

What is at stake?

Notes to accompany lecture by Dougal Hine
CEMUS, Uppsala University, 1 Sep 2014

In addition to the references to specific sections of the lecture, the following are relevant to much of what I spoke about:

Mike Hulme, *Why We Disagree About Climate Change* (2009)

Alastair McIntosh, *Hell and High Water: Climate Change, Hope and the Human Condition* (2008)

John Michael Greer's blog, *The Archdruid Report* -

<http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.se/>

Paul Mason's blog at Channel 4 - <http://blogs.channel4.com/paul-mason-blog/> - very useful for analysis of economic and political situation in Europe and globally (look out for Mason's articles for The Guardian)

You can find further links to my own work and reading lists at:

www.dougal.dnu - my current blog and professional homepage

www.dougal.co.uk - my old homepage, includes an extensive 'Reading' section

THE FUTURE

1. WE ARE ALL GOING TO DIE

Philippe Ariès, *Western Attitudes Towards Death* (1975) – short historical overview

B G Glaser & A L Strauss, *Awareness of Dying* (1965) – sociological study, changing culture of dying, contrast in approaches to death in US hospitals in mid-60s

Tony Walter, 'Modern Death: Taboo or not Taboo?', *Sociology* May 1991 vol.25 no.2 293-310

Some extraordinary images of 'ossuaries' (bone rooms):

<http://weburbanist.com/2009/10/30/7-wonders-of-the-undead-world-global-ossuaries/>

Laura Helmuth, 'Why Are You Not Dead Yet?', *Slate* (5 September 2013) -

http://www.slate.com/articles/health_and_science/science_of_longevity/2013/09/life_expectancy_history_public_health_and_medical_advances_th_at_lead_to.html - 'You used to get one life, now you get two'

David Cutler & Grant Miller, 'The role of public health improvements in health advances: The twentieth-century United States', *Demography*, February 2005, Vol 42, Iss 1 -

<http://link.springer.com/article/10.1353/dem.2005.0002> - nearly half of

total mortality reduction from 1800 to mid-20C in US cities due to clean water technologies

Gustavo Esteva, Salvatore Babones & Philipp Babczyk, *The Future of Development: A Radical Manifesto* (2014) – see Ch.2 ‘Development statistics and what they tell us’ for some useful cautions about what mortality statistics tell us

‘We project our fear of our own death onto the planet’ – this refers to the Freudian concept of ‘projection’ – for a useful summary of Freud’s theory and the evidence see:

Roy F Baumeister, Karen Dale & Kristin L Sommer, ‘Freudian Defense Mechanisms and Empirical Findings in Modern Social Psychology: Reaction Formation, Projection, Displacement, Undoing, Isolation, Sublimation, and Denial’, *Journal of Personality* 66:6 (December 1998) – online here - http://faculty.fortlewis.edu/burke_b/personality/readings/freuddefense.pdf

2. THE PLANET DOESN’T NEED SAVING.

Steven Mithen, *After the Ice: A Global Human History, 20,000-5,000 BC* (2003) – including speed of climate change at the end of the Younger Dryas and the story of the Early/Late Natufians

Per Johansson, ‘The Dark Mountain at the End of the World’ (22 April 2014) – ‘animals, forests, coral reefs are used to dying. They have been doing that for millions and millions of years. It is quite natural to them. It is the way of their world. If the cause of death is a lightning strike, or an ice age, or a bulldozer, or climate change – so what?’

3. WE DON’T HAVE AS MANY PROBLEMS AS WE THINK WE HAVE

John Michael Greer, *The Long Descent* (2008) – on the distinction between a ‘problem’ and a ‘predicament’

Vinay Gupta, ‘Time to Stop Pretending’, speech at Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain Festival (2010) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EkQCy-UrLYw> - ‘Collapse means living in the same conditions as the people who grow your coffee’

OUR TIMES

4. WELCOME TO THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT

From mass prosperity to mass precarity

Guy Standing, *The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class* (2011)

Tilting away from the West

- Al Jazeera, 'Jin Liqun: Europe induces 'sloth, indolence'' (27 Dec 2011) -
<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/talktojazeera/2011/11/2011114434664695.html>
- The Economist, 'Catching the Eagle' (22 August 2014) -
<http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2014/08/chinese-and-american-gdp-forecasts> - China projected to overtake US as world's largest economy by 2021
- Jonathan Watts, *When A Billion Chinese Jump: How China Will Save the World – or Destroy it* (2010)

The First World War Reenactment Society / the retreat of globalisation

- Paul Mason, *Why It's (Still) Kicking Off Everywhere* (2013)
– 'How Peaches and Propaganda are Helping to Shape the New World Order', *The Guardian* (17 August 2014) -
<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/aug/17/peaches-propaganda-helping-shape-new-world-order-paul-mason>
- Larry Elliott, 'Russia and economic warfare: RIP the free market new world order', *The Guardian* (31 August 2014) -
<http://www.theguardian.com/business/2014/aug/31/russia-economic-warfare-rip-free-market-new-world-order>

The population knot

- Jeremy Seabrook, *A World Growing Old* (2004)
CIA World Factbook, 'Country Comparison: Total Fertility Rate' -
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2127rank.html> - TFR is a measure of 'births per woman' – the global 'replacement rate' (i.e. the number of births per woman required for population to remain steady) is estimated at 2.3

After the Future

- Dougald Hine, 'Remember the Future?' in *Dark Mountain: Issue 2* (2011)
-- 'Back from the Future' - talk at Winchester School of Art (2013) -
<http://vimeo.com/78246247>

5. 'THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT IS NOT THE END OF THE WORLD FULL STOP' from *Uncivilisation: The Dark Mountain Manifesto* (2009)

Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

Near-Term Extinction

- Guy McPherson, *Nature Bats Last* – the blog that is the focus of the Near-Term Human Extinction movement - <http://guymcpherson.com/>
- Alex Smith, 'Will Humans Go Extinct Soon?', EcoShock Radio (5 June 2013) - <http://www.ecoshock.info/2013/06/will-humans-go-extinct-soon.html> - picks apart the problematic science behind NTE
- Scott K Johnson, 'How Guy McPherson gets it wrong' (17 Feb 2014) - <http://fractalplanet.wordpress.com/2014/02/17/how-guy-mcpherson-gets-it-wrong/>
- John Michael Greer, 'The Pleasures of Extinction (15 May 2013) - <http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.se/2013/05/the-pleasures-of-extinction.html> - on the cultural psychology of NTE

6. THE END OF THE WORLD AS WE KNOW IT IS ALSO THE END OF A WAY OF KNOWING THE WORLD

"Someone once said that it is easier to imagine the end of the world than to imagine the end of capitalism" – Fredric Jameson, 'Future City', *New Left Review* 21, May-June 2003 – online here:

<http://newleftreview.org/II/21/fredric-jameson-future-city>

Mark Fisher, *Capitalist Realism: Is There No Alternative?* (2009)

On the trajectory of *figuration > abstraction > reflection* (where postmodernity could be characterised by the shift from abstraction to reflection), see:

John Michael Greer, 'Towards a Green Future, Part Two: The Age of Unreason', *The Archdruid Report* (13 Nov 2013) – online at:

<http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.se/2013/11/toward-green-future-part-two-age-of.html>

-- 'Towards a Green Future, Part Three: The Barbarism of Reflection', *The Archdruid Report* (20 Nov 2013) – online at:

<http://thearchdruidreport.blogspot.se/2013/11/toward-green-future-part-three.html>

HOW TO ACT?

7. WE URGENTLY NEED TO SLOW DOWN

Dougald Hine, 'On the Urgent Need to Slow Down' (2014) –

<http://dougald.nu/on-the-urgent-need-to-slow-down/>

– 'A Farewell to Uncivilisation' in *Dark Mountain: Issue 5* (2014) – also on my blog as 'Remembering Uncivilisation' -

<http://dougald.nu/remembering-uncivilisation/>

Dougald Hine & David Abram, 'Coming to our (animal) senses' in *Dark Mountain: Issue 2* (2011) – includes discussion of 'ecological grief' – also available as a video, '

Alastair McIntosh, *Soil and Soul: People versus Corporate Power* (2001) – especially on the idea of ‘wu wei’, ‘doing through not doing’
Martin Shaw, *A Branch from the Lightning Tree* (2011)
– *Snowy Tower: Parzival and the Wet Black Branch of Language* (2014)

8. SEPARATE ‘THE THING WE’RE TRYING TO DO’ FROM ‘THE WAY WE HAPPEN TO HAVE BEEN DOING IT’

As a guiding principle, this owes a great deal to the work of Ivan Illich. See: Sajay Samuel (ed.), *Beyond Economics and Ecology: The Radical Thought of Ivan Illich* (2013)

The argument about the past and future of the university is one that I developed in the following talks:

Dougald Hine, ‘The (Higher) Education Revolution’, TEDx London Education Revolution (2011) - <http://dougald.nu/tedx-london-talk-2011/>

Dougald Hine, ‘A Storm is Blowing from Paradise’, Dalarna University (2013) - <http://dougald.nu/a-storm-is-blowing-from-paradise-talk-at-dalarna-university/>

The second of those talks also includes a section on rethinking jobs/work. The example of the Florentine cloth merchant in 1330 is taken from Illich’s essay ‘Shadow Work’, included in the collection edited by Samuel.

9. TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR SOMETHING THAT MATTERS

Dougald Hine, ‘The Dark Shapes Ahead’, The Resilients Project (2012) - <http://rhapsodi.se/resilients/?p=231>

Paul Kingsnorth, ‘Dark Ecology’ in *Dark Mountain: Issue 3* (2012)

John Berger, ‘Steps Toward a Small Theory of the Visible’ in *The Shape of a Pocket* (2001)

Andrew Brown, *Fishing in Utopia: Sweden and the Future that Disappeared* (2008)