



Faculty of Design

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Medicine in the anthropocene: Modern healthcare and the transition to an ecologically viable society

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RSD⁵

SYMPOSIUM

systemic design for social complexity

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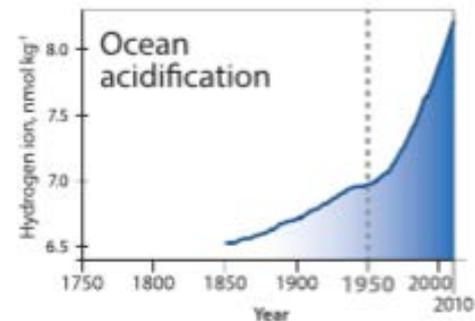
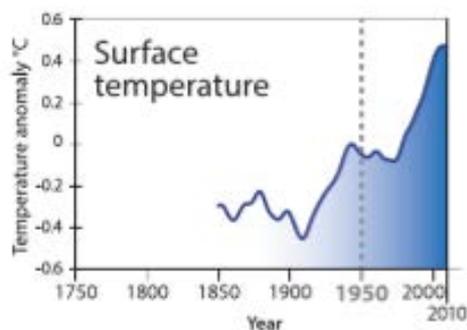
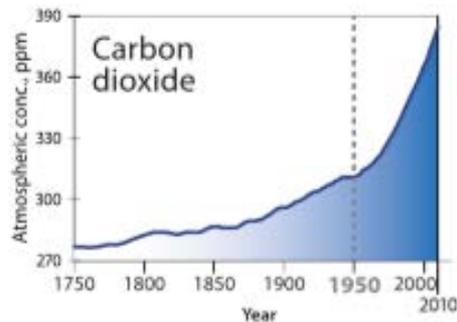
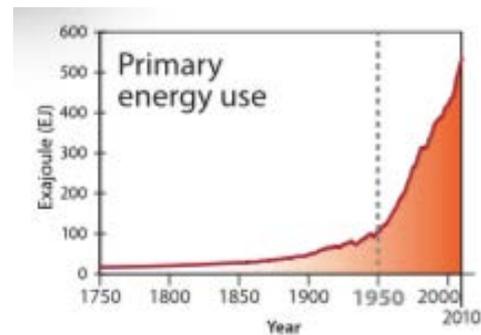
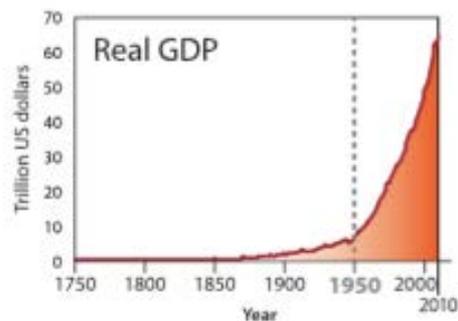
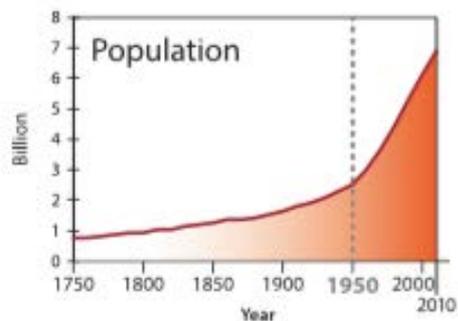


Medicine in the Anthropocene: Modern Healthcare and the Transition to an Ecologically Viable Society

1. The Anthropocene
2. The Problem Context
3. Transformation in Socio-Ecological Systems
4. Building Alternatives: Minimum Specifications
5. Building Alternatives: Wicked Dilemmas
6. Case Studies: Transition Design, Salutogenic Design

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The Anthropocene



Charts: Steffen, W., Broadgate, W., Deutsch, L., Gaffney, O., Ludwig, C. 2015. "The Trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration." *The Anthropocene Review* January.

The Problem Context: Medicine in the Anthropocene

Research article

Respiratory health and ecosyndemics in a time of global warming

Merrill Singer

Will Medicine Survive the Anthropocene?

Up to ten percent of major drugs contain plant but a warming world could put those—and oth



Global antibiotics 'revolution' needed

19 May 2016 | Health

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4. Mosquitos bringing dengue fever



How Climate Change Is Cranking The Heat On Public Health Crises

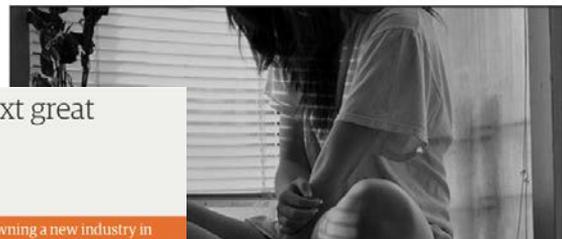
September 23, 2016 Updated 09/23/2016 2:46 PM

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Psychologist: "Modern Life is Not Good for Mental Health"

Daniel Lattier | March 18, 2016



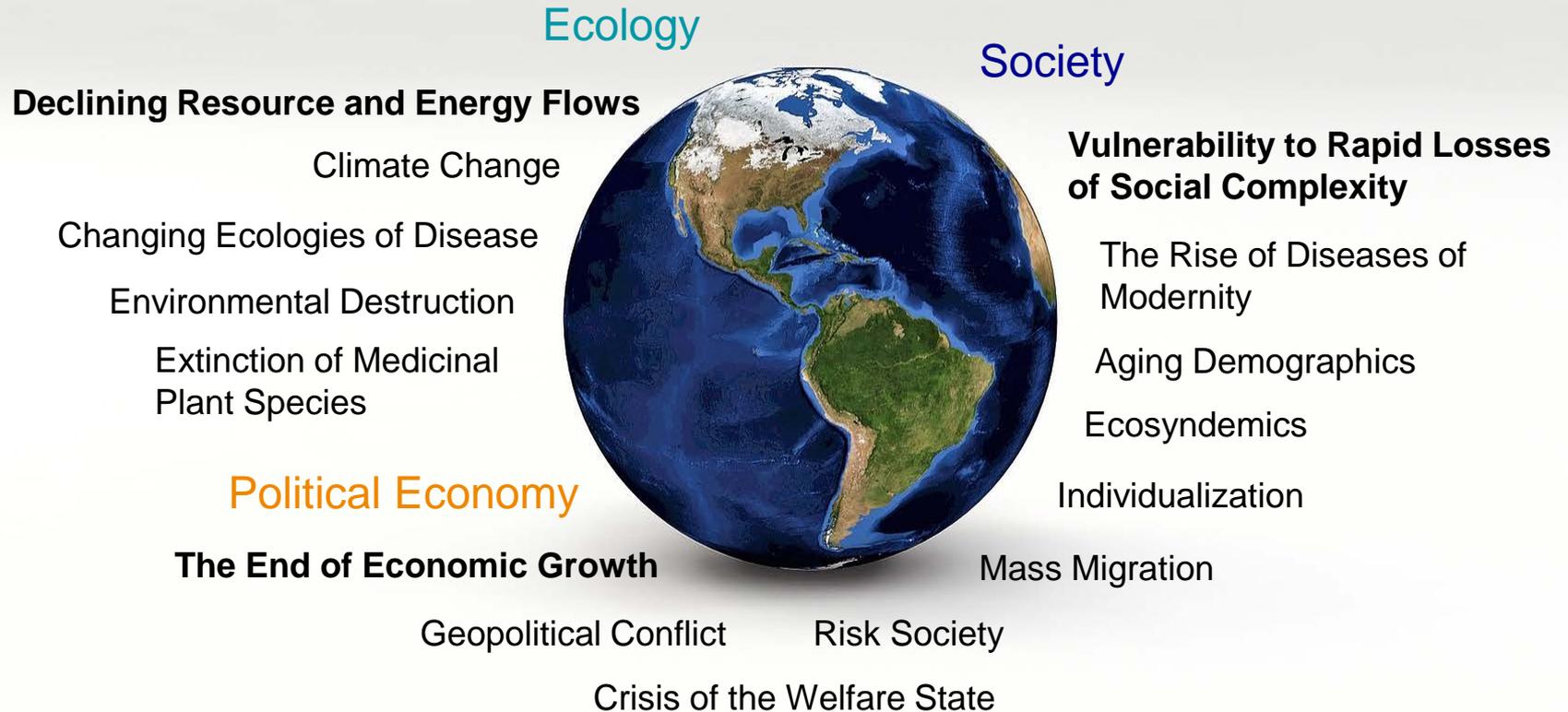
Loneliness will be the next great moneyspinner

Emily White

Isolation among young people is increasing, spawning a new industry in companionship. Soon paying for walks, dinners and dates will feel normal



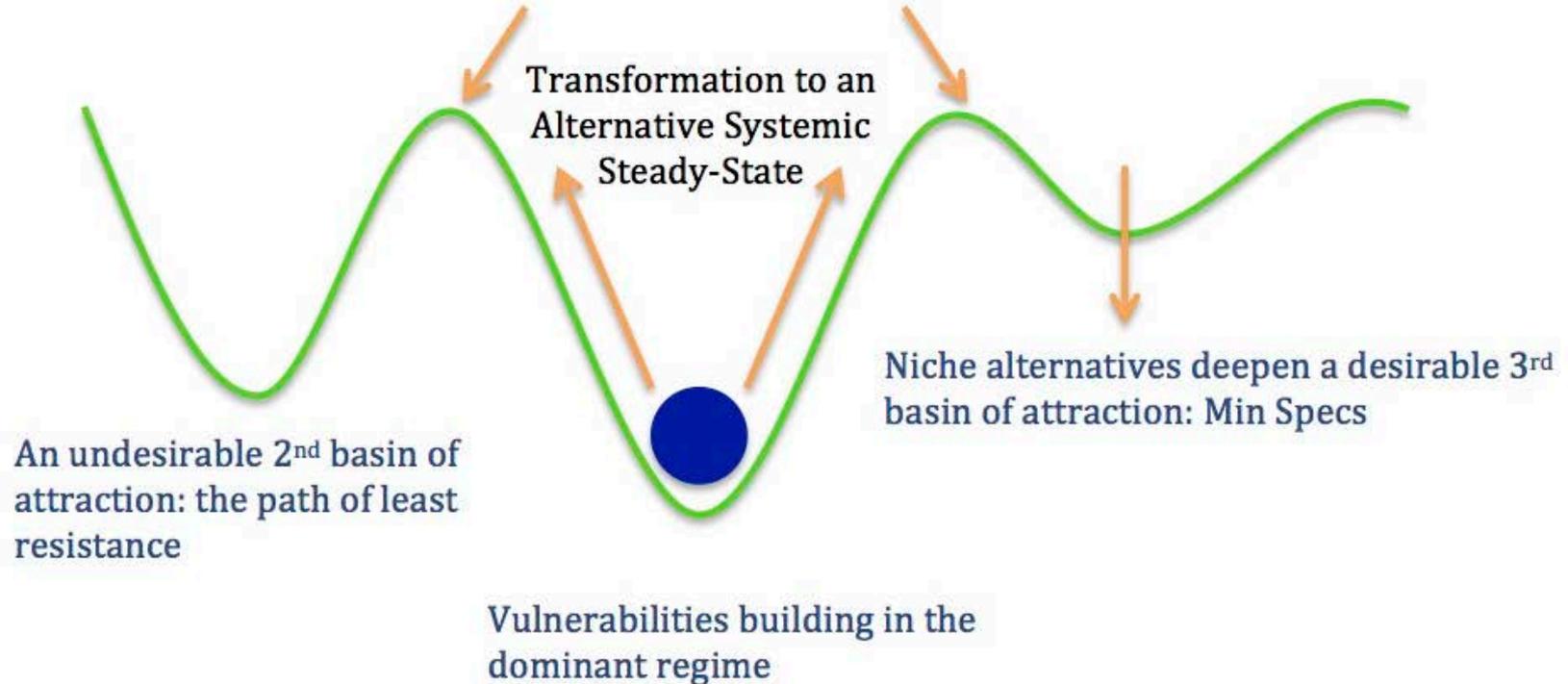
The Problem Context: Medicine in the Anthropocene





Transformation in Socio-Ecological Systems

Ecological, Social, Economic Pressures of the Anthropocene





Building Alternatives: Minimum Specifications for Redesigning Health Systems (Global Scale)

1. Decrease the energetic and material throughput of modern medicine
2. Extract the best of modern medicine from reliance on industrial production, consumption, and distribution
3. Re-embed aspects of healthcare in networks of family and community reciprocity
4. Move away from individualism in medicine to incorporate broader recognition of the interdependence of social and ecological wholes at multiple scales
5. Leverage disruptive technologies and ontologies



Strategies: Economic Degrowth

- Redefine the purpose of the economy from generating growth to supporting human wellbeing.
- Care and health anchor a new labour-intensive, prosumption-oriented economy
- From curing to prevention and care
- Care provides an enduring basis for self-esteem and status





Strategies: Transition Design

“[T]he future with less oil could be preferable to the present, but only if sufficient creativity and imagination are applied early enough in the design of this transition”

– Hopkins, 2008

“Transition Design focuses on the need for ‘cosmopolitan localism’, a place-based lifestyle in which solutions to global problems are designed to be appropriate for local social and environmental conditions.”

- Irwin et al., 2015





Strategies: Salutogenic Design

- Embeds preventative health into the structure of social institutions and the built environment
- Ecological architecture restores the environment
- Urban design promotes healthy behaviour
- Principles of design used to reduce the burden of disease
- Enhanced by social innovation, which introduces novel processes, behaviours, and beliefs





Building Alternatives: Innovation Space

Ecological limits to economic growth could twist sociological processes of modernization in a retrospective direction, opening up space for innovation in health systems

Premodern Societies

Modern Societies

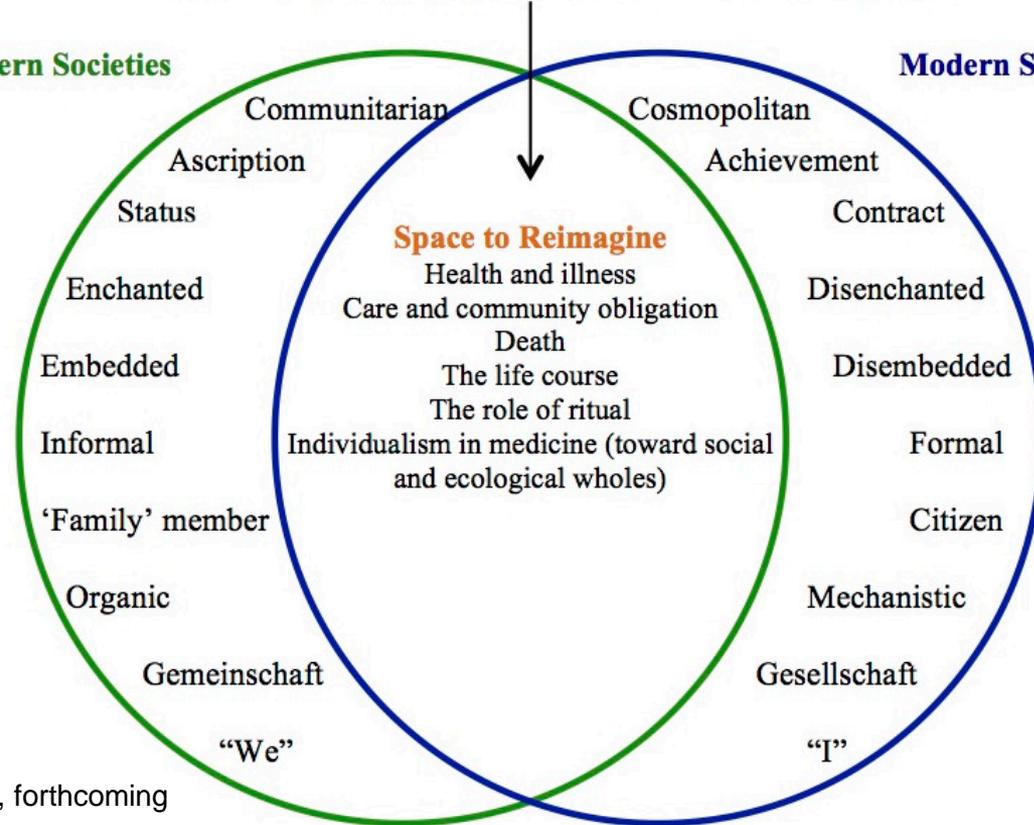


Diagram from Zywert & Quilley, forthcoming

Medicine in the Anthropocene: Modern Healthcare and the Transition to an Ecologically Viable Society

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