EVOLUTION—
it's not Progress, it's just
MIDDLE-AGE SPREAD

Reg Morrison

...the Retiarius spider

...the toolmaking genius
of the animal world ...

Retiarius spiders manufacture their hand-weapons from three different kinds of silk. None are "sticky".

Placing the "heel" of her third foot on the three kinds of silk, she pushes the top two into small zigzag folds, dabbing these on to the two high-tensile reinforcing lines that lie beneath them.

It takes her about 20 minutes to knit a hunting net.

The hunting net nears completion.

Drapsis subflava
A spider waits in her aerial hide for prey to pass beneath her.

Once caught, the victim struggles to escape.

When her victim is exhausted, the spider closes in for the kill.

**DNA: Code for Life**

- **Adenosine (A)**
- **Thymine (T)**
- **Guanine (G)**
- **Cytosine (C)**

The sides of DNA’s double helix are made of sugar and phosphate molecules.

**RNA (Ribonucleic Acid)**

- **Adenine (A)**
- **Guanine (G)**
- **Cytosine (C)**
- **Uracil (U)**

The bases are attached to ribose sugars and are hydrogen bonded with each other.

**The Human Brain, with its Speech and Auditory Processing Centres Highlighted**
THREE COMMON DELUSIONS:

1. We have dual existence (body + mind).

2. We are essentially rational, and ‘morally responsible’ for our behaviour.

3. We have ‘conscious free will’.

These 3 perceptions combine to saddle us with the most dangerous delusion of all...

**ANTHROPOCENTRISM**

(Humans are ‘Special’)

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**Humanity’s Dangerous Delusion:**

Evolution progresses by complexity and intelligence, and Homo sapiens is the star on the Christmas tree of life.

![Diagram](image)

But the facts paint a very different picture...

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**The Tree of Life**

Evolution is not Progress, it’s just middle-aged sprawl.

![Diagram](image)

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**The sole drive of all life is to replicate its genes.**

Growth and reproduction are means to that end.

![Diagram](image)

Shade from central leaves forces a plant’s lower branches to grow outward in search of sunlight.

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**LIFE** is an expression of the chaotic energy gradient that exists at the interface between the Earth and space. Life feeds it and maintains it, and so life will appear wherever such gradients occur in the universe.

![Image](image)
There are 30–100 million species embedded in the chaotic energy gradient that forms the biosphere of this middle-aged planet.

The key to this massive evolutionary byproduct is massive time. Australia is the Earth’s time capsule, and its unparalleled record is on permanent public display...

Iron crystals, 4.15 billion years old, from Mt Narryer, WA

Primitive atmosphere + lightning yields amino acids

Columnar fossil

North Pole

FOSSIL STROMATOLITES

Pilbara, WA (3.5 billion years old)

Branched fossil

near Shaw River

VANT STROMATOLITE FOSSIL

2.8 billion years old

LIVING STROMATOLITES, low tide
TROMATOLITES, high tide

This mat of green 'hair' is made of filaments of cyanobacteria and the bubbles are their waste gas, oxygen.

This chemistry represents the greatest pollution event the world has ever known and it is the source of the oxygen that we are breathing now.

This is also the chemistry that built Western Australia's Hamersley Ranges...

Cyanobacteria, near Komen, NSW

built by bacterial oxygen

Hamersley Ranges, Western Australia

Archebacteria of the Hamersley Ranges built these cliffs...

ill into a Hamersley gorge and you walk back into deep time—more than two billion years in most places.

These cliffs of iron oxide commemorate evolution's gravest threat.

Eukaryote Cell

Archebacterial plus eukaryote... You and I are eukaryote corporations, born of the Hamersley pollution crisis.

Heritage of the Hamersleys...

- Oxygenated atmosphere
- Ozone (UV shield)
- Eukaryotes (bacterial-archaeal composites)
Corporate Bodies...
probably evolved more than a billion years ago, but left no fossils.

About 600 million years ago, several very complex marine animals began to leave body impressions on sea beds around the world. It seems they may have discovered collagen.

Queensland Lungfish, Neoceratodus forsteri

The evolution of humans

Homo habilis, 1.4 million yrs.
East Africa

Homo sapiens, 13,000 BCE
S.E. Australia

Austral Homo sp?
(erectus sapiens?)
13,000 BCE
S.E. Australia

Aboriginal culture, early 1800's
New York

Biological deposits (Homo sapiens)

Habitat lost

Brush-tailed Possum, Sydney

POPULATION
TECHNOLOGY

[Image of a forest with text: in our impact equals P X A X T, there are no technological solutions. New technology merely increases our energy debt. The more sophisticated the technology, the greater the debt.]

[Image of a forest with text: dinosaurs walked here...]

[Image of a burnt tree with text: burned forest (due to overstocking with cattle)]

[Image of a burnt landscape with text: burnt forest (due to mining fires and logging)]
Our impact on the planet is rigidly governed by rules of existence that can be expressed as an equation:

\[
I = P \times A \times T
\]

**IMPACT = Population \times Activity \times Technology**

Since the \( P \) and \( T \) factors are still growing, and since we are already in energy debt, we must face the inevitable conclusion:

*Increasing our energy debt will lead inevitably to population collapse.*

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The boom-bust syndrome has punctuated human history for at least 5,000 years.

Examples: Malta, Sumer, Egypt, Mycenae, Petra, Hvar, and Easter I. Examples include:

- Precisely the same pulse appears in many plague-prone species, especially rodents.
- The collapse mechanism is built into the genome and is hormonally orchestrated.
- Malnutrition, disease and environmental stress clear up the stragglers.

This auto-collapse mechanism is known as the General Adaptive Syndrome, or G.A.S.

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**Island cultures provide the clearest evidence of G.A.S. in our species.**

**Malta**

- 8,500 years ago—settlement.
- 5,500 years ago—deforestation, erosion, aridity and declining grain harvests.
- 5,000 years ago—droughts and massive temple building.
- (Cults of Death and Fertility)
- 4,500 years ago—the population and its culture disappear.

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**The rise and fall of isolated civilisations.**

**THE SEQUENCE:**
1. Culture flourishes
2. Deforestation
3. Erosion
4. Climate change
5. Harvests decline
6. Birth rate falls
7. Cults flourish
8. Society fragments
9. Starvation occurs
10. Population crashes

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**Easter Island**

- Easter Island population 500 AD—2000
- 10,000 years ago
- 5,000 years ago
- 0 years ago

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CONCLUSION:

1. Life is an expression of the chaotic energy gradient that exists between matter and the voids of space, and life therefore appears spontaneously and regulates itself.

2. As typical products of genetic evolution we are neither alone in the universe, nor special in any biological sense.

3. Like other plague species we too have a built-in self-collapse mechanism: the General Adaptive Syndrome.

4. Our population growth fits the standard plague graph, and we are now approaching our GAS peak.

5. Since we are a typical mammal, and P = AX + T, our intelligence offers us immunity from GAS.

   Evolution is not progress, it's just middle-age spread.

The ideas and the images you have just seen come from these two books by Reg Morrison.

Plague Species: Is it in our genes? Summarizes humanity's struggle on the planet and explores the evolutionary origins of the behaviors that caused it.

Australia: Land Beyond Time. Sets the evolution of Australia in its place and its animals against a 3/4 billion-year kaleidoscope.

ILLUSION

REALITY

What appears to be a tree of Growth and Progress is in fact a pyramid of growing dependency.
The Tikopia story

2,800 years ago—the island was colonised by Polynesians.
2,100 years ago—the environmental threat was recognised.
- Arbor culture was introduced.
- Birth control (including infanticide) was imposed.
- Young men were sent on suicidal canoe voyages.
- Pigs were hunted to extinction.

RESULT:
The population stabilised at roughly 1,000 inhabitants about 1,100 years ago, and remained at that level.

(It took the Tikopians about 1,000 years to achieve this unique stability)