a degree reinvent our infrastructure for the future. But people were bored and called him old, even though he was only 3 years older than Trump. And Americans went into the record heatwave summer with people wanting more drama and chaos instead of steady and boring.

Communities nationwide were in chaos. I did help that from 2020 on there were police staff shortages for several reasons. After the outcry for accountability during the Black Lives Matter protests, there was a short-lived push to [defund the police](#). Many rank and file cops got extremely defensive, and then many retired. Their reasons for leaving varied, including the [Great Resignation](#), which also deeply impacted other emergency services, in particular healthcare and fire.

## **103.4. American Healthcare After the Fall **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION****

Many jurisdictions were severely short-staffed for emergency services. Then in 2024 Israel set the precedent for healthcare facilities to be fair game for military forces when they see a facility as a viable target. But unlike Israel which claimed to have only one target, the Hamas, although they seemed willing to sacrifice as many Palestinians as it took, while the U.S. has called a variety of people and groups "[terrorists](#)" over the years using somewhat vague language. So all bets were off. Police and security forces occupied major health care facilities along with many government offices, like a police state, which was the beginning of the shift. Consequently through the summer of 2024 and into the early months of 2025, substantial numbers of health care professionals left their professions. A number tried to rebuild and cooperatives of health care professionals, but without a corporate component, and police security, their facilities were ransacked. By the Beginning of 2025 there were less than a ¼ of the number of healthcare professionals there had been ten years before. Within months that number was slashed again.

Mental health services were some of the most deficient areas because they fell into the cracks. Most communities were unable or unwilling to pivot their resources so that

mental health calls would go to crisis intervention teams instead of police. This arguably would have benefited everyone including the police. But there was an outcry and a “digging in” mentality to back the police against what was viewed as anti-cop rhetoric. Mental health services remained in the cracks, even in 2024 when people nationwide were referring to the general mental health and were finding some extra funding for young people, with record number of them reported thinking of suicide and a rising number of suicides with all the societal turbulence and increasing numbers of climate refugees.

Without sufficient staffing many healthcare services were unavailable and ultimately most facilities closed their doors or at a minimum, dramatically reduced their services and hours. Patients on critical treatments, such as chemotherapy were really caught in a bind unless they were billionaires and could afford to obtain professional staff, equipment and medicine. Everyone else was scrambling.

Any functioning facilities become targets for looting and vandalism. By the summer of 2024 there was so much violence and turmoil, that healthcare shifted away from full service to catch as can. Many people resorted to more traditional home remedies not as a preference, but in desperation. By 2025 many remaining public health departments transitioned away from supporting community healthcare to burying bodies to prevent cholera and a whole slew of other disease outbreaks.

## **103.5. From Police to Guard to Troops **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION****

As a clear danger of insufficient police to prevent violence, various state leaders pleaded with President Trump to call up the National Guard. But Trump was reluctant to use resources to protect anyone outside of his circle. Some of his base was displeased when the Guard was called on to college campuses during the Palestinian protests against America’s role in Israel’s aggression in Gaza. But they became very upset in 2025 when he cut employees and funding for the VA, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid. All were bridges too far.

Ultimately Trump did allow Governors to call in the Guard in a number of states, but in several cases the insurgencies, the rioting, and the disrupters violently claimed the city streets, and there were not enough police and Guard units deployed to stop riots or even try to keep the peace in most jurisdictions. Worse, in some jurisdictions police didn’t simply stand down but they were supporting disruptors and white supremacists are they simply Nor were there enough emergency medical techs or even healthcare facilities to meet demand. And all the while, torrential megastorms filled the skies.



## 103.6. The Reckoning **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

The ironic silver lining of all the megastorms and weather catastrophes was that people started to shift gears from partisan pitchforks to pitching in to help neighbors and community members survive. Finally, there was some reckoning of the consequences of the divisiveness that the plutocrats and their minions had been using to keep people from banding together. But tragically, by the time we finally leveled the playing field started to band together, region by region, to respond to the environmental calamities, the genie was already out of the bottle.

Like the police and other emergency services, the healthcare industry collapsed quickly after the rioting started leaving a few doctors and clinics scattered, unable to do much more than triage and provide basic care, due to a lack of equipment and medical supplies. But the downfall of American healthcare had been of concern for decades.

Shortly after 2008, early in President Obama's first term he was able to get through Congress the beginnings of a universal healthcare program called the Affordable Care Act (ACA) aka Obamacare. It was designed to keep the costs of healthcare from continuing to rise and to provide insurance plans for those who had been unable to obtain them before. Another feature was increased transparency by providing digitized patient records and transportable electronic datafiles. But soon the Republicans started chipping away at some of the benefits, and the insurance and healthcare industries found loopholes so that medical costs began rising again. Regardless of the assurances we'd been given. The new spin was that they'd be even worse without ACA protections, but to most it almost seemed like a sick joke.

During the pandemic, American healthcare was even more heavily under fire from the added pressure of dealing with a new and highly adaptable killer virus. Healthcare workers were so mentally and physically exhausted from being on the front lines. Not only were they under attack from COVID-19, but a large number of Americans got swept up in the Trump movement and they were suspicious of scientists and their findings as they tried to navigate the uncharted waters of COVID-19. Many Americans refused to wear masks, to get vaccinated, or even spatially distanced. Because of their reckless and irresponsible decisions America was forced into a herd immunity situation and over a million died.

By the second year of the pandemic, millions of Americans had lost any interest and got back into the rat race of the working world, and this included large numbers of healthcare workers. Significant numbers of healthcare workers resigned along with millions of other Americans in other lines of work, in what became known as the [Great Resignation](#). After the pandemic American healthcare remained understaffed and it took months to get appointments in most healthcare fields, which further impacted many people's health and lives.



By the end of 2023 pharmacists and their support staff were [striking](#) because of their own poor working conditions. They were not only understaffed, like most of healthcare, but rules in some jurisdictions required that a pharmacy had to have a pharmacist on duty, so they couldn't even go to lunch or the bathroom without having to close the pharmacy. Then the big corporate stores started trying to emulate the online prescription services, so people were getting less and less access to anyone to talk to about healthcare and their prescriptions.

Perhaps it seemed inevitable that American healthcare would collapse under the weight of Capitalism, but it wasn't. All Americans had needed to do was look to Europe and elsewhere for better models. But they didn't. They were too arrogant as the so-called strongest nation in the world to think that they weren't really the best by any measure of sustainability, resilience or endurance.

When the global supply chain broke down and revolutions broke worldwide, most nation states collapsed within a matter of weeks. The United States was predisposed to violence, in particular [gun violence](#). So people in any kind of residential neighborhood were subject to gunshots day and night. Some people had more powerful firepower because the regulations had been so lax in the previous decade throughout much of the country. Political operatives continued to exploit fear and drive divisiveness. Violence ultimately shut down our system of governance along with most of the rest of the world.



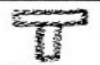


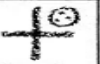
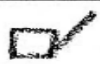

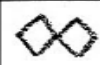

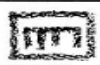





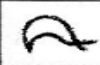
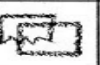


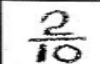



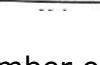



Once the violence and chaos began, constructive protests about healthcare and housing or feeding homeless people or anything to improve the quality of life became a thing of the past. The non-violent protests no longer existed. Now it was violence, very violent, hating police, officials, and anything establishment, or ethnic, or religious. People lashed out at everyone and everything like wild animals sometimes, more than people.

The chaos brought the best and worst out in people. I think most of us recognized that our **Volunteer Medical Corps**, who often worked for food and shelter, were the true heroes of the day. For a few years most people were frequently mobile, moving when needed, never staying anywhere too long without security, they tended to range within a few miles, for the most part. In time they learned who "belonged" in their territory, meaning those who were trying to survive there, and who were interlopers trying to make a score by taking advantage of locals, and then moving on. This new type of "knowing people" led to a different kind of trust. For the most part people learned to have the backs of other locals, whether they had ever laid eyes on them before. I'm sure most people reading this have their own unique experiences along these lines. But it seems to be as we began to know and to a degree, trust others trying to hunker down near us, and we began to build community. It didn't take long for people to help each other more directly, bartering and sharing food and supplies, even shelter.

One thing everyone tried to avoid were roving bands of looters, typically on motorcycles, or on foot, or any kind of police or military vehicles. The wheels were off

when it came to accountability. Many were no different than the roving bands, except many of the new brand of security forces still had access to fuel, and many of their vehicle radios still worked, so they could bring in backup. They acted like they were only hassling people for security reasons, but in reality they wanted they were after the same things that the looters did, many were thugs in some version of a uniform. They still had some headquarters they world out of, which were armed to the teeth. No one was safe from their roving patrols. People began to fight back. They called themselves the resistance.

The Resistance started to secure communities. At first resistance cells were composed primarily of Veterans and others handy with weapons. But they quickly expanded to couriers and ultimately safe houses as a means for people to stay away from the cops. Some called themselves Antifa (anti-fascists) and had more of a political bent. But most were simply trying to help their fellow Americans survive the Collapse and to weather out the storms. People developed codes that would fly under the radar, if their messages got into the wrong hands. Initially many people still had phones and used emoji codes, as discussed previously in the blog related to [mobility](#). But as time passed, the ability to charge phones was increasingly sketchy and signals were intermittent due to the loss of networks and cell towers. Ultimately the time came when people conveyed messages between or within resistance cells orally from memory or with small slips of paper which could be quickly swallowed. No person had much info in any given message, and people stayed on the move, making it harder for cops to track down their operations. Codes became popular throughout. The simplest symbols were most common, using emoji symbols or something entirely new. Some even managed to track down the old [Hobo Codes](#) which were pre-adapted for mobility.

 KIND LADY LIVES HERE	 KIND NOBODY, not a good story	 FOOD HERE if you work	 RELIGIOUS TALK and FREE MEAL
 IF YOU ARE SICK, they'll care for you	 DOCTOR HERE WON'T CHARGE	 FREE TELEPHONE	 ALCOHOL IN THIS TOWN
 KEEP QUIET	 HOLD YOUR TONGUE	 BARKING DOG HERE	 VICIOUS DOG HERE
 THE SKY is the limit	 TROLLEY STOP	 GOOD PLACE TO CATCH A TRAIN	 THIS IS NOT A SAFE PLACE
 DISHONEST PERSON LIVES HERE	 COWARDS will give, to get out of you	 YOU'LL BE CURSED OUT	 A BEATING AWAITS YOU HERE
 THERE ARE THIEVES ABOUT	 CRIME COMMITTED, not safe for strangers	 JUDGE LIVES HERE	 COURTHOUSE PRECINCT STATION
 OFFICER OF LAW LIVES HERE	 JAIL		

An amazing number of people remained in denial about climate being as much of an imminent threat as the political crisis, until well into 2025 because of a variety of reasons. Some were tethered to political partisan thinking or corporate interests which manufactured a narrative of complete denial of the climate emergency until it impacted

them personally. Some were vested corporate interests, or simply because they never bothered to be informed, or they were afraid to know, or they'd never really learned how to do the research. They lived their lives in disinformation bubbles, uninformed about our core relationship to the earth and other organisms or how we were disrupting the normal operations of the earth's climate.

State-level societies allowed people the freedom to be disengaged and rely upon constant distractions from social events and pop culture. There was hardly anything on the news about record temperatures, super storm movements, or mega-wildfires until they impacted densely populated areas. Almost no news outlets presented any information about human mobility except on our border and only what was posted on their corporate and partisan news media partner sites, as they bounced between trending stories.

Even most scientists who acknowledged the climate emergency, as I did back in [2016](#), thought we'd have more time, maybe until 3000, or at least 2050. Few expected 2025 to be the catastrophic **tipping point** year, or how cascading natural and societal disasters would cripple us by **intersecting emergencies** that increasingly fell into place like toppling dominoes, ultimately triggering a total collapse of our global climate. When it came, it was relentless, swifty transitioning from occasional catastrophic events that split up more the moderate, predictable patterns we'd enjoyed for millennia to a series of intense and erratic cataclysmic events in rapid success. By late 2026 there almost wasn't a region of the country that didn't have a catastrophic event at least once a week. What resilience we had was quickly diminished.

But it wasn't just the climate. It was our partisan divide between Democrats and Republicans that broke our nation's back. This divide struck at the very foundations of the United States and what they stand for. Just when it still seemed some kind of [police reform](#) would emerge, Trump and his cabinet of conservative plutocrats doubled-down and sent in their hired militias, many of whom were white supremacists or anti-government, such as the [Proud Boys](#), the [Bougaloo Bois](#), and the [Oath Keepers](#) with the intent of intimidating any demonstrators demanding justice.

[Antifascists \(Antifa\)](#) stood up to defend vulnerable Americans from their own police force, but when the far right brought violence to the streets, police supporters and much of the media.

Like after the murder of George Floyd, when Trump and the MAGA right blamed the violence on non-violent Black Lives Matter activists instead of the ultra-right [white supremacists](#) who were at fault, he persisted in his false narrative about it being DEI people who were causing all the disruptions, giving pardons to any right wing fanatics who took matters into their own hands. Just as he heated up tensions and violent political conflicts leading to the first insurrection on January 6, 2021, when Trump tried to steal democracy by marching on the Capitol, with the Proud Boys leading his parade, he maintained his false narrative once again. While there were hearings and much ado about

that first insurrection, in 2024, there were no brakes in 2025, and the push back by the white supremacists and their allies was oppressive.

MAGAS soon took over many state and local jurisdictions and governing boards and started banning books and media. With Trump's blessing his operatives took leadership roles and restricted what could be taught to students from K-12 through college. Extremists denied not only the climate emergency, but any historical existence of slavery, and in time the holocaust. Trump set the tone and they ran with it, outlawing abortions, birth control, and gender affirming care, including gender-related surgery and medications. They associated all of it and the mindset of leftists to be immoral. Only Viagra was spared from their gender biased wrath.

We had seen Governors in Texas and Florida start ramping up their game of cruelty to non-white people and immigrants earlier in the 2020s. For example in 2023, the Governor of Texas hid razor water under buoys on the Rio Grande that maimed emigrants trying to cross the Rio Grande River. Around the same time he signed an Executive Order denying low-paid construction workers any water breaks during the day during record heat. The social conservatives were on a roll leaving the moderates, progressives, and leftists nowhere to turn but the Supreme Court of the United States (SCOTUS). Unfortunately, the court was packed by Trump.

Thanks to Trump, SCOTUS tilted to the far right. His newer right wing activist judges banded together with existing conservatives and started stripping away civil rights from women, people of color, non-straight people, and religious minorities. By 2023 they had overturned major components of Affirmative Action. They failed to honor treaties and denied Diné (Navaho) people the right to Colorado River water. Justice Clarence Thomas, an admitted beneficiary of Affirmative Action, effectively closed the door for others. People demanded that SCOTUS establish a set of [Ethical Conduct Rules](#) for their body, but this, too, was forgotten after several other new distractions in the media.

By 2024, a new super strain of these social diseases of hate went viral on social media due to the unfettered use of **AI (Artificial Intelligence)**. **AI-based** misinformation quickly spread throughout all social media platforms like wildfire. 3D printers produced guns and ammo for anyone with a desire to have them, including children in some urban sectors. Guns on the streets were limitless with no way to know or control them. And, of course, some religious fanatics saw every single tragedy, either human caused or a climate disaster, as a message from God that the apocalypse was at hand for our sins. The stage was set.

To add another insult to injury, President Trump declared war on the rest of the world with his irrational tariffs, and he did so in a classic chaotic Trump style with them on again and off again, until global stock markets looked like the paddle-ball game. And no economy suffered more profoundly than the U.S. which quickly stalled and fell into a significant recession, which made the so-called Great Recession of 2008 look like a joyride.

By mid-2025 there was no longer any legitimacy to the existing governance. Civil war had essentially emerged in several regions. Nationwide, cultish militias armed to the teeth took down any government agency or official boards they deemed inconsistent with their version of the Constitution. Some local officials tried to restore order in their jurisdictions by ramping up a police presence, or even declaring martial law, but most places didn't have the police staff to back that play. Many police and military had switched sides. Suddenly there were no more deciders except those with the wealth and armaments to back their play.

Between the cataclysmic climate events and the violent rioting, no one was safe anywhere near the streets. People just tried to find some place out of the weather and off the streets which were full of hungry and hurt people rioting and looting for food and health supplies. Most people were soon desperate for an end to the violence, but even more importantly, food and shelter for their families, and many became motivated to do whatever was needed to protect their family or comrades. Roving bands of mercenary thugs took what they could during all the turmoil. People urgently found neighbors or allies they hoped they could trust, and shared shelter from the storm and the gangs of looters. The streets, the skies, and the waterways no longer felt safe, but people determined to survive and protect their families and comrades now found comradeship and shelter with small bands of like minded people. All the while the death toll remained staggering.

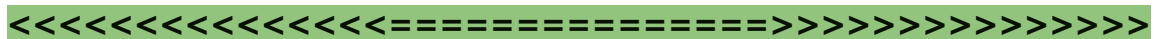
Many people fled urban centers, if they could seek smaller communities or they went off the grid entirely. As mentioned before in the blog post on [refugia](#) which are protected areas with a diversity of beneficial resources, the most important being shelter, water, and some source of food and fuel. But many of these refuges proved temporary due to the changing seasons and the severe and erratic weather and other catastrophic events, such as mega-wildfires.

Another high risk in the refugia was encounters with other human groups who were equally desperate in their drive to obtain the refuge from its current occupants. There just didn't seem to be any kind of reasonable solution to the existential threats. Even the billionaires who had planned to shelter in their bubbles were finding the limitations to their plans, and they hadn't adequately assessed the risks between the climate events and the desperation of humans who are fighting for survival.

Drastic measures were needed and decisions had to be made. That's how the **Big Sort** happened. It began because people were exhausted, not only from the violence and tyranny by mobs, but because millions were starving. Very few had access to food after the supply chains stopped. Everyone was so mentally numbed by the death and destruction they'd been living through. Even the top 1%ers saw the need for the violence and looting to stop, so they offered a plan. It made sense to have a workforce even remotely. And keeping them in designed and monitored cities away from their elite bubble retreats with no incentive to storm the citadel made plenty of sense.

Anytime during the 2020s, WW3 could easily have begun, but one silver lining of the climate chaos was that societies needed their troops to support domestic emergencies and help restore order at home, so they couldn't afford external wars. Finally, Trump's Tariff War ended, not with a bang but a whimper, with the United States left on our knees, or worse. Unfortunately, in its place there were still hundreds of horrendous regional Civil Wars worldwide because most state governments were in disrepair from all the political chaos and catastrophic storms. This absence of the military big dogs led to a wave of insurgencies throughout the world as more global organizational political powers like the United Nations became obsolete.

More and more people were displaced and on the move. This overwhelmed the few fragile support systems still in place, particularly along borders and shorelines. And of course, shorelines had their own set of troubles, such as rising sea levels, flooding, and [superstorms](#). It was just too much. Many industrial nations, including the United States set the stage for their own implosions.



## 103.7 A Recent History of Political Power and Energy Outages: UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Today, in 2030, energy outages are a normal occurrence that happen frequently and have for years now. It's an annoyance that everyone has learned to live with, and it's part of a new reality that we deserve from our past misdeeds and [pluralistic ignorance](#). It seems these power outages impact people according to their residential status. Rarely do they occur in the higher tiered complexes, and they seem to happen more outside the Pods Sectors than within them. Over the last year many guilds have acquired batteries and solar arrays to mitigate the power outage impact, to a degree. In more rural communities they rely, not only on solar, but wind and small hydro dams, where feasible. In many communities near perennial streams some form of water wheels are used, not only for energy, but also for milling grains and other crafts, such as milling wood.

Back in early 2023, after the last of the pandemic restrictions were removed, scientists started harping on what they called the Solar Maximum (SM) phase that was starting to expand and was said to peak in 2025 with serious implications for erratically knocking out the power. Everyone was already so exhausted from pandemic's urgent warnings a few years previously that hardly anyone paid attention to the warning of an SM phase, not to mention the announcement of a return to an El Nino event over the summer months of 2023, and the realization that both phenomena would persist for a few years when the chance for climate survivability was already so dire.

Climate scientists focus on modeling predictions based on past climate trends, and a number of them forecast that 2023-2025 would increasingly bring more record breaking



events. Their interpretation of their graphs of accelerating temperatures, sea levels, and percentages of melting ice led some of them to predict human extinction in 2050 or even 2040. But few factored into the existing trends the additional weight on model from an SM phase plus an El Nino. Certainly few factored into their predictions even one human caused [Black Sky Event](#). This turned out to be an epic mistake. No one was prepared for this outcome. Especially when it happened in concert with the second insurrection in January 2025. Together these factors meant game over to the previous life we knew.

Climate scientists, like most scientists, tend to work on one set of data they collect and don't bring multiple sets together for analysis because of the difficulties of weighing various factors and various sampling variables. Scientists are biased toward preferring clean data sets that they consider reliable and this is paramount over considering a multivariate analysis that could be subject to countless biases and limitations. That is how most scientists are taught to think: pluralistic ignorance.

Regardless of the inherent limitations of the scientific process to identify and combine new factors, most people had already begun to doubt science. Beginning in the Trump era, being anti-science and anti-intellectual became something of a populist war cry. So many ignored the warnings, even those on network news. Besides, everyone soon got distracted by the end of the NBA season finals, or release of the season's new films, or the SuperBowl or the holidays or the season finale of some virtual reality show.

What the Atmospheric Scientists failed to grasp when they screamed their "[the Sky is Falling](#)" alerts, is that human decision making, even during the climate melt down, would fail to adapt to the appropriate level of crisis. Physical scientists had no idea how to factor human decision making into any predictive model related to the Climate Crisis. But as extreme weather events began to roll out during the winter of 2022 and the spring and summer of 2023, even as humans became unable to adjust to the rising temperatures and the increasing number of power outages, rolling brownouts, [superstorms](#), and rising flood waters worldwide, the primary response by humans remained entropy. Most humans actually learned to embrace more distractions to offset any bad news.



*"A few of us are going out after work to pretend it's not the end of the world, if you want to join us."*

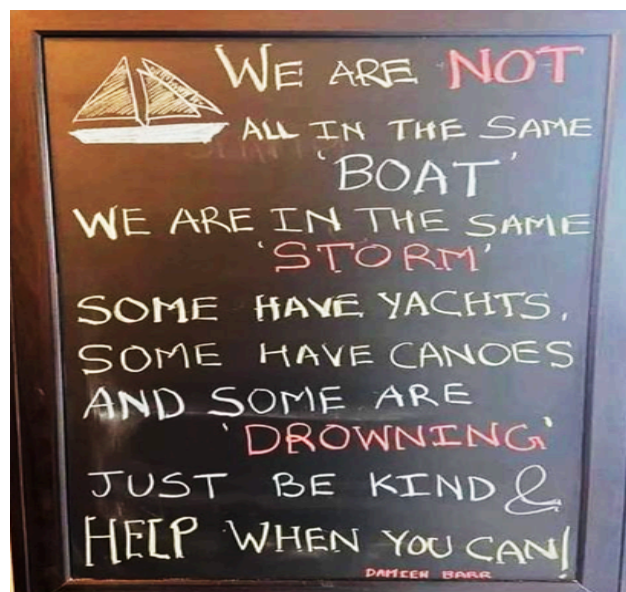
We continued to allow ourselves to be distracted, citing rising numbers of mental health issues, urgently needing to lower our stress, and to maintain our artificial state of distraction with the added use of alcohol and drugs. First they decriminalized, then legalized [Cannabis](#), and then began the same with [Psilocybin](#) was legalized in much of the U.S. In time there was really no way to know how many people were high during most of their waking hours, or what they were taking, so long as they stayed away from cops and didn't get checked. But it was clear, from its medicinal properties to relieve pain and mental health issues, it was never going away again.

Perhaps the most tantalizing new distraction was [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) which rose to popularity worldwide in 2023. While [leading experts in AI](#) warned that it needed to be regulated and presented as an existential threat to society, these warnings went unheeded. It quickly swept through society, infecting virtually all technology and communication systems. It was like [Star Trek - The Trouble with Tribbles](#) on steroids.



Several years before then, the election of President Trump, and soon thereafter the break out of the COVID-19 pandemic, had already led to the erosion of much of what remained of the public trust in scientists and health officials, which in turn was replaced with mistrust and divisiveness at a scale not seen in the United States, since the Civil War. And with **AI** there were soon food reasons to question every news statement that didn't mesh with a popular perspective.

There really was no place to turn, and humans were facing the strong likelihood of extinction. Climate scientists didn't win a victory lap of gloating. Like everyone else, they were facing the same hard choices everyone else faced, whether to essentially run in the streets with their hair on fire (some literally did this), or hunker down, bug out, or do whatever their resource base allowed them and their families.



With street violence out of control throughout the United States and many state-level societies shut down due to infrastructural players and the rise of gangster-type terrorism, the great majority desperately grabbed the lifelines provided by the [megarich](#) and opted into the human experiment which would become known as the [Big Sort](#).

## AI and our Crumbling Infrastructure

Let's be honest, even without moral depravity and other societal ills, we were already headed for a major calamity due to our failure to maintain our infrastructure, both the physical side, including bridges, roads, railways, public access to water and energy, but also technology and communications. By the 2020s, many Americans, including most younger people, viewed much of their role in society by their interactions on social media.

A new kind of cybercrime surfaced in 2024: **AI Identity Theft**. For some time it had been possible to hack institutions' and individuals' accounts, and take their money, power, and image, but with AI it became difficult to confirm identities. By the mid-2020s there were already multiple forms of identity needed to log on to many accounts, but in a short while even secure accounts could be hacked. But that was only the beginning of the trouble.

During the 2024 Presidential election hackers replaced several political candidate's identities entirely with false web presences and false narratives. As soon as the fake was identified and taken down another went up so that it was a chronic problem for most politicians and public officials. [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\)](#) had arrived and was widely accessible so now anyone could get into the game of false web presences. It quickly crushed the idea of having any secure information technology or even what was real or not.

Our failure to maintain our infrastructure was a significant factor in the horrendous collapse of the United States. In 2021 President Joe Biden worked with Congress to pass the historic [Infrastructure and Jobs Act H.R. 3684](#) intent on doing massive repairs and green technology retrofits in our energy and transportation sectors. But at every turn the Republicans blocked progress.

All infrastructural systems need periodic maintenance and updating. When the storm surges and superstorms became unrelenting, we were caught with an older, failing energy grid in disrepair and an incomplete new one, leaving us functioning nowhere near capacity. The same was true for much of transportation with partial bridge replacements and other critical transportation hubs and connectors leaving the entire transportation network without any backup or alternate solutions to keep the supply chain and other aspects of transportation moving. Without a central functioning government, most states and major urban areas were not resilient enough to secure and protect their homes and businesses.

Some smaller communities fared better but no longer connected to a larger communication or transportation grid.

Then during 2023, the post-pandemic de-structured" year **AI** was unleashed to the masses through ChatPT and other accessible programs, without any legal restrictions or guidelines in a highly publicized rollout. Within a matter of months, it was institutionalized and entrenched in virtually all modes of communication and file creation software. Suddenly all our infrastructure was vulnerable to cyberattacks both because of **AI** infiltration, and because of a lack of cybersecurity. Ultimately **AI** contributed to the take down of the grid along with dirty bombs set by the disruptors in 2025. It took a few years to clean the technology so that it was truly functional again, but it was never whole again.

In the middle of this global meltdown, the widespread release of [AI](#) apps to the public essentially became a new third existential threat; like the climate and our societal ills weren't enough. Once it was readily available through chat apps, it spread like wildfire faster than the pandemic. With all the hacks and cyberattacks, suddenly no one knew what was and wasn't real, or whether any of the news or legal hearings were legitimate due to faulty citations of fictional documents. It became unclear whether anything whatsoever viewed online was real, or whether anything we thought we knew about public figures or institutions was even accurate. It was like the Dr. Seuss book, the [Sneetches and Other Stories](#):

*"...until neither the Plain nor the Star-Bellies knew whether this one was that one... or that one was this one...or which one was what one... or what one was who"*

The final blow might have been when Donald J. Trump was pardoned in the summer of 2025 due to the whole **AI** calamity when we suffered system-wide compromised state and federal judicial and police databases due to a targeted **AI** hacking program. After that, all bets were off. Suddenly no one knew what was real or accurate, or even who masterminded the hack. But it all synced perfectly with Trump's court dates. Well played, plutocrats.

As the legal system crumbled, the few remaining police, TSA, private security, and prison guards not commandeered by the [megarich](#) stopped coming to work. Prisons were, one by one, opened and all inmates released because there were no guards and besides, their records had been hacked and **AI** modified as well.

Stores, businesses, and homes were looted, ransacked, and burned during the riots. Mass transportation and all forms of transportation bigger than bikes came to a screeching halt. The people in the streets were likely people to avoid. It was a war zone with no stated goal, except basic survival. Unfortunately, our [Overshoot Climate](#) was putting that into doubt.

The billionaires were already dabbling at controlling messaging by buying up social media platforms. [Some](#) saw **AI** for what it was, more corporate control by the same billionaires, trying to keep people distracted. But not even those who saw it, failed to grasp how quickly it would integrate into every aspect of our society and become an [existential threat](#) to our survival. There was no removing it now.

Had we put just a fraction of our defense budget into maintaining and updating our infrastructure, and retooling our bureaucracy through periodic revolutions, as Jefferson suggested, we would have been a whole lot safer and more stable over the centuries. But that's water under the bridge now. Instead, we kept kicking the can down the road, talking about the climate crisis abstractly, instead of acknowledging that it was our inevitable Achilles Heel.

Another accelerant in the collapse of state-level society was the loss of trust in public officials or anyone involved with law enforcement or the legal system. It had been coming for some time, in part because of our chronic societal ills related to injustice. Some governmental agencies hadn't been truly overhauled since WW2. Most institutions had become bogged down in bureaucracy. Much of what passed as governance had been corrupted by the **plutocrats**.

## **Plutocracy and Manufactured Distractions:**

Over several decades, politicians handed over to the [megarich](#) a bigger slice of the profits from production and let them pay less taxes than the working class who continued to be squeezed tighter. In turn pet politicians stayed in office and enjoyed the well-connected high life of Washington politics. Plutocrats had already bought most of Congress and many federal and local justices. The [police have a long tradition](#) of siding with political power and influential interests, so their mission remained the same in the new regime. The transition to the new order of things, with the plutocrats governing the federal government went smoothly. Working people felt out of options.

When the [megarich](#) partnered with the **Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)** they recognized that phones were essential to their grand scheme. Phones provided a lifeline in order to ensure their secure bubbles. and to their goal rebuild some semblance of a stable functioning society. It was critical for any kind of future workforce, because masses would not and could not work or function without universal access to phones.

I think we all know more elite services were reserved for pods and bubble people who could afford it. Although it is better defined today, this pattern of the rich getting more has always been the case.



*"Semper pauper eris, si pauper es, Aemiliane; dantur opes nullis nunc nisi divitibus. You will always be poor, Aemilianus, if you are poor; nowadays wealth comes to no one but the rich" ([Martial](#)).*

During the Pre-Collapse Capitalistic State, there were always more premium services and products to be had for a price. Right before the Collapse, the U.S. had [40% of the world's millionaires](#), double the number of the next three countries, China, India, and the U.K. combined, and over [30% of billionaires](#). Perhaps one of the few good things that we might consider coming out of the Great Collapse was the American Debt Jubilee which was a big incentive for the Big Sort by forgiving all debt prior to the FEDS, and changing the money system over to electronic credit (EC).

Through the pandemic, corporations and the megarich got an even bigger piece of the money pie by [clogging up the supply chain](#), increasing consumer demand, and failing to pay living wages so that workers were hung out to dry. This led to severe economic instability for middle class working families and soaring prices for basic needs including food and housing. The Democrats in Congress got through a couple of bailout bills for people, but the Republicans did what they could to divert those funds through banksters or even claw back some of the funds after the fact. During the first two years of the pandemic, the [world's ten richest men](#) more than doubled their fortunes while the remaining 99% saw a loss of income and an additional 160 million people were forced into poverty.

Many people moved their workplaces to the computer screen on Zoom and other conferencing tools and phones became an essential part of the game in 2020 for everyone. We were, for the most part, at home unless we had so-called "essential jobs requiring our physical presence. Either way we were placated and distracted with social media streams, so that few grasped what was happening or what we were doing to the earth, until it was way too late and we had entered what ecologists call a [Climate Overshoot](#).

All this violent human drama was playing out as a backdrop while the climate became increasingly unpredictable. No longer was anyone minding that store. The energy grid continued to work sporadically, as the plutocrats tried to keep the lights on to protect their own fortunes and prevent people from storming the gates of their bubble retreats. In retrospect, this could be viewed as part of the transition to a publicly recognized plutocracy.

**Plutocrats** made sure everyone knew they had secured the energy grid in the urban sectors. They hired a new army of repairmen with security guards to help keep the network functioning. But it was still hit and miss with the rioting going on. With no one with any authority to govern, autocrats now had the reigns of both the energy sector and deployment of the military and police, and they were now calling the shots, officially now.

People began to set up community meetings and attempted to restart democracy from the grassroots level as it was intended. These instances were rare at first, and more successful in more rural areas and on a small scale. Many start up local governments failed almost immediately due to the lawlessness that still existed in much of the country, and the culture war differences that some still held close.

The loss of state-level society in the United States could have been a more organic, [Velvet Revolution](#), but their challenges were insurmountable. There was too much violence because of the proliferation of weapons and the propensity for violence by many Americans. Add to that the large number of corrupt officials, greedy banksters, the dramatic reduction in police and other emergency, and health professionals, plus the sudden release of thousands of violent prisoners nationwide back onto already chaotic streets during the crisis because of the **AI** takedown of information technology and the Justice system.

Only after several years of relentless extreme weather events did most people finally make the connection between the climate crisis and displaced people. Back in the early 2020s, people who still had homes and jobs treated migrants, whether from the U.S. or foreign-born as losers, as an undesirable burden on their quality of life. But after the massive **Overshoot Crisis** with the massive waves of violent disruptions, few could avoid displacement or becoming mobile, at least in the short term. Everyone knew folks who had shared their former quality of life and yet had been displaced and forced into a mobile way of life. [People on the move](#), either homeless, displaced, or by choice, grew more than ever before.

Once the bottom finally fell out in 2025 when there was no civil order to be found, people were forced to become more mobile to obtain resources. Tens of thousands of people were suddenly fully mobile. Former borders were nearly impossible to protect. Massive numbers were on the move, and they crushed the infrastructures of many urban and suburban communities. Without homes or any place to anchor them, many were left without any allegiance to anything beyond themselves. With only a fraction of the emergency support staff remaining that could keep any trace of civil order, the energy grid was crippled, and clean water became scarce.

Everyone who still had family tended to them and held them tight. Some extended their care and solidarity to their neighbors and those in need in their communities. Finally, people began reconnecting community by community over the land, rebuilding local roads and bridges, and establishing coops for food and supplies, and guilds for trades and crafts. Communities gained access to localized grids by obtaining mega-storage batteries and enlisting local electricians and farmers to help keep the lines open for their neighbors in the

suburbs and more broadly rural areas. This was an early sign that the plutocrats were going to release these parts of the country to self-governing rule and focus on the cores and their networks. In a sense this was the beginning of the Presort.

## Mindful Intersectionality vs. the Presort:

One upside of this involuntary catastrophic human experiment was that people finally began to grasp the **intersectionality** of the problem of survival, how we are all inevitably interconnected and dependent upon each other and, directly or indirectly with all other earth life forms in a very fundamental and organic way.

With the empathy of mindful **intersectionality**, there became a time when we all felt displaced from our former selves and the way we thought the world operated. With the rate of change of everything accelerating beyond our capacity to reverse it, we were simply struggling to grasp the situation enough to even attempt a "go with the flow" strategy and survive. So by thinking about the situation as a series of intersections between elements we put it back in scope at a ,

Dealing with the loss of our old way of life was a grieving process with the stages needed to get through to achieve acceptance. This was difficult when all the while our society and climate were still both imploding. It wasn't like we hadn't been warned about the climate crisis, we knew that and how the oil industry ignored it in the 1960s, and 70s, and 80s, for over 40 years before they were exposed. But most people stayed stuck in denial for as long as their resources allowed, and an end to any sense of normalcy finally arrived. There was a lot to process. Virtually everyone was dealing with [cognitive dissonance](#).

In terms of [Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid](#), it was now simply a question of survival for everyone still alive by covering security and basic needs. Enter the long game players of the **Great Game**.



While people were distracted by political and economic instability, and dire shortages of food, fuel, housing and all other essentials, more extreme climate disruptions loomed large on the horizon. People added new terms to their lexicon, such as [superstorm](#), [megastorm](#), [firestorm](#), [megafire](#), [ghost lake](#), [ghost forest](#), [zombie forest](#), [atmospheric river](#), [polar vortex](#), and [extra-tropical cyclone](#). and they worried of a [climate apocalypse](#).

At the very same time, all the mass shootings were increasing until they were a daily event all over the country. There were over [600 mass shootings](#) in 2023. By 2024 it was two per day. Schools, churches, and mosques were targeted, and still we looked away, with one political party refusing to help get assault weapons off the street.

In the final analysis, some would say COVID-19 was a key trigger, because it directly caused a million deaths in the U.S. alone, and it turned countless lives upside down. Getting hit with a pandemic while Donald Trump was president was just plain bad luck. He played both sides of the pandemic claiming the cure but also fanning the flames of resistance against masks, social distancing, and the vaccines. We also learned there were significant increases in violence and [deaths](#) during lockdown because many violent acts happened behind closed doors. Some MAGAs even appreciated Trump's disrespect and objectification of women instead of regarding them as equals.

Perhaps we should point to the 2016 election of Donald Trump as another key trigger because in 2020 he got his base riled up, refused to admit defeat, and prompted our country's first insurrection. The more he broke the law, the more there were investigations, and court cases and the more he riled up his base. He was running for president while under house arrest and riots broke out all over the U.S. at the same time, reducing any chance police forces would be able to stop it. By the time the 2024 election came around, there was sporadic rioting in half a dozen cities and isolated incidents daily nationwide. But still people went to the polls and voted, and he lost again. Our double-down bad luck was how Trump's second insurrection dovetailed with so many major climate **tipping points** and thereby triggered what I'm calling the **Existential Trifecta**.

**REDUCE ALL THE THREATS TO THREE. WHICH THREE? STATE, WHAT ELSE PATRIARCHY,**

After Trump, the federal government was never fully stable again. We began to see moral and civil decay through government at every level. Trump made several key appointments to the United States Supreme Court (SCOTUS) and thus achieved something Congress, in its ineptitude, could not. Instead of bringing the government to a screeching halt as Congress often did, SCOTUS caused chaos with more authoritative finality by a series of rulings that collectively stripped Americans of many of our civil rights, allowing only one in the end, the right to own guns.

In a way Donald Trump was a lot like the COVID-19 pandemic, both lingered around and threatening a comeback. But neither Trump or the pandemic caused all the violence and cost us billions of lives worldwide and led us to a [societal collapse](#). Both were major catalysts and symptoms, for sure, and at the very least, they were major distractions. But it was a million different things all interconnected through the Web of Life that together led

to the co-extinctions, the collapse of existing human societies, the catastrophic disruptions of the climate and life as we know it on Earth.

**TRANSITION PARAGRAPH:** Drastic measures were needed, and decisions had to be made. That's how the Big Sort happened. It began because, not only were people exhausted of the violence and tyranny, but they were starving. Very few had reliable access to food after the supply chains stopped. We needed a common cause, bigger than ourselves, to rebuild our bonds and heal our pain. Thankfully the great majority of us found it through the fog of the collapse by simply helping each other, neighbor to neighbor. It didn't take but an instant for us to realize we all wanted to stop the fighting and start living again by helping to rebuild the country, community by community.

It was soon evident that while people in the construction trades could start to rebuild it would take some degree of capital to obtain supplies and other resources, to give people reboot funding. A select few of the remaining **megarich** conferred with remaining political leaders and they decided to finance the reestablishment of **Protective Orderly Districts or PODs** throughout the former U.S. The remaining police and politicians were paid off big time. The **megarich cabal** took control under the moniker of **Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)**.

They quickly suspended elections, so in the end, the **Great Game** became a game of musical chairs. A select number of those in positions of authority remained in political power. Anyone who resisted their authority, regardless of previous rank, was either arrested and/or disappeared. In essence, the **Big Sort** had begun.

A truce had been called, but even after the major rebellion period was over, the police stayed in place, for better and worse. At first, most people appreciated the presence of police and authority figures who represented an end to the chaos, because people were collectively suffering from PTSD and xenophobia (fear of strangers) from all the violence and turmoil. But before long, once again police were picking winners and losers, and siding with those in political power over everyone else. And in short order the police fell back into the long tradition in the U.S., no one policed the police, and eventually they became, once again, out of hand.

Everyone was feeling triggered by every stray sound or sight. People were collectively a basket case, and most willingly let themselves be herded to shelter and safety, even if it was by the megarich. Perhaps that was predestined all along.

*"The Sneetches got really quite smart on that day,  
The day they decided that Sneetches are Sneetches  
And no kind of Sneetch is the best on the beaches.  
That day, all the Sneetches forgot about stars  
And whether they had one, or not, upon thars."*

While [neoconservatives](#) and [neoliberals](#) persisted in playing their version of the [Great Game](#), average Americans tried to sort of a plan of action that allowed them to survive the rioting, looting and mass shootings. The climate of the earth could no longer tolerate our destructive and wasteful human games, and neither could we. As a species, we were exhausted, mentally and physically, with only one plan hatched that pointed to any kind of viable survival. Thus, the **Big Sort** began.





## Blog 2030-104: The Big Sort **STILL UNDER CONSTRUCTION**

The **Big Sort** was not only economic, but social, and ideational, and symbolic, and most definitely spatial. Over a period of six months, the people residing in the territory we historically called the “Lower 48” of the United States of America were sorted regionally into localities which had sufficient in-place security staffing and available local resources (water, shelter, buildable space) for incorporating into [Pod complexes](#). Within these locales people were sorted according to their skill sets, abilities, proclivities, needs and wants. To a degree, there was a critical choice to be made by all adults as to what type of lifestyle they were willing to pursue moving forward. In a sense people had a big say in where they landed. In other ways, not so much because the **Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)** had their thumb on the scales.

### Move to top of The Big Sort

While a select and lucky few found refuge in natural or created refugia, most Americans had to rough it out by any means possible. Survivors were all traumatized to a degree, having witnessed and lived through a nonstop series of nightmares and horrendous scenes that would be housed somewhere in their memories forever. But some who suffered and endured the most and the worst are now some of our heartiest of our people. They are seasoned and resilient and props to everyone for what we’ve collectively endured.

So they sorted themselves out in cadres of like-minded people with skill sets or other values that mattered to each member of the group, whether it was a Guild, or Fellowship, or some other kind of association. In smaller population areas this association might include everyone in the community center and the surrounding area, or it could be a group living among a larger population outside of the pods. As it happened these new Guild sectors became essentially anthropogenic refugia, meaning they created communities that were adapted to the prevailing environmental factors depending on geography and available natural resources.

The megastorms continued to wreak havoc along coasts and the Great Lakes region, and the heat waves were devastating the southern part of the continent for several years. People in the far west, the subarctic, and the east still dealt with the threat of wildfires, although much of the forested lands had been burned off over the last decade that there was less threat near many of the new residential pod areas. This irony was not lost on the architects.

Those who choose to live inside the FEDS security beltway had the option of living in one of the new pod sectors erected in a number of the newly rebuilt urban areas, unless they had sufficient resources to live elsewhere, such as a piece of property with a title, and they were lucky enough not to be in the footprint of a pod sector construction zone, at which case their proprietor would be condemned. In that contingency they were often provided a choice of pods to move into, with certain constraints based on complicated and opaque algorithms related to their demographics, skill sets and resources.

In the end, most people got some say in where they landed. Their decision-making was based on a needs analysis of their own individual or immediate family and what locations they could obtain given their specific set of needs, skills, and resources. Some with careers or influence in high demand were allowed some aspirational strategizing and even design of their new living/work spaces. Most agreed that the new pod sectors provided for a higher order of needs and security than they could have without the pod plan.

## Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)

The **Federal Economic Development Services (FEDS)** were the brainchild of the megarich, or oligarchs, in consultation with the surviving key political and military members of the [Great Game](#). They quickly took control of the remaining police and military and suspended elections, so in the end, the **Great Game** became a game of musical chairs. A select number of those in positions of authority remain in political power to this day. Anyone who resisted their authority, regardless of previous rank, was either arrested and/or disappeared. In essence, the **Big Sort** had begun

The billionaires, on the other hand, moved into large compounds and took their families, staff and anyone else they wanted with them. I hope they like their bubbles. Wow, little did we know how many billionaires were among us until the big sort happened? They were living in suburbia alongside us, squirreling away funds in gold bars and other resources off the books. They weren't even listed because before then the focus was on the so-called *influencers* who were in the news all the time back then, like the Gates and Musks, and the Walton heirs. Hey, maybe George and Lucy were some of those secret "billionaires" (giggling), yeah right. What did happen to them?

Glad I went for a federally secured pod instead of one of those self-secured [pods](#), Annie thinks. Most of those setups ended up bringing the street conflicts indoors, turning on each other. What a hell that must have been. Well, I don't have the bandwidth to worry

about how some folks' extremism led to their own demise, and their part in the panic and fear and the street violence that drove us to be driven by fear.

But I do feel for those who got dragged along when the sort was underway. I think lots of folks got stuck for a while in those quonset huts just outside the new footprints for the pod sectors, or in those tent cities set up in what remained of the big airports near urban centers that shut down during the violence when commercial airlines ceased operations or when the government collapsed. I think a lot of the construction tradespeople they relied on to build the pods didn't get a chance to even live in one. And those camps soon had their own dynamics and self governance, for better and worse.

A select few of the remaining number of megarich and regional political leaders conferred and strategically decided to finance the reestablishment of order and civility sectors through the former U.S. The remaining police and politicians were paid off big time. The megarich cabal who took control behind the scenes with their massive assets became known as the **Federal Economic Development Services**, or the (FEDS).

Back during the hellish six months of the [Big Sort](#) when we scrambled to get classified as Podders, that whole billionaire/government takeover was essentially a squeeze play. We had to surrender our land holdings to the FEDS, as part of the deal, just to become eligible to get classified and in exchange they provided us a pod residence with a workspace. What a joke, what a tragic joke. They pushed down homes and created these pods using our confiscated property and other resources. If people weren't physically in their homes, their property was up for grabs. And construction workers and the trades were forced to step up because they were so desperate to save their families from the street fighting and fascist cops that they fled to the safe environment of pod-construction.

FEDS OFF LIMIT AREA: So far the FEDS are staying out of recreational drugs, home remedies and most medications, with the exception of a very few such as for heart disease, diabetes and a few over the counter pain meds. For now prescription medicine is more of a cottage industry with a number of [apothecaries](#) spread throughout various regions of the country. The rest is dependent on surviving pharmacists and scientists who are providing support for people in terms of information and FEDtube, blog, and online docs for individuals to self-medicate.

## Security Threat Levels:

Levels are determined according to the degree they impact vital resources or locations ranked according to importance by the FEDS.

Level 1 FEDS lock down after a small army of biker raiders pillaged their way through their region

FEDStube

At the end of the day, I think most people ended up somewhere that provided them the ability to pick themselves up, to come out of hiding, and to begin again. And in most cases there is a degree of support to help them resume their lives, as we collectively have begun the process of rebuilding our sense of community, something most of us lost along the way without realizing it. This isn't the best of times, or the worst. I'm sure we all hope the absolute worst is in the rear view mirror.

The great majority of people resolved to end the squabbling over trifling matters, in many proclamations and covenants in many different settings throughout the country. I'm sure we're all still struggling, but we've gone a long way at learning how to accept our differences, and how to live together, for the [common good](#). If not that, then what is there left for us?

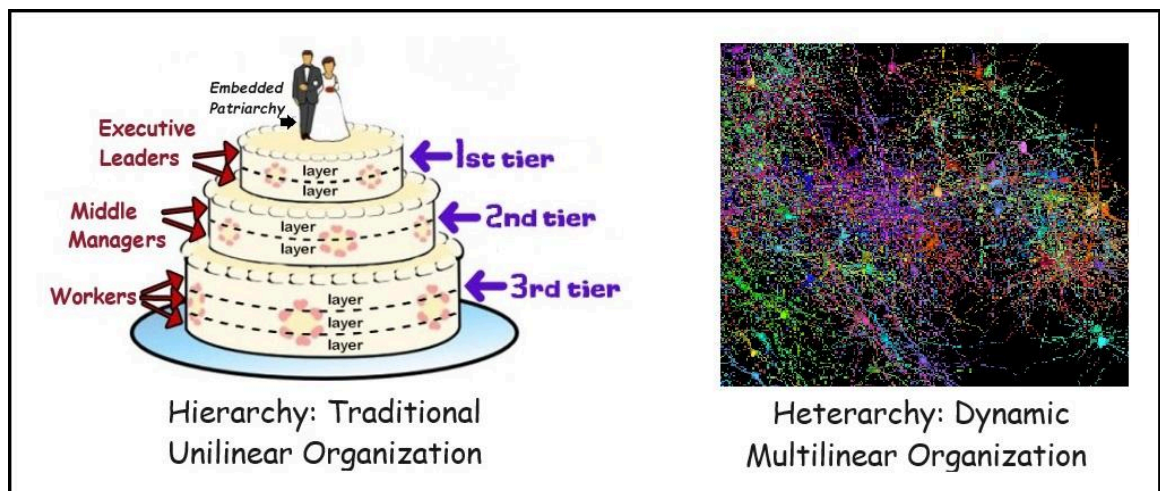
## Hierarchies vs. Heterarchies

In a sense The **Big Sort** relied upon two co-equal fundamental principles of economic and social organization, **hierarchy** and **heterarchy**. [Hierarchies](#) are a better known, linear top/down structure, typical of ranked organizational models with more traditional forms of leaders and bosses. [Heterarchies](#) are more dynamic multilinear

networks where individuals or small groups create and maintain connections according to their needs and those of their community.

**Hierarchies** are the basis of larger social organizations such as chieftainships, monarchies, corporations, and the more bureaucratic sectors of state-level societies (e.g. judicial, healthcare and education). The **Pod Sector**, where people like myself landed in the **Big Sort**, were initially based on hierarchy thinking and actions. We accepted these terms because a secure organizational structure was our top priority at the time, and still is, to a large degree. This is the type of broad organizational model that everyone landing in the **Pod Sector** found waiting for them. Everyone else landed in **heterarchies**.

**Heterarchy** merits further consideration because it's a less well-known organizational process. It is based on **intersectionality** with no permanent leaders. **Heterarchies** tend to be more organic, dynamic, and flexible with many **intersections** and access points, and no one imposing a linear or centralized order or leadership roles. Structurally hierarchy and heterarchy organizational models are as different as a **traditional tiered wedding cake** with it's linear, layered structure, and the **mapped neurons in a human brain** with an infinite range of potential networking.



**Heterarchical** networks are dynamic, and are built and maintained according to individual needs. Such networks, by nature, can be much more fluid and interactive than in a more linear authoritative **hierarchical** model. While rarely recognized, **Heterarchy** is in

play at the grassroots of many social settings, such as neighbors and community members engaged in helping each other, even in hierarchical organizations.

During chaotic periods, such as the **Great Collapse** when state-level societies had broken down, **heterarchy** serves as an integral part of the safety net for many people struggling to survive. In a sense, **heterarchy** is **grassroots organizing**, people helping each other, not only getting through a time of crisis, but it's in play in any sustainable community. Candidly, it's in play in the Pod Sector as well, with any bartering or social organizing that might help people to network and connect. It has an added quality, in these times, of being leaderless and non-linear in form, which can be problematic for state-level actors, such as the **FEDS**, to monitor, control, or regulate **intersections** that may essentially be off their monitoring grid. This makes it extremely adaptive for many types of collective engagement. Because it is so dynamic, it is especially ideal for those trying to stay under the radar when police attempt to monitor and control groups of people.

As you may recall, the **FEDS** began the **Big Sort** by selecting folks who met certain qualifying criteria for the **hierarchical** Pod Sectors. Everyone else self-sorted themselves into **heterarchical** guilds, leagues, and independent communities. Those who didn't choose one of these two options were subjected to whatever the streets or the wildlands dealt them. For example, I've heard of old wrecking yards at the periphery where people have created loose-knit communities called "car camps." If any readers know anything about them, or have any images to share, please contact me and I'll share on a later blog.

## Pods, Guilds and All the Rest

**Add an "why the Wildlands?" section in this blog group**

Houses, shops, and any structures that had managed to survive what the [superstorms](#) threw at them, and were not destroyed by disruptors or rioters and looters, became the natural centers for people in the Guilds. These surviving neighborhood strongholds were core to the survival of many people during all the violence. Many became "safe houses" or "urban refugees" or refugia after the Collapse. They were often considered off limits to the gangs and disruptors because they were defended by the resistance, who took the form of Antifa, when needed.



## Pods:

Occupation within a pod complex comes with the promise of continuing forward with relevant research for these new times, and with opportunities for intellectual exchanges and thoughtful collaborations and thoughtful discussions. In reality many people stick to themselves. But some of her pod complex neighbors spend a lot of time in the common areas, and the grounds, while others that are rarely ever seen. I understand this is even more so in pod complexes with families.

For example, I specifically applied for a pod complex where scientists working on lab projects that don't require highly specialized equipment which would also include added layers of security and surveillance that she doesn't want any part of. Many of the pods are structured around professions and other special interests, such as family vs. singles pods, or by religion or ethnic origin, for example. During the Big Sort application process, people self-sorted according to their priorities. For example, Annie went with a science lab complex with a certain composition and set of fields that complimented her research and suited her lifestyle.

But many don't socialize like they did before the Collapse. Some stay apart because they are still triggered from PTSD for all the stranger-danger period they lived through. Some science-types are so tied to their research that they were almost pre-adapted to pod life. Others not so much. Initial climate surveys from pod sector residents indicate that people feel safe in their complexes, away from most people, but most are lonely for more human companionship. Annie is not only alone, but feeling a bit trapped by this [Catch 22](#).

## Guilds:

During the **Big Sort** most of these newly formed or reformed resistance groups merged into **Guilds** or **Fellowships** that made up the nationwide alliance of locally governed sodality within the Freedom League. Each of these respective groups created their own governing rules collectively or they followed directions from political or spiritual leaders. There were suddenly 1000s of these new social experiments. While many were now well established with set rules and policies others were still quite fluid.

e's the captain of this brigade of crafters, artisans, and practical engineers, as they are now called, folks that were trained to build or repair one thing, but now can fix almost anything. They are a hot commodity in any Free Cell, no matter what their politics or history.

There are other of these Free Cells that are more upscale professions like medicine or law, or even celebrity musicians, singers, or performers that have their cells. They were developed haphazardly right when the street fighting started and people had to rely on the young and fit to gather food and resources for everyone.

Some Cells are political, some are decidedly not. If Andy's cell swings either way in politics, it's middle/left, with a few exceptions like his buddy Mike. But it really much more about staying safe while they get to pursue their various side hustles. Part of their role within the cell is service, contributing a resource, like a skill or serving a need. It was what it was at first, but over about a year people sorted into viable cells, sometimes with themes, but mostly that could live with. It is the basis of Consensus Decision Making, which is a driving governing force in a number of the live cells. The same goes for the Guilds, and for that matter, the Pods, although they reliably try to keep pods at roughly the same income bracket/credit score/track record.

There are these Free Cells of people with Safe Stations all over the country now in virtually every city. It's a leftover from the Resistance during the Collapse, but it's also something people are unwilling to give up or forget. It's part of the identity of those living outside of the pods, and a result of their skepticism of central government control. . It's where everyone like Andy and all his cadres have to go to be safe at night. It's not just when the cops are lurking, but then that's pretty much all the time now. These places are everywhere, thankfully. Once in a while the cops find one and make an example, but most of the time they leave them alone because the people in these cells are really running the economy at the ground level, and everyone knows it.

Technically Guilds and similar associations are not part of the plutocratic federal government, however, so long as they had establish rules of conduct and worked well with others their members are eligible for a "ticket" to work in urban Pod Sectors and perhaps even for the elite pods, although most of them had private consulting firms or hired their own security and delivery staff.

People identify and associate within their own spheres of influence, which often has a spatial component for practical reasons. But more importantly, they share common interests or needs.

Public education is being rethought today. Younger children are, for the most part, home schooled when possible, until they are older, both for safety reasons, and because parents are fairly comfortable with the generic lower grade standard American curriculum. All children have to do is pass a grade appropriate standard test for their grade and they get credit. If they blow it they try again.

In the higher grades, it is more difficult for average Americans to teach so the surviving trained education and volunteers are helping older youths to transition to public high school with the hope that soon middle schools will return as well. Most adults in their communities are encouraged to pitch in and help students learn, to stop by common study places and encourage them. Also in the [Freedom League](#), various guilds and trade unions are more than willing to apprentice young people at entry levels into the trades. The model is more holistic, comprehensive, and community based, much more in line with America's original promise when the public school system was initially established by setting aside [Section 16 for every township](#) for a public school in the [Land Ordinance of 1785](#). Education, like the postal service, is something people are quickly realizing they need to come together and support.

## Postal Service and a Free Press

Thankfully, the **FEDS** didn't interfere when the [Freedom League \(FL\)](#) took on rebuilding the postal, delivery services, and communication services, let alone building many community-based water features including mills. so far they've left alone the **Freedom League's** current push to stand up free presses again in every region within America. Like CB radios, many of their **FL** radio stations are linked through radio waves sent through towers, just as they were a hundred years ago, and just as mobile phones now use cell phone towers. But this time, post **Great Collapse**, while those of us sequestered in the **Pod Sectors** are subject to more **FEDS** oversight, for security reasons, we are told, those living outside the pods are starting to develop an infrastructure freer from the shackles of corporate overreach that had contributed to society's downfall. All Americans agree that *a free press and a public postal service are fundamental to any civilization, and Americans also believe in access to free public education. Now that will mean through college, trade school, or some advanced training leading to a profession or craft. Looking back people realize how a lack of education, and specifically critical thinking skills and a lack of knowledge about academic scholarship and the scientific method led to the breakdown of society.*

Within the police state, the standard rules for police conduct were suspended and those on the streets identified by police as violent offenders could be swept up and disappeared, perhaps to a mental health institution. If they were a family member you could advocate for them, if you knew about the details of their abduction, but it is a new legal system, and it was fraught with problems. Most people inside or outside of Pod Sectors generally avoid the police whenever possible.

Guilds are roughly based on unions, but somewhat more like granges in political decision making, and without the baggage of the big unions with their corporate bureaucracies, and their history of corrupt leaders.

Guilds were local and based on Democratic Sodalities that found a common understanding of the skills and needs of the group. To avoid any surveillance from the FEDS, they generally refrained from any kind of fixed leadership or central governance, and relied upon loyalty and service to the Guild, each as they can give. Those who were lucky enough to still have locations on the map organized around their homes and shops to build a sort of second underground railroad, to help shelter or transport their members in harm's way by the FEDS or their ground troops, the cops.

Only after tens of millions of Americans had died from violence and civil unrest, did people start taking control of their own destinies free of the complexities of Capitalism and the [Great Game](#). Only then did people reclaim primary responsibility for their neighborhoods, and begin to rebuild their communities through distributions of resources based on [Craft Guilds](#) and community-based business cooperatives. Tradespeople and Craftspeople organized their guilds according to skills and expertise, all unified in the Freedom League.

Young people like Simone the crafter would get a new start to make a living and become a respected member of her community. Large swaths of urban areas were left uninhabitable with no infrastructure or safe means of accessing basic resources. These areas provided opportunities for the new communities outside the pod sectors.

Remarkably, there were some buildings, both homes and businesses, that managed to survive the civil war. They were quickly made into community hubs or centers, and

neighborhoods sprung back to life. People left with nothing were finding skills they didn't know they had, and they made homes in the most creative and innovative ways.

Everyone knew the best plan of action was to avoid dealing with the cops, if possible. This was true for all sectors and territories, but perhaps more so in the **Pod Sectors** where there was less chance of evading the authorities once they targeted you. Of course, those in their own pod sectors were safer than any other zone except for the most exclusive pods and bubble zones (as they were called in Freedom League Zone and by many of the Podheads). But the **Freedom League** members were right where they wanted to be.

Prior to the **Big Sort**, when people were dealing with the chaos and the superstorms, it was better not to be too stationary. The police state, composed of remaining local police, state troopers, national guard, and military, were battling looters, disruptors, and sometimes resistance fighters who defended communities that didn't want any encroachment into their neighborhoods by the police state. A new more mobile network way of living was established. It wasn't as nomadic as say Romani people. It was perhaps more like migrant laborers who move within their networks of kin and social contacts, making tracking their paths more complicated. In this way, only a handful of people knew their whereabouts any given day and that kept most people safe while grounded organically in their work and interactions within their communities.

As we all well remember these social and political conflicts including a second Trump led Insurrection played out with a backdrop of superstorms, flooding, wildfires, and a need for shelter from both storms and cops. To help their neighbors, people they may have known for years before all this chaos happened, small businesses and homeowners created a network of what quickly called "safe houses" and "depots" in tribute to the historic [Underground Railroad](#). It was widely understood that this usage was not fully analogous with slavery, but people did share a few characteristics, such as people escaping the tyranny of their current situation and being put on a path to freedom where they could be full members of their communities where they would hopefully thrive.

The term **depot** was more likely used when displaced people were trying to move along a route or refugees from being hounded by cops, or to meet a conductor or exchange information, while the term safe house was more often used for refuges, essentially urban refugia, where people could find essential resources and rest and be safe for a while. Safe houses were also places where more mobile community members, or members of a Guild, could go and get some sleep, a shower, and be safe off the street for a while. It was thought it was more difficult for cops, drones or others to track people who changed up their movement patterns regularly.

Guilds had safe houses for their members. Most were organized in more local cells where neighbors could move around when they might stay within a small area near their work or perhaps near their old neighborhood before all the chaos began. Safe houses were typically owned by people who were called station managers (a deviation from the original term, station master). Station managers made some part of their homes or business available for these “passengers” as a safe place.

Depots and safe houses and depots served as anchors that allowed people to function in the world, doing jobs, making a living, and also gave them a network of people through the Guilds and the neighborhoods, and people began to look after each other again, as community members. This gave everyone an added level of safety, sense of security and perhaps most importantly, a purpose through their identity in their free cell and their community. People understood that they must pitch in where they stayed, either in service or with a commodity. The service most likely was tied to the person’s craft. Craft was more loosely defined as the skills needed for any sort of job, in particular, manual labor jobs. Crafts could be fine woodworking or shoemaking, or it could be cleaning bathrooms. All jobs that did not hurt or exploit people or destroy essential resources were good, respected jobs and that person as a Guild member, for purposes of this new governance, had representation, much like the [National Grange](#) mode. And in fact, many granges, which were already positioned in more rural communities, survived a great deal of the chaos and began anew with any surviving members.

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The governance for the Free Cells was basically consensus decision-making and general assemblies. There has been talk of a regional or even national general assembly across all the Guilds with the goal of a second Constitutional Convention some day, but after several years of violent chaos, many still don’t feel like dealing with anything that could lead to another round of political drama.

Those lacking the courage or skills to join these foundling guilds, or those having more resources available to them, or needing the resources provided by a hierarchical structure entered into some kind of pod living/working quarters within new Pod Sectors, built out of the ashes of former urban centers that were destroyed during the violence.

After the police and the military had deployed to urban streets in every major metro area in the nation, what remained of it, the FEDS issued a moratorium and allowed



everyone not in custody to step back, and the great majority took that opportunity to seek shelter and lick their wounds. All were battle-worn by then and those who couldn't get behind a moratorium were quickly rounded up and transported out of the area to an unknown location. That's all most people would ever know, although some of them did reappear from time to time, looking like they'd escape a zombie infestation.

**MOBILE PHONE STUFF?** For the most part the FEDS (funded by the megarich) set up a series of signal towers for urban pod sectors and their perimeters to keep phones working. People learned how to function using cryptic emoji codes on their phones or at times chalked or carved on surfaces, instead of calls or longer texts. Historically this was fashioned after the [Hobo Codes](#) which emerged in the U.S. after the Civil War.

Phones miraculously stayed on most of the time. Even the plutocrats realized they needed to stay on top of messaging to control the masses. Outside of these areas controlled by the FEDS, people in the Freedom League found ways to connect a series of signal towers out into the hinterlands. Everyone in the entire world, even the outlaws, realized how essential phones had become.

**TECHNOLOGY** Access to a functioning phone or a computer suddenly became more essential to our national security than a single standing army. The military and the reserves broke down regionally into divisions and brigades and smaller units. Some aligned with outlaw militias and even cults like white supremacists. The remaining military were vetted, and sworn to protect the nation from insurrectionists, including their former military comrades who had defected and joined the outlaw militias.

These twice sworn troops were merged with civilian police forces. Their uniforms were now with "blue shirts" assigned mostly to urban and suburban sectors and "green camo shirts" in more rural and wildlands. But most of their control remained regional and local. National unit coordination or any sense of data sharing between divisions and regions became, for the most part, a thing of the past.

The absence of any data sharing and gaps in security left plenty of room for the wild ones and even some crazies to stay off the radar. Out in the wildlands, away from the urban/suburban pod sectors, it became a cat and mouse game for everyone to stay off the radar from one entity or another.

Then there were massive PAs sent out on phones that indicated there would be jobs, food and shelter in the pod sectors for those meeting eligibility. There were speeches made by well-known billionaires and former political officials and then their architects laid out the plans with lots of pretty pictures, maps and blueprints. For those who had professional trades, there were opportunities to work for the FEDS. Those with sufficient credit and

potential for continuing their professional journal, to secure space in these new planned professional and residential complexes where they could rebuild their lives with some semblance of order. There were no false promises that anything would be the same, only that it would be the only opportunity to start over in a relatively safe and secure setting.

Then the FEDS began a massive deconstruction of what remained of old buildings. They requisitioned construction equipment from companies and government entities that no longer existed and hired tens of thousands of construction workers desperate for money to support their families.

Community by community, they began taking apart old buildings, salvaging whatever building materials they could to stockpiling them for repurposing. In the U.S. many construction line workers are from south of the border and they are supporting extended families, sometimes in two countries. During the rioting when there was a total shutdown, their unemployment en masse had a global impact.

Regardless of their situation before the chaos all were grateful for the opportunity to contribute to the rebuild, to get some basic services working, and to have access to basic needs again. It was suddenly patriotic to contribute and for everyone able pitched in finding ways to mold their skills to the cause.

Workers were quickly put back to work deconstructing old buildings, recycling materials, and repurposing in the new construction and building the secure Pod Complexes. This progress soothed much of the angst many were feeling and created hope in some kind of future.

Construction workers with a clean record could earn someone who didn't otherwise have financial resources the ability to earn a place in a pod. This became the new Work for Pod Access (WPA) program.

The people who took this path of living in the Pod Sector, no matter what their economic status, quickly became known as Pod People (sometimes more pejorative names by those living outside the Pods), who considered themselves to be free, even many of those in the Guilds who used safe houses as their sleeping quarters.

By 2030, state-level democracies were now essentially a thing of the past. Perhaps they would emerge sometime in the future, if Pod People could ever break away from the [plutocratic](#) rule we accepted as a temporary fix. Only then might Americans escape the fascist boot print of the Big Sort police state.

Admittedly the Pod Sectors are a much gentler police state than many historic examples, or dystopian books foretold, but still. But once people were sorted into Pods and not, haves and have nots, it was hard to envision the two sides of the Divide ever reconsolidating by choice. The FEDS did allow podders to self-govern on local complex decisions, like landscaping the grounds, and many decisions about common areas. They had a board and typically used Robert's Rules to govern the meetings and decision-making process. This brought comfort to many in the Pods, the same way the circles of General Assemblies brought a sense of sovereignty to the Free Cells outside the pod sectors.

The pandemic taught people how to live sequestered for periods of time and to obtain our food and resources remotely through pickups and delivery. Of course, all that took money, which many Americans no longer had. During the pandemic, those who wouldn't or couldn't stay inside simply toughed it out by masking and heading back into more public situations. And most of the MAGAs and anti-vaxxers refused to go along with the CDC protocols so they never really adjusted to this new type of abnormal. And MAGAs would not move into the pods, even those qualified, so they stayed in their homes, and fought for their property if they could.

Those whose homes were "condemned" for the new Pod Sectors, and those who had no land holdings, quickly became displaced people. They either competed for less desirable tiers of the Pod Sectors, or they were left to try to find like-minded people on the outskirts of the Pod Sectors to connect with and start over, essentially like resettling the New Frontier, which many Pod People called the Wildland Boundary areas.

People would no longer drive to get what they needed, so they no longer needed wheels, except maybe a bicycle, or a motorcycle, which is really all most people had anymore. Wheels were a liability at the very least. Motorized vehicles had all been stolen or destroyed during the rioting. Many people admitted it was better this way. Many of the motorbikes were converted to electric because charging was easier than finding fuel. It also reduced the sound level and was less noticeable.

There was no safe traveling across the country or even outside of the sectors for now. It was done, but mostly by the traders and bus transports, which all brought their own security. The heroic postal carriers rode motorcycles and were reminiscent of the Pony Express, traveling specified routes at breakneck speed. Like phones, everyone was clear that a postal service was essential, and virtually everyone agreed to honor the letter carriers. There were limits to the size of packages they would carry, it was truly mostly letters again, so there was no need to rob them. There was little likelihood of even a check because money was handled electronically on phones. The main threat that remained was lack of maintenance of routes and the roving band of "road warrior" remnants of the disruptors.

There were no longer functioning public airlines or long distance rail lines, at least for the time being. Big trucks were almost obsolete too because they were magnets for gangsters which still terrorized anywhere that cops or local vigilantes could not secure. And the megastorms and lack of a functioning infrastructure made them obsolete. Besides, once the big box stores were gone, there wasn't a huge need for them. Most small businesses didn't need or want a huge inventory which was a liability. Some businesses still required some midsize trucks, but they were rare, and they tended to roll during the day. When you saw a truck, it generally meant trouble.

Many people who learned during the pandemic that they could effectively work from home, were provided living pods where they could incorporate their skill set through an adjoining office or lab, small arts studio, or crafts workshop, and they got back on the neoliberal grid in some ways.

Nevertheless, the large number who opted to work from home drastically and immediately redacted much of the carbon that had been released into the atmosphere by millions of Americans driving to work each day, and this helped the earth to begin to breathe again. While there were still cataclysmic weather anomalies happening on a weekly basis, people surviving the last few years of the storms plus violence now felt a reprieve from fighting or hiding, tending to the wounded or burying loved ones. For either side of the divide, this was better.

**BELOW THIS NEEDS TO MOVE UP IN THE COLLAPSE**

The time leading up to the Big Sort had been a time of one existential threat veiled in another, where all sense of reality was suspended. This is what had become known at the **Existential Trifecta**. People had recognized, some for the very first time, the multitude of intersecting moving parts feeding the existential threats they were facing. The three basic threats, climate, AI, and our deeply divided society which included our poor mental health left us broken. Somewhere in the middle of the pandemic, people realized they were suffering from the effects of severe mental illness. Many were deeply concerned for the young people who could understand much of what was happening, but in fact it was the adults who had to manage the load. In a sense, everyone in the entire former United States had gone insane, and in that state of insanity found something they all shared, the fundamental needs for life. By 2025 this was a national discussion covered regularly on the news. Our poor mental health impacted everything around us.

Some other parts of the world were also in crisis, in particular, state-level societies were proving to be epic failures, between corrupt politicians, decayed infrastructure, and lack of any oversight. With society in collapse, with widespread destruction and chaos, there was an urgent need to stop the violence and regain control of the streets. A need to restructure and reformulate governance in a way people could live with was secondary to reclaiming their sense of security, sanity, and dignity. It was not simply essential, but it was critical and urgent. It was at this time that the moniker The Big Sort was born.

So many had ignored the obvious signs of the climate crisis until they were unable to put the genie back in the bottle. All they could do was ride it out, and hope that some survived. And some did, because of unintended naturally occurring [refugia](#), isolated relic habitats that had the key ingredients for survival. These remnants can be tens of thousands of years old, or older.



## Collective Farming in Apple Creek

Every area has begun to have some truck farms in the peripheral areas outside of the pod clusters. The basic [tenets](#) of the Freedom League were designed to provide some guidelines for the people outside the Pods. Deciding upon a farming collective was in turn

with their tenets, because their farming collective patching together the open lands nearest the village for the good of the village and neighboring communities, ultimately to help restore their communities and rebuild America communities.

After the resistance fought back the police from trying to confiscate more lands for the pod cities, decided these lands were valuable, not only as a buffer between them and the pod people, but also that these were valuable farmlands. So they would own unclaimed lands collectively. Surviving farmers who wanted in were welcomed into the collective. In exchange for joining the Farmers Collective, they go the benefit of neighbors helping during planting and harvesting, and they pooled resources to get wagons and horses and a few hybrid trucks for transporting their goods to market.

## Maslow's Needs

But in regards to the [Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Pyramid](#), all but the [megarich](#), landed much lower on their scale of needs than they had been a decade before. **MOVE UP TO SOCIETY HILLS OR PERHAPS MINDFUL INTERSECTIONALITY?**



Another big rub was that there was no mechanism for change, once your place in a new sector was set. This would prove to be an epic flaw in time. But for the first few years, the Big Sort provided stability and more security, and the constant street violence in urban sectors was suppressed, más o menos.



One upside which contributed to the reduction in violence was the realization among people that they did have a choice. Most also realized they wanted to live in a safe society that had some shared sense of community welfare. This was envisioned differently for those choosing the pod sector than others. But regardless, there was still commonality in their core values, wanting less violence and a freedom of choice. This sense of free agency, no matter how limited it might have been for some, was a profound epiphany in the revitalization of American Society during the Big Sort and thereafter.

Given the horrendous amount of chaos people had just lived through, it seemed miraculous that, for the most part, the Big Sort went quickly and without too many hitches. People were mentally exhausted, and most were dealing with some degree of PTSD and at that point in human history. The great majority just wanted a safe space to chill, collect themselves, regroup, and reboot.

# Glossary

[Climate Weirding](#) - Various climatic factors including several global warming other factors related to exceeding the majority of identified "planetary boundary thresholds" has caused a much higher rate of intense, catastrophic weather and climate events including superstorms and megawildfires, among other "whiplash" weather and climate events. Also called [Global Weirding](#) and [Weather Weirding](#).

[Global Weirding](#) - Synonym for Climate Weirding. The term is thought to have been coined by Climate Scientist [Katharine Hayhoe](#).

[Climate Slop](#) - Technically AI-generated misinformation regarding the Climate, but also it was manufactured by politicians, bureaucrats, and other sycophants attempting to hide the scientific facts of Climate Change. Donald Trump was famous for calling Climate Change a hoax.

[Climate Overshoot](#) [1X + 7 blog] - Demands made by humanity exceed what the biosphere of Earth can provide through its capacity for renewal.

[Overshoot Pathways](#) - Pathways that exceed the stabilization level (concentration, *forcing*, or temperature) before the end of a time horizon of interest (e.g., before 2100) and then decline towards that level by that time. Once the target level is exceeded, removal by *sinks* of *greenhouse gasses* is required.

[Overshoot Temperature](#) - The temporary exceedance of a specified level of global warming, such as 1.5°C. Overshoot implies a peak followed by a decline in global warming, achieved through anthropogenic removal of CO2 exceeding remaining CO2 emissions globally.

[Planetary boundaries crossed 9-13-23](#) - Nine boundary processes that define a safe operating space for humanity. As of 9-23-23, six of these boundaries have been transgressed.

[Weather Weirding](#) - Term popularized by Tom Friedman. Synonym for Climate Weirding or Global Weirding (see above).

In addition, the [IPCC Glossary](#) may be helpful for additional key terms.