

Exigent Change

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29 January 2020

Compiled on January 1, 2025



THIS IS ABOUT ME. ONLY ME.^{1 2} When I watch the *Cowspiracy*, *An Inconvenient Truth*, and *Before the Flood* documentaries, and read *The End of the Line*,^[5] I feel a quickening of spirit, a sense of urgency.

When I learn about the horrific injustices and cruelty we still see fit to inflict on our fellow animals,^[36] such as Earth's fish, chickens,^[11, 18, 30, 20] pigs^[16, 29, 31, 34, 37] and cows,^[3] as if they are our slaves, objectified and de-personalised, I feel ashamed.

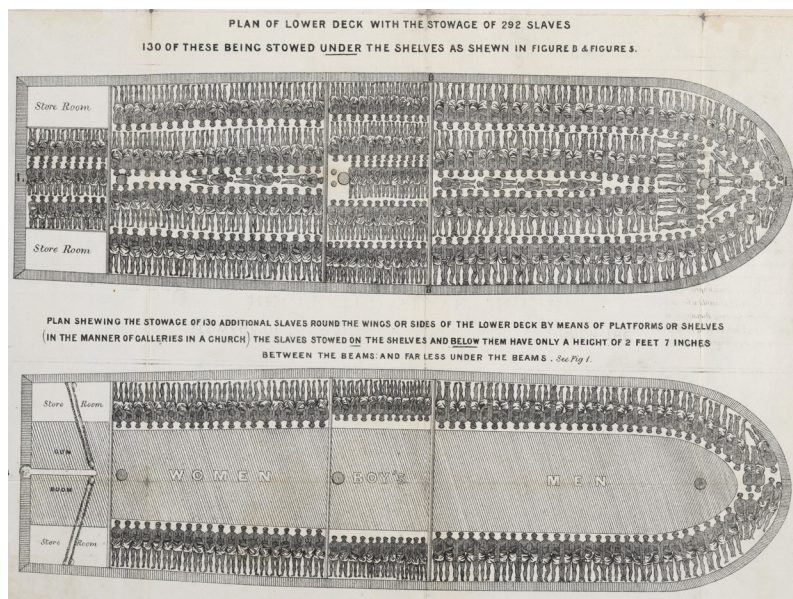


Farrowing crates.

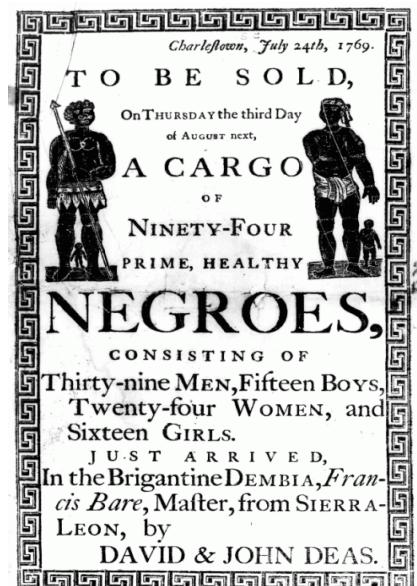


Battery cages.

I discover how the 400 year trans-Atlantic slave trade was systematically and systemically abetted by Confederate Protestant Christianity, preached from the loftiest pulpits.^[2, 13, 14, 17, 26]



Schematic of the stowage of the British slave ship *Brookes* under the regulated Slave Trade Act of 1788.^[21]



A broadside (or poster) for a slave auction (Charleston, South Carolina, 1769).^[27]

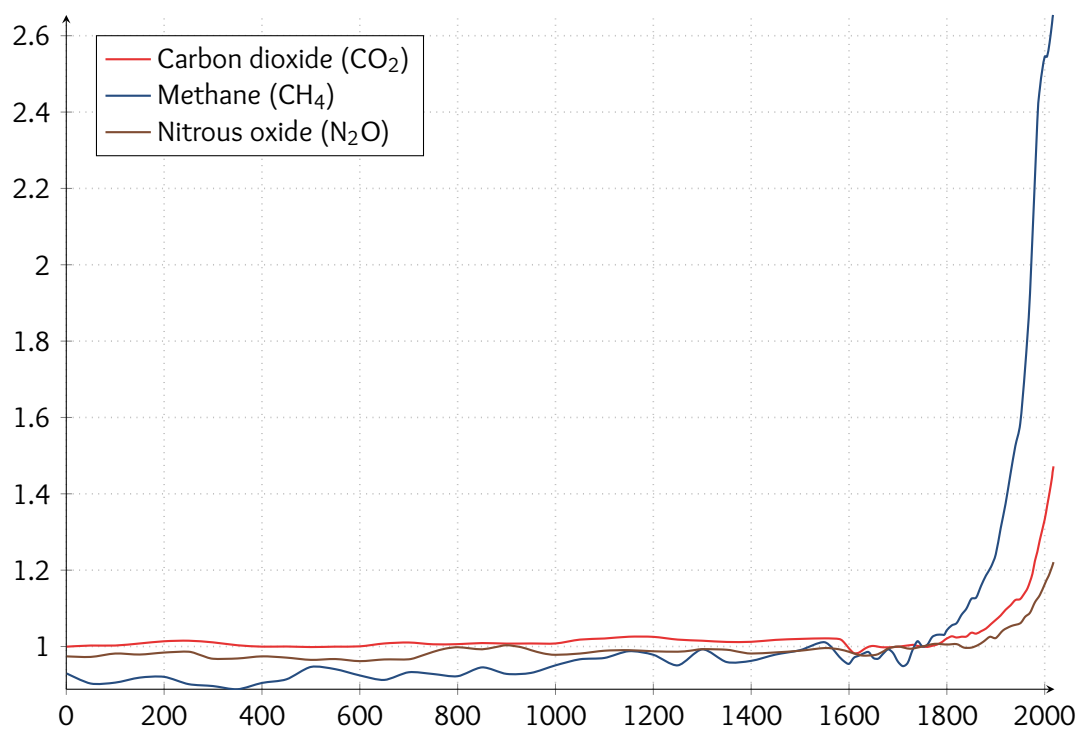
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²Exigent—Pressing, demanding.

I learn with near disbelief how religious doctrinal bigotry caused the wound of **anti-semitism** to fester and seep for 2000 years.^[24, 15, 35, 32] And it **bled** at Christianity's pivotal moments, from the early utterances and writings by Emperor Constantine (272–337 CE) at the Council of Nicea,^[10, 28] to the founding of the Protestant Reformation under Martin Luther (1483–1546 CE), as reflected in his writing entitled, *Von den Juden und ihren Lügen* (*On the Jews and Their Lies*).^[38, 12, 23, 4, 22] I look up. And at long last, I see the moral arc of secularism's rainbow pointing to justice.

I learn about ever growing yet unsustainable income **inequality**.^[33] I peruse empirical evidence that after a certain income threshold, happiness and wealth are *not* correlated.^[19] This tells me that there's ample room for a seismic shift in the ethics, values and jurisprudence undergirding our present perpetual-growth systems.

As I stare and stare at my data graphs on spiking atmospheric greenhouse **gas concentrations**, a realisation dawns. Like a silent dark ship looming. The concentrations have not spiked; they are busy spiking. A deep conviction grows that real non-hoax facts undergird and legitimise this stirring.



Histories of the globally averaged normalised atmospheric concentrations of the **carbon dioxide (CO₂)**, **methane (CH₄)** and **nitrous oxide (N₂O)** greenhouse gases over the last 2000 years. The industrial era began around 1750. Normalised concentrations are expressed as the relative mole fraction, i.e., as the number of molecules of the gas in a well-mixed atmospheric sample divided by the corresponding number in 1750. The plot combines data from measurements of gas concentrations trapped in ice cores at Law Dome, Antarctica, and of directly measured marine surface annual mean data. Data for the ice cores at Law Dome were accessed from ^[6]. Marine surface annual mean data were accessed from ^[7, 8, 9].

When I witness the tragic **destruction of ecosystems**,^[3, 25, 1] of parking lots replacing, of **rainforests** one thirtieth, of an efficient _____sameness_____for_____miles_____, I feel sad. Every eco-heritage loss is my loss, for through connection upon connection, I had connection with it. Wild as a word is away from us.



Virgin jungle next to a burnt area located near Porto Velho, Brazil, 23 August 2019.

But when I learn about the talis(wo)manic work of various **environmental** activist people, of Avaaz, of 350 . org and others, I am impelled to take part. And when I learn how the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (www.ipbes.net) is helping to promote **Earth's** biodiversity and ecosystem services, and when I read the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change reports (www.ipcc.ch), I'm overcome with awe and with respect for what we can pull off. I am amazed for our capacity for prescience and for our values and ethics to change in step.

Something organic is stirring. I can feel it. Paradoxically, as it moves us to constraint, it liberates. It is reconnecting us with **Earth** and with **Earth's** richness. It is reminding me of what I am. Inasmuch as I am connected to **Earth**, I am **fish**, I am **chicken**, I am **cow**, I am my wife, I am my children. I am human.

I am ready for exigent change.



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