

April 29, 2018 – EARTH DAY

We just had another Earth Day. This foolishness dates back to 1970. For our entertainment, [Freedom Works](#) lists the 13 worst predictions made on that first earth day.

*... In 1970, the first Earth Day was celebrated — okay, “celebrated” doesn’t capture the funereal tone of the event. The events (organized in part by then hippie and now convicted murderer [Ira Einhorn](#)) predicted death, destruction and disease unless we did exactly as progressives commanded.*

*Behold the coming apocalypse as predicted on and around [Earth Day, 1970](#):*

1. *“Civilization will end within 15 or 30 years unless immediate action is taken against problems facing mankind.” — Harvard biologist George Wald*

2. *“We are in an environmental crisis which threatens the survival of this nation, and of the world as a suitable place of human habitation.” — Washington University biologist Barry Commoner*

3. *“Man must stop pollution and conserve his resources, not merely to enhance existence but to save the race from intolerable deterioration and possible extinction.” — New York Times editorial*

4. *“Population will inevitably and completely outstrip whatever small increases in food supplies we make. The death rate will increase until at least 100-200 million people per year will be starving to death during the next ten years.” — Stanford University biologist Paul Ehrlich ...*

There were many mentions of Paul Ehrlich in the above collection of bogus earth day predictions. So we have more on him. Even the NY Times figured out the fraud of Paul Ehrlich says [Jonathan Last](#). But, Mr. Last says Ehrlich is even worse than the Times knows. All of this is from June three years ago, but it is germane to today's posts. And it is not the last word.

*Everyone is talking about the New York Times [piece](#) exposing how utterly wrong, willfully blind, and insanely dangerous Paul Ehrlich is, and has been, for the last forty-seven years. There’s video, too.*

*This is great, I guess.*

*Of course, it’s been obvious that Ehrlich was not just misguided, but an actual charlatan, since the 1970s. The late economist Julian Simon spent most of his career [exposing Ehrlich’s errors](#). You may remember the Ehrlich-Simon wager. In 1980, Simon bet Ehrlich \$1,000 that over the course of the following decade the price of a basket of commodities—any resources Ehrlich chose—would drop, as proof that Ehrlich’s ravings about the relationship of population to scarcity was wrong.*

*Simon was correct. Ten years later Ehrlich sent him a check, with no note. Never prone to either civility or introspection—he frequently called people he disagreed with “fools,” “idiots,” “clowns,” and worse—Ehrlich later told the Wall Street Journal, “If Simon disappeared from the face of the Earth, that would be great for humanity.” Hell of a guy.*

*Other people caught on to Ehrlich over the years. In her book about sex-selective abortion, Mara Hvistendahl has a long, devastating interview with Ehrlich in which she probes his errors, pushes him for accountability, and reveals him to be a doddering, foolish, old man wedded to a political ideology and with no interest in science, demographics, or even basic math. And Hvistendahl is a progressive feminist in good standing. (I spent a good deal of time on Ehrlich in my book on demographics, too.) ...*

Ehrlich recently ranted some more in a Manchester Guardian interview. Real Clear Science responds.

*Do you see yourself as a worthless cockroach contributing to the collapse of human civilization? Probably not, but Stanford biologist Paul Ehrlich thinks precisely that about you.*

*Fifty years ago, he published arguably the worst book ever written, The Population Bomb, which declared that human overpopulation would cause mass starvation. Instead, the Green Revolution (led in part by ACSH co-founder Norman Borlaug) caused global food production to explode, and the world population more than doubled from 3.5 billion in 1968 to 7.6 billion today.*

*The reason The Population Bomb was so terrible is not because its predictions were wrong; most scientists make incorrect predictions. No, the book is terrible because of how it made people in the developed world feel about people in the developing world. A short anecdote, which I described for Forbes, illustrates my point.*

*Several years ago, I gave a talk in Seattle about the benefits of GMOs. One person in the audience expressed concern that GMOs were simply helping to "feed the monster" -- that is, the "monster" known as hungry people in poor parts of the world. Though she didn't verbalize it, her words were clear: The world would be better off if poor people (mostly brown and black, I might add) in distant lands weren't given any food. Starve the monster.*

*This appalling attitude is surprisingly common in allegedly compassionate cities like Seattle. And the book that gives this openly misanthropic, vaguely genocidal belief a veneer of academic credibility is The Population Bomb. ...*

Another adherent of this type of thinking, John Holdren, ended up being Obama's science advisor. Holdren helped set up the bet Ehrlich lost to Julian Simon. Trump's predecessor had a talent for filling his administration with hopeless ideologues. Here's some items from Holdren's Wiki entry.

*... Overpopulation was an early concern and interest. In a 1969 article, Holdren and co-author Paul R. Ehrlich argued, "if the population control measures are not initiated immediately, and effectively, all the technology man can bring to bear will not fend off the misery to come." In 1973, Holdren encouraged a decline in fertility to well below replacement in the United States, because "210 million now is too many and 280 million in 2040 is likely to be much too many. ...*

*... Holdren was involved in the famous Simon–Ehrlich wager in 1980. He, along with two other scientists helped Paul R. Ehrlich establish the bet with Julian Simon, in which they bet that the*

*price of five key metals would be higher in 1990. The bet was centered around a disagreement concerning the future scarcity of resources in an increasingly polluted and heavily populated world. Ehrlich and Holdren lost the bet, when the price of metals had decreased by 1990. ...*

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## Freedom Works

### [13 Worst Predictions Made on Earth Day, 1970](#)

by Jon Gabriel

The 1970s were a lousy decade. [Embarrassing movies](#), [dreadful music](#) and [downright terrifying clothes](#) reflected the national mood following an unpopular war, endless political scandals and a faltering economy.

Popular culture was consumed with decline, especially Hollywood. The Omega Man, Soylent Green, Damnation Alley and countless other dystopian films showed a planet wrecked by war, pollution and neglect. In large part, the entertainment industry was reflecting the culture at large.

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Behold the coming apocalypse as predicted on and around [Earth Day, 1970](#):

1. "Civilization will end within 15 or 30 years unless immediate action is taken against problems facing mankind." — Harvard biologist George Wald
2. "We are in an environmental crisis which threatens the survival of this nation, and of the world as a suitable place of human habitation." — Washington University biologist Barry Commoner
3. "Man must stop pollution and conserve his resources, not merely to enhance existence but to save the race from intolerable deterioration and possible extinction." — New York Times editorial
4. "Population will inevitably and completely outstrip whatever small increases in food supplies we make. The death rate will increase until at least 100-200 million people per year will be starving to death during the next ten years." — Stanford University biologist Paul Ehrlich
5. "Most of the people who are going to die in the greatest cataclysm in the history of man have already been born... [By 1975] some experts feel that food shortages will have escalated the present level of world hunger and starvation into famines of unbelievable proportions. Other experts, more optimistic, think the ultimate food-population collision will not occur until the decade of the 1980s." — Paul Ehrlich

6. "It is already too late to avoid mass starvation," — Denis Hayes, Chief organizer for Earth Day
  7. "Demographers agree almost unanimously on the following grim timetable: by 1975 widespread famines will begin in India; these will spread by 1990 to include all of India, Pakistan, China and the Near East, Africa. By the year 2000, or conceivably sooner, South and Central America will exist under famine conditions.... By the year 2000, thirty years from now, the entire world, with the exception of Western Europe, North America, and Australia, will be in famine." — North Texas State University professor Peter Gunter
  8. "In a decade, urban dwellers will have to wear gas masks to survive air pollution... by 1985 air pollution will have reduced the amount of sunlight reaching earth by one half." — Life magazine
  9. "At the present rate of nitrogen buildup, it's only a matter of time before light will be filtered out of the atmosphere and none of our land will be usable." — Ecologist Kenneth Watt
  10. "Air pollution...is certainly going to take hundreds of thousands of lives in the next few years alone." — Paul Ehrlich
  11. "By the year 2000, if present trends continue, we will be using up crude oil at such a rate... that there won't be any more crude oil. You'll drive up to the pump and say, 'Fill 'er up, buddy,' and he'll say, 'I am very sorry, there isn't any.'" — Ecologist Kenneth Watt
  12. "[One] theory assumes that the earth's cloud cover will continue to thicken as more dust, fumes, and water vapor are belched into the atmosphere by industrial smokestacks and jet planes. Screened from the sun's heat, the planet will cool, the water vapor will fall and freeze, and a new Ice Age will be born." — Newsweek magazine
  13. "The world has been chilling sharply for about twenty years. If present trends continue, the world will be about four degrees colder for the global mean temperature in 1990, but eleven degrees colder in the year 2000. This is about twice what it would take to put us into an ice age." — Kenneth Watt
- Quotes from "[Earth Day, Then and Now](#)," by Ronald Bailey, Reason.com. May 1, 2000.

## Weekly Standard

### [Paul Ehrlich: Even Worse than the New York Times Says He Is](#)

by Jonathan V. Last

Everyone is talking about the *New York Times* [piece](#) exposing how utterly wrong, willfully blind, and insanely dangerous Paul Ehrlich is, and has been, for the last forty-seven years. There's video, too.

This is great, I guess.

Of course, it's been obvious that Ehrlich was not just misguided, but an actual charlatan, since the 1970s. The late economist Julian Simon spent most of his career [exposing Ehrlich's errors](#). You may remember the Ehrlich-Simon wager. In 1980, Simon bet Ehrlich \$1,000 that over the

course of the following decade the price of a basket of commodities—any resources Ehrlich chose—would drop, as proof that Ehrlich's ravings about the relationship of population to scarcity was wrong.

Simon was correct. Ten years later Ehrlich sent him a check, with no note. Never prone to either civility or introspection—he frequently called people he disagreed with "fools," "idiots," "clowns," and worse—Ehrlich later told the *Wall Street Journal*, "If Simon disappeared from the face of the Earth, that would be great for humanity." Hell of a guy.

Other people caught on to Ehrlich over the years. In her book about sex-selective abortion, Mara Hvistendahl has a long, devastating interview with Ehrlich in which she probes his errors, pushes him for accountability, and reveals him to be a doddering, foolish, old man wedded to a political ideology and with no interest in science, demographics, or even basic math. And Hvistendahl is a progressive feminist in good standing. (I spent a good deal of time on Ehrlich in my book on demographics, too.)

And it's not just economists, feminists, and conservative hangers-on who knew Ehrlich was wrong. Just about every serious demographer on the planet has spent the last 30 years examining the phenomenon of *declining* fertility rates, which may lead to population contraction. Don't take my word for it, go ask the United Nations.

But here's the thing: Even in the face of all of this, the elite caste has showered Ehrlich with awards and honors.

In 1990—the same year he lost his bet with Julian Simon—Ehrlich was awarded a million dollar MacArthur "genius" grant and was simultaneously feted across the Atlantic with Sweden's Crafoord Prize, which was worth just about half a million. In 1993 the Heinz Family Foundation bestowed on him its first Heinz Award. This little trinket came with \$100,000 in cash and the most delusional praise possible, claiming that Ehrlich's "perspective, uncommon among scientists, has made [him and his wife] the target of often harsh criticism—criticism they accept with grace as the price of their forthrightness." Which is a peculiar way of explaining that Ehrlich was completely wrong and that he responded to all such evidence with ad hominem attacks. Five years later, in 1998, he was awarded the Tyler Prize, which comes with \$200,000. The money train kept on rolling.

And it wasn't just dumb philanthropists. "Serious" organizations continued to honor him. In 2001, the American Institute of Biological Sciences gave Ehrlich its "Distinguished Scientist" award. In 2009, the World Wildlife Fund featured him as a guest lecturer in their flagship speaker series. In 2012, he was inducted into London's Royal Society, which is Britain's nearly 400-year-old national academy of science. There is more. So much more.

Paul Ehrlich's entire career stands as a monument to the ideological imperatives of the world's elites and the extent to which they exist not just independent from, but in actual opposition to, both science, evidence, reason, and good faith.

The very fact of Paul Ehrlich is an indictment of the *bien pensant* progressive order. And the *New York Times*—which is only half a century late to the party—has nothing to say about that.

## Real Clear Science

### Paul Ehrlich: A New Rant From An Unrepentant Secular Doomsday Prophet

by Alex Berezow

Do you see yourself as a worthless cockroach contributing to the collapse of human civilization? Probably not, but Stanford biologist Paul Ehrlich thinks precisely that about you.

Fifty years ago, he published arguably the worst book ever written, *The Population Bomb*, which declared that human overpopulation would cause mass starvation. Instead, the Green Revolution (led in part by ACSH co-founder Norman Borlaug) caused global food production to explode, and the world population more than doubled from 3.5 billion in 1968 to 7.6 billion today.

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### **A New Rant from an Unrepentant Secular Doomsday Prophet**

Now, at the age of 85, Dr. Ehrlich still hasn't let reality change his mind. In fact, he's doubled down on his apocalyptic prognostications. In an interview with The Guardian, he likens humans to cancer cells. The article reads like a crackpot manifesto, channeling the unscientific ramblings of the Food Babe along with the conspiracy theorizing of Alex Jones:

*The world's optimum population is less than two billion people – 5.6 billion fewer than on the planet today, he argues, and there is an increasing toxification of the entire planet by synthetic chemicals that may be more dangerous to people and wildlife than climate change.*

*Ehrlich also says an unprecedented redistribution of wealth is needed to end the over-consumption of resources, but "the rich who now run the global system – that hold the annual 'world destroyer' meetings in Davos – are unlikely to let it happen".*

Let's debunk this, line by line.

There is no optimum human population. Dr. Ehrlich pulled the "less than two billion" figure out of thin air. Besides, demographers predict that the population will peak and begin to shrink, probably sometime in the 2100's. The reason is because people tend to have fewer children as they become wealthier. That fact exposes his "cancer cell" analogy as entirely bogus. Humans don't behave like cancer cells.

Dr. Ehrlich's concern over "synthetic chemicals" is simply based on ignorance of chemistry and biochemistry. It doesn't matter if a chemical is "natural" or "synthetic." From a toxicological perspective, the only thing that matters is the dose and how an organism's metabolism handles it. Chemists can make pretty much anything they want in the laboratory, so there is little practical distinction between natural and synthetic chemicals. There is neither anything magical about the former nor evil about the latter.

Dr. Ehrlich's screed against the cabal of rich people who run "world destroyer" meetings in Davos is so utterly conspiratorial and unhinged, that it makes me wonder if he believes the Illuminati helped fake the moon landing.

### **The Mouth of Fools Poureth Out Folly**

To this day, Dr. Ehrlich stands by his book. Though his timing was off, he claims the book is correct. What explains his lack of repentance in the face of overwhelming evidence to the contrary?

Dr. Ehrlich is an ideologue. His predictions are less like the careful analysis of a serious scientist and more like the wish list of a misanthrope. Apparently, wisdom and grace don't always grow with age.

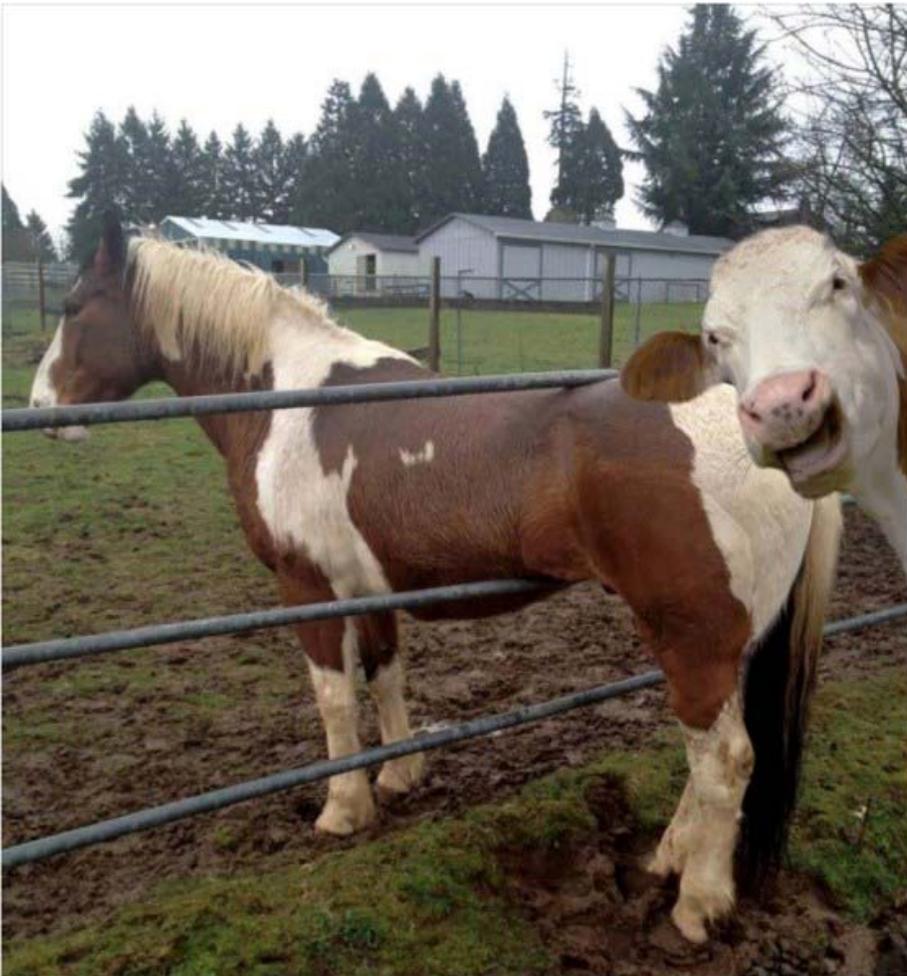




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