

How Can We Ever Convey The Existential Threats To All Life From The Climate Crisis And Biodiversity Extinctions?

Some thoughts - on reading in Underestimating the Challenges of Avoiding a Ghastly Future

Corey J. A. Bradshaw^{1,2*}, Paul R. Ehrlich^{3*} et al, 2021 at www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcosc.2020.615419/full

whose peer-reviewed references fully support the word 'ghastly' in the title:

'Given the existence of a human "optimism bias" that triggers some to underestimate the severity of a crisis and ignore expert warnings, a good communication strategy must ideally undercut this bias without inducing disproportionate feelings of fear and despair... It is therefore incumbent on experts in any discipline that deals with the future of the biosphere and human well-being to eschew reticence, avoid sugar-coating the overwhelming challenges ahead and "tell it like it is." Anything else is misleading at best, or negligent and potentially lethal for the human enterprise at worst.'

Ever since my Damascene 'wake-up call' as a med student at St John's Cambridge in November 1959, I like others who are alarmed by the relentless growth in numbers of planet-trashing, GHG emitting humans, have found ourselves oscillating

BETWEEN:

1 'Telling it how it is' - and either

<> being dismissed as a doomsayer, OR

<> being shot as the messenger (more than once people have said "if you think there are too many people on the earth, why not start with yourself") OR

<> inducing those '*disproportionate feelings of despair*'

AND:

2 **Sugar-coating the challenges by easy-to-do green messaging**, resulting in:

<> tokenistic 'green-washing' measures by the big resource-consumers and GHG-emitters OR (AND)

<> ordinary folk, both politicians and voters, saying "if that's all, what's the fuss, let's keep kicking the can down the road"

Either way, and both have been tried, the necessary **ACTIONS** - whether on pollution of air water and land, or on resources and wildlife habitat-conservation, or in just **meeting women's rights everywhere on earth to have their babies by choice and not by chance** - do not happen, have not happened, in a timely way and at the necessary **SCALE**.

To quote our two primary letters of Apology to the Future, at my website

www.ecotimecapsule.com:

"We kept warning everyone who would listen, though there were too few of them. Our culpability is less, though few can claim to be blameless."

"In signing below, on this World Environment Day 1994, we pledge ourselves to respect the needs of our children and grandchildren in going about our daily lives. We each aim to make our contribution to a saner, safer and sustainable world. According to our talents and opportunities, we will work to advance the painful process of changing hearts, minds and policies before it is too late."

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