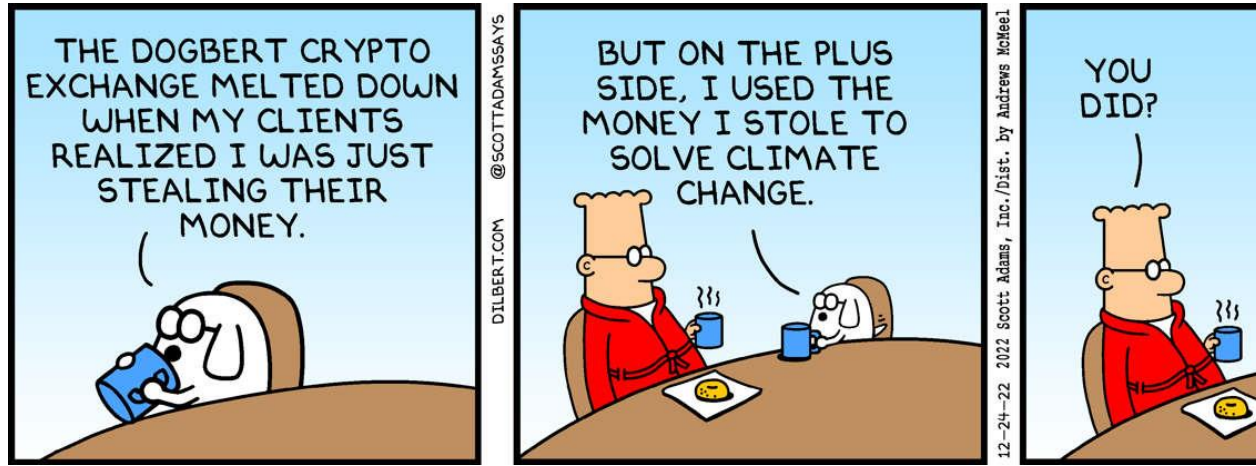


Lessons from “Effective Altruism”



CLIMATE CHANGE IN AN AGING SOCIETY

Jan.13, 2022

Editor: H.R. Moody

-----QUOTE OF THE DAY-----

“Nobody made a greater mistake than he who did nothing because he could only do a little.”

-Edmund Burke

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In This Issue:

- I Go Down to the Shore (Mary Oliver)
- The Flood Is Coming
- David Attenborough, Eco-Elder
- Climate Legislation: The Next Two Years
- Long-Term Thinking
- Yes, Something to Worry About
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- Coming Events

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Mary Oliver

I GO DOWN TO THE SHORE

by Mary Oliver

I go down to the shore in the morning
and depending on the hour the waves
are rolling in or moving out,
and I say, oh, I am miserable,
what shall—
what should I do? And the sea says
in its lovely voice:
Excuse me, I have work to do.”

Also from Mary Oliver: “My work is loving the world ... /
Let me / keep my mind on what matters /
which is my work / which is mostly standing still and learning
to be astonished.”

Mary Oliver, died in 2019 at age 83. She was an Eco-Elder
who repeatedly reminded us of our ties to the natural world.

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THE FLOOD IS COMING

While working on my book about climate change, on
the very last day of 2022 (New Year’s Eve) my wife and I
unexpectedly ended up driving through an atmospheric river
that engulfed the San Francisco Bay Area, drenching
everything with the second worst rainstorm in 170 years. The
floods have continued this week, too.

As we drove through streets and encountered floods, barely able to drive home, I wondered: Can this be a bad dream? Such unexpected flooding is likely to be more frequent in years to come. In retirement we live at the top of high hills on the Bay Area Peninsula, so we were not searching for safety in old age. We thought we had found it. But we were wrong. It was not a bad dream, but reality, the “new normal.” Such intimations of flooding appear in this dream “The Flood Is Coming.”

“I dreamt that the clouds were very dark, stretching out over my town, and the rain and wind were so bad we had to stay in the house. I looked outside at the clouds, and saw some big billowing clouds below us. I realized they were rolling down the street, and were not clouds at all, but a torrent of floodwater. I knew the water could come in through our front door, and I woke up from the dream in a panic of thinking about how to get onto our roof to be rescued.”

From <https://climatedreams.com/> (March, 2019)

Our dreams show us what we already know but cannot yet see. Anyone with dreams about climate change can be in contact with me (HRM). The concluding chapter of my climate book is titled “Hope and Fear,” constructed from such dreams, my own and others. W. B. Yeats put it best: “In dreams begin responsibilities.”

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David Attenborough, Eco-Elder



“We are facing a man-made disaster on a global scale. Our greatest threat in thousands of years.”

– Sir David Attenborough

Sir David Attenborough, now age 96, has long been renowned for his books and broadcasts celebrating the wonders of the natural world. But in later years he has been known for his support of environmental causes, such as biodiversity, renewable energy, and advocacy around climate change. Last year he was recognized by being given the Champion of the Earth award by the United Nations. His words are a message for all generations:

"The scientific evidence is that if we have not taken dramatic action within the next decade, we could face irreversible damage to the natural world and the collapse of our societies. We are running out of time, but there is still hope." -David Attenborough (Sept. 17, 2022)

His documentary film “A Life on Our Planet” is available through Netflix. For a preview, see:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=64R2MYUt394>

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CLIMATE LEGISLATION: The Next 2 Years
“Houston, we have a problem.”



From California, as I cope with an atmospheric river:
“[Kevin] McCarthy’s rise came as atmospheric rivers inundated his home state of California with severe flooding and widespread power outages. Scientists say atmospheric

rivers are fueled by climate change — a problem that
McCarthy’s pro-fossil-fuel policies stand to exacerbate....

Even as California has emerged as an environmental leader,
McCarthy has championed policies that would boost the
consumption of oil and other fossil fuels, a primary driver of
global warming, while downplaying the scientific consensus
on climate change.” (*Washington Post*)

See: “What the House speaker’s deal with ultraconservatives
means for climate” at:

[https://grist.org/politics/what-the-house-speakers-deal-with-
ultraconservatives-means-for-
climate/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_
campaign=daily](https://grist.org/politics/what-the-house-speakers-deal-with-ultraconservatives-means-for-climate/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=newsletter&utm_campaign=daily)

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LONG-TERM THINKING

Imagine if 20,000 years into the future, an exploration
of the Earth uncovers the final notes and
unfinished stories left behind by the last human beings who
lived here: “And Peace Shall Return” at:

[https://emergencemagazine.org/fiction/and-peace-shall-
return/](https://emergencemagazine.org/fiction/and-peace-shall-return/)

The Long Now Foundation, based in San Francisco,
founded by Stewart Brand (*The Whole Earth Catalog*),
is building a 10,000-year clock to last ten millennia in the
future. For details see:

<https://longnow.org/clock/>

Elders are those who should be thinking at seven
generations, and beyond. For a podcast on “Long-Term
Thinking in a Distracted World” by Bina Venkataraman: at:
[https://longnow.org/seminars/02020/jan/15/long-term-
thinking-distracted-world/](https://longnow.org/seminars/02020/jan/15/long-term-thinking-distracted-world/)

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YES, SOMETHING TO WORRY ABOUT

In August, 2022 an article appeared in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* titled “Climate Endgame: Exploring Catastrophic Climate Change Scenarios.” The article argues that maintaining global temperature increases below two degrees Celsius (or 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit) shouldn’t mean looking only at the low end of warming scenarios. We could end up being unprepared for more drastic changes. Carbon-caused disappearance of stratocumulus cloud decks could mean another eight degrees Celsius by 2100.

The authors also worry about a ‘tipping cascade.’ In such cases, environmental damage could prove to be nonlinear, which means we ought to look at low-likelihood outcomes. What happens then? Prospects include electrical blackouts, famine, pandemics, mass extinction, or nuclear war. Something to worry about? The unexpected often has a way of happening.

From M. Hutson, “Eight Times Science Exceeded Expectations in 2022,” *The New Yorker* (Dec. 28, 2022).

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ARTICLES OF INTEREST

The Shape of Things to Come? “California’s Devastating Storms Are a Glimpse of the Future” at:
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/annals-of-a-warming-planet/californias-devastating-storms-are-a-glimpse-of-the-future>

Young People: Ready to Act. See Matthew Ballew et al, “Young adults, across party lines, are more willing to take climate action,” Yale Program on Climate Change Communication, CLIMATE NOTE, 2020 at:
<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/publications/young-adults-climate-activism/>

Climate and Retirement Planning. “3 Win-Win-Win Steps For Seniors To Fight Climate Change” at:

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevevernon/2021/08/16/3-win-win-win-steps-for-seniors-to-fight-climate-change/?sh=468263b22220>

Misinformation Warning! “Twitter has always been a hotspot for climate change misinformation. On Musk's watch, it's heating up.” Despite pledges to clean up lies, hoaxes and conspiracies, climate misinformation is surging on Twitter under Elon Musk, exclusive new report says. See: <https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/2023/01/10/twitter-climate-change-misinformation-surge-elon-musk/11002993002/>

The Heat Is On. The past 8 years were the hottest in recorded history. See: <https://climate.copernicus.eu/copernicus-2022-was-year-climate-extremes-record-high-temperatures-and-rising-concentrations>

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WHAT DID THEY KNOW AND WHEN DID THEY KNOW IT?



“Exxon made ‘breathtakingly’ accurate climate predictions in 1970s and 80s”

Oil company drove some of the leading science of the era
only to publicly dismiss global heating
See: The Guardian:
<https://apple.news/AkJCXk6OoS5ipvuUOskm0uQ>

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COMING EVENTS

“Biodiversity for a Livable Climate: Redesigning Our
Communities for Life After Fossil Fuels”
(Jan. 21, 2023, 1-4 pm, Pacific) With Richard Heinberg (Post
Carbon Institute). Details at:
https://bio4climate.org/redesigning-our-communities-for-life-after-fossil-fuels-january-21-2023/?utm_source=Post+Carbon+Institute&utm_campaign=abe97e38fb-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_12_19_10_28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_abe97e38fb-%5BLIST_EMAIL_ID%5D&mc_cid=abe97e38fb&mc_eid=eac865ca66

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Cosponsored by Climate Change & Consciousness
<http://https://www.cccearth.org>

Climate Action Now

<https://climateactionnow.com/>

Center for Ecozoic Studies

<https://www.ecozoicstudies.org/>

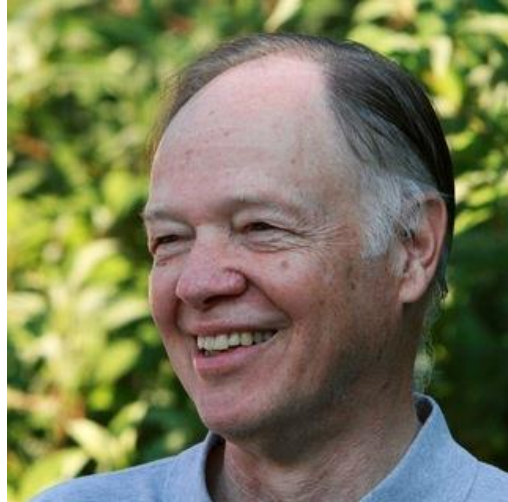
Third Act Educators

<https://thirdact.org/educators>

Gray Is Green, the National Senior Conservation Corp

<http://grayisgreen.org/>

From Harry (Rick) Moody



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<http://www.climateandaging.org>

