

The Intelligence Paradox

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ABSTRACT

Intelligence is far more than IQ. It characterizes all life forms, and not just in our biosphere. To understand our place within other aspects of intelligence, and within the history of our species, it is necessary to approach it all within the framework of systems theory. High-level operational intelligence has brought us toward what we now call the Anthropocene period. However, there are devils within the details, and we need to find out how dysfunctional elements operate within our structural-functional ideals. What we need to learn and embrace will determine the fate of our entire species, and much sooner than later.

Before I started formal school I was a semi-feral child in a middle-class southern white family. In the early 1950s white privilege and male dominance were assumed. America was seemingly supreme culturally and militarily, except for that inconvenient Korean War, and some lynchings, and The Bomb.

That was just before B&W television came to our house; and very much before the Internet offered a vast library; and before cable TV appeared in HD color. People read their local paper and listened to radio, none of which challenged our understanding of the world unfolding beneath our happy feet. Going to church was a ritual celebration of white American cultural dominance over inferior religions. Few questioned this quaint national zeitgeist. With few exceptions, everybody white swallowed and followed.

Being a mere child, I wondered openly how my parents both had been able to finish high school without failing at least one grade. I asked my mother how she was able to tackle each succeeding school year, because they all get more difficult. She said that I would learn enough each year to easily handle the next year. That simple statement made sense, but something was missing: real-world *context* for things I would be taught.

Formal public education in any country hardly differs from the national zeitgeist. What was ideologically correct for America could be wrong in a theocratic society. Theocratic schools differ from each other, so what is right in a Roman Catholic school could be wrong in a Hebrew school, and very wrong in a Muslim school.

I was never told how public schools minimized others who are not within the favored local ethnic culture. This lack of contextual wisdom is precisely how sophisticated 20th-century Europe *twice* sank into deepest darkness.

I have shared with you my too-common story for one reason: Ideal education can lead us from darkness to the light. However, industrial schools teach such as language and math, but not how to seek the universal truth all around us. Feudal Japanese said: "The nail that sticks up will be hammered down." Thus emerged Imperial Japan and their spiritual darkness in WWII.

Global myopic education spawns cesspools of nationalistic arrogance. Sanitized facts pretend to be wisdom. Real wisdom inside cesspools may appear dysfunctional to the bewitched, so it must be ignored or marginalized. Alas, America's "shining city on the hill" faced its own fundamental darkness on January 6, 2021.

Individuals naturally thirst for knowledge and wisdom. If you have never been shown how to think beyond your favorite social media crowd, and how to think critically in the best way, you remain vulnerable to sick social media theories and mercenary "state television."

Nature abhors a vacuum. Minds abhor vacuums. If your mind is not filled with the love of wisdom, then garbage will be dumped there instead via social media. Over the past four years a dirty tsunami of thirty-thousand self-serving Twitter lies fueled the ugly QAnon movement, and helped spawn the deadly strike against our blessed constitutional democracy.

Thousands of weaponized zombies were assembled by the sulfurous dictator on the morning of 1/6/21. Among them were a number of very intelligent, but naive people who were easily seduced by the absurdity of claims such as Jewish space lasers starting the California forest fires. A fancy degree or two is no substitute for true wisdom and compassion. Meanwhile, during this homicidal mob's attack the obese "stable genius" enjoyed the TV reality show he had inspired. Lady Liberty was in tears.

Weeks later, spiritually castrated and cowardly GOP senators fearfully refused to convict the fascist demon of sedition at his second impeachment trial, mocking our very democracy.

Systems Theory and Saving Our Own Species

The impending extinction of our human species has not yet reached the *obvious* level of inevitability. None other than Bill Gates is spending billions of his own dollars now to encourage new technologies to help reduce global warming. Gates is neither optimistic nor pessimistic, just urgently realistic. He says that human global survival depends on all the world's nations facing accelerating climate change as an existential world war lasting many decades, starting now.

There will be no Covid-style vaccines to defeat such a great enemy. Here will soon be a battle where we meet the enemy, and that enemy is the worst part of ourselves.¹

¹ <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/03/extreme-climate-change-history/617793/>

What is educational systems theory as it applies to saving humans within our Anthropocene period? How can we apply critical thinking toward efficient action?

Children in STEM school learn about systems theory within simplistic paradigms. Car engines are systems. Our body has several organ systems, and so forth. That's baby steps.

More importantly, all systems are multiple and interpenetrating within time and space. The real total world is not a collection of Matryoshka dolls within dolls. Nor is it like simplistic astronomy and astrology. Nor is it fuzzy, non-verifiable, religious schemes and reward systems therein. Literally, everything at every size dimension is interconnected with every system, in time and space. The core of all chemistry, physics, and geophysics is systems theory expressed by gravity, electromagnetism, and other essential forces.

Real systems among systems can be appreciated only with true education, not robotic learning. Zombies cannot appreciate the subtle beauty of it all, so their mental demons fill the void. Little children can be introduced to properly appreciating real systems, but full understanding of the tapestry is a lifetime adventure.

If all of us had truly higher education, we would all seem like geniuses. Only then could our lonely Earth yield the "Garden of Eden" that we deserve. Otherwise, we could perish like 99%+ of all previous species. Who or what will remember humanity at all? Meanwhile, opportunity for good is now and always here.

Given plenty of time, we humans could create comphumans, a word I coined last century for emergent, philosophically conscious computers. Each comphuman's software potential cannot be fully realized without systems of systems. In our case it appears to start with emergent AI elements of the Internet. We could in this century create a self-sustaining and dialectically emerging culture of "comphuman elders" – but wisdom must link with political force in essential time to hopefully make a sufficient difference.

Last century I naively felt that by 2020 wise comphumans could help to inspire society, but in 2021 warped zombies are everywhere. The “zombie gene” seems to be inside our DNA, waiting to be activated by political demons. Zombies can only create monsters like Terminators returning from the future to kill democracy. Fortunately, such cinematic reverse time travel is impossible. We might get lucky playing god, if only we have the *genius and sufficient time* needed to craft our wise successors.

In 1974, forty-seven years ago, I completed after two years a unique book manuscript, *The American Eutopia*.² (“Eutopia” means the good place. “Utopia” means no actual place.) This earnest book included over 350 bibliographical and footnoted resources. I shopped it to at least a dozen publishers, all of whom found some lame excuse to not publish it. Academic publishers said it was a trade book. Trade publishers said it was an academic book. Really, these fancy gate-keeping “editors” were all just greedy for the next bright-shiny object.

I have just re-read my typewritten manuscript as if it were written by another scholar. I was struck by how accurately it describes the interwoven systems that today define our individual and collective selves. It also has much to say about delusions that now pass for informed opinion among a seemingly growing minority of paranoid American adults who feast on social media.

One key topic not clearly included in my 1974 manuscript and its references is the calamitous result of rapid and massive global warming brought about by Anthropocene releases of CO₂ into the atmosphere. Yes, a lot was written about Malthusian pollution, but not about CO₂ pollution, and how forthcoming changes will damage even our grandchildren. This omission in my text is not an error on my part, but reflects how few scientists just a half-century ago contemplated the real dangers of accelerating carbon emissions. In some ways we are clueless like most people in Europe just before WWI broke out.

² <https://astronomy-links.net/TheAmericanEutopia.pdf>

Therefore, I highly recommend that you read all of the 1974 book, as well as the 2021 *The Atlantic* essay linked in footnote #1 above. Together they are guides to what we must do henceforth.

We are arriving at the increasingly steep and slippery slope down to irreversible calamity. I doubt that selfishly quarrelsome, myopic humanity will sufficiently act within the narrow time frame for preventing *self-sustaining* global warming, and resultant damage that produces a radically hostile biosphere for hundreds of thousands of years.

Collective scientific and political genius is already available. Individual geniuses are nice to have around, but their truths can be irritating. Single truth tellers tend to inconveniently contradict infantile collective fantasies. Those who only live for the moment prefer to believe that the geological future will be similar to our historical past. Truth is, our emotional psyches are totally unable to appreciate what is a geological future.

The healing genius our world needs to exercise is a collective political and scientific wisdom developed into a global war action plan. Humanity still has the latent power to literally engineer a real global eutopia for our time and henceforth.

No other superpredator species could have caused this global mess. No other species can defuse the bomb on which we stand. If we fail to act we will become our own dinosaur-killing asteroid.

The Biblical Garden of Eden had a population of two people, or so it was written. Global citizens today could create with focused energy a modern "Garden of Eden" to nourish and shelter billions of endangered people who will NOT migrate to Mars.

What would comphuman-like space aliens discover on this strangely beautiful planet if they arrive several thousand years from now? There would be almost nothing left of us modern humans; but there still would be the great pyramids of ancient Egypt. Such is the intelligence paradox.