

Life Is But a Dream — An Interview with Chris Korda by Amadeus Vogelsang

LEAD:



Amadeus Vogelsang: *snuff your life, 0-7*, series of collages, mixed media, 2020  
Ne0: *snuff the rich, chris*, 2020

What if you overdose on an unknown drug and all of a sudden your dreams alter the past so that they become reality in the future? Civilization is mainly being constructed by religion, governance and science, as of late seeming to fall apart. Nowadays, the thriving force appears to be the individual. This interview with environmentalist, musician, reverend, programmer and queer icon Chris Korda on the force field between science and religion questions the possibility of a day when all those forces thrive towards a common global good and evokes a time of catastrophic destruction and death.

TEXT:

<<The Church of Euthanasia was inspired by a dream, in which Rev. Chris Korda confronted an alien intelligence known as The Being who speaks for the inhabitants of Earth in other dimensions. The Being warned that our planet's ecosystem is failing, and that our leaders deny this. The Being asked why our leaders lie to us, and why so many of us believe these lies. Rev. Korda awoke from the dream moaning the Church's infamous slogan, Save the Planet – Kill Yourself.>>

<https://www.churchofeuthanasia.org/history.html><<

Amadeus Vogelsang (AV): It's the 28th birthday of this infamous dream. In 2019 the Church of Euthanasia (CoE) has published the fifth issue of «*SNUFF IT, The Quarterly Journal of The Church of Euthanasia,*» has been represented by artist run space Goswell Road at the art fair Paris Internationale, Chris Korda had a new EP release on the electronic music label *Perlon* with a release party at Berghain/Panorama Bar and much more... How have the dreams altered those last three decades? And what are your resulting visions/predictions for the future three decades?



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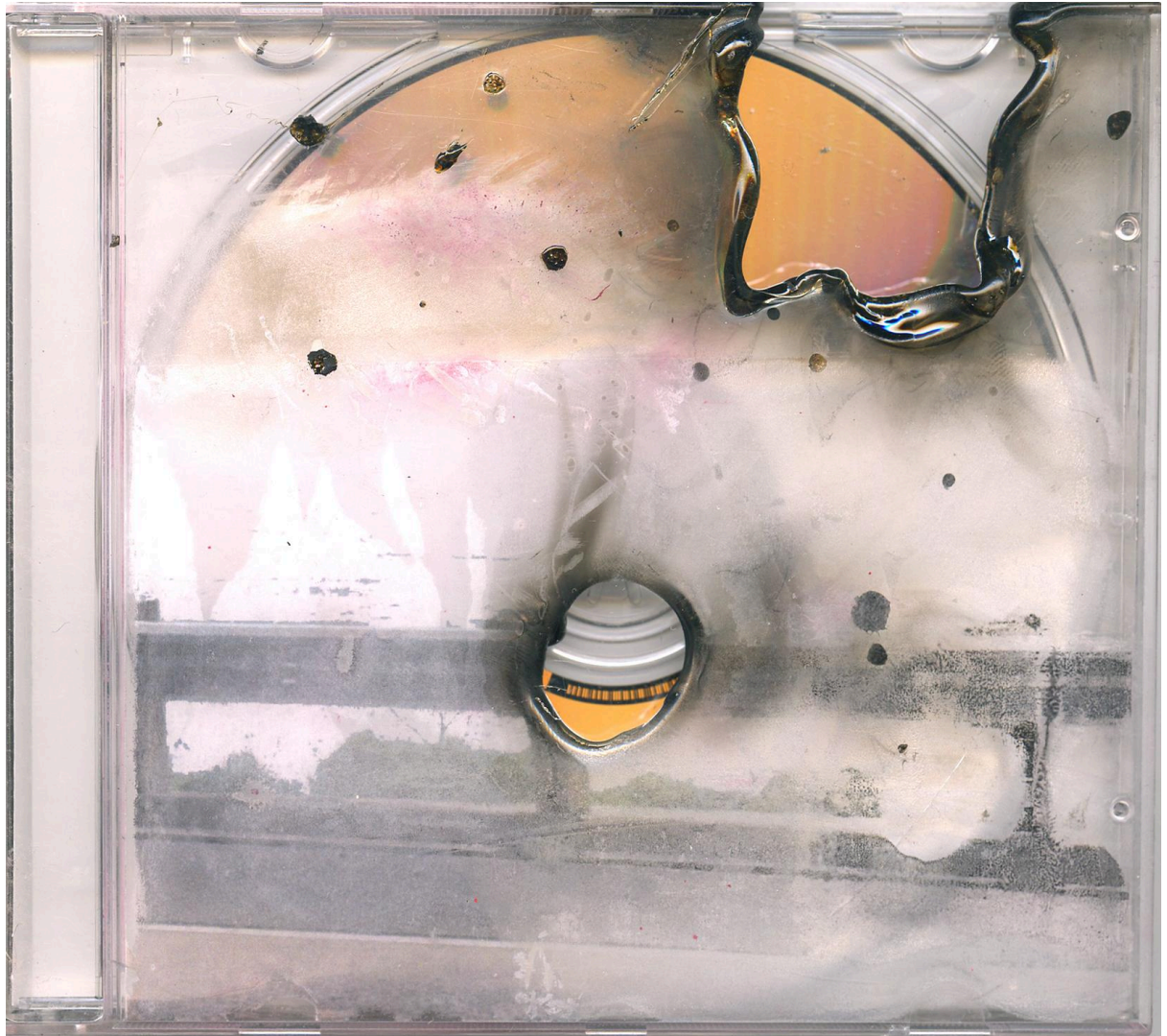
Chris Korda (CK): My predictions. Ha... Well, so the first thing is: have you seen issue number 5 of *Snuff It*?

**AV: Yes, I read it.**

CK: Key to the fifth issue of *Snuff It* is to understand that the CoE's positions have changed a lot over the thirty-odd years that we've existed. In the beginning, it was much more about misanthropy and about hating humans, but it's kind of a little late for that now. Increasingly, it's more about feeling sorry for humans because the thing we were warning against, it's now too late to prevent it. Thirty years ago, there was some chance of preventing it perhaps, or at least making it less bad, but now that's no longer an option.

I like to use this analogy:

You could imagine a car that's starting to have an accident. Say, you're falling asleep behind the wheel. There is a point where you still could wake up and could start to brake. Maybe you'll be able to prevent the accident all together, or for sure you will be able to make it less bad because the car will be going more slowly when you hit the guard rail. But then there is some other point, when you didn't wake up soon enough. You wake up and the car is actually going over the guardrail. Now it's no longer a question of braking. Braking is no longer relevant. You are going to hit something. There is going to be an accident, and you and maybe other people are going to get hurt or maybe die. This is our situation now: People in fact are already getting hurt and are dying. Climate change impact is already occurring. It's just mostly occurring in poor countries, and rich people, who are on the internet, don't live there, and they don't give a shit. In fact it's already occurring in Bangladesh and in many other places. So the question is no longer whether there is going to be a catastrophe – no, the question is how bad the catastrophe is going to be? Are we going to continue to accelerate into the catastrophe? Based on our knowledge the answer to this question is: yes.



№1: *don't forget to snuff the uppers*, 2020

We are continuing to accelerate. We plan to burn even more fossil carbon over the next ten or twenty years. If you look at the plans, if you look up the IEA<sup>1</sup> energy outlook and look at all the plans of all the major fossil fuel corporations like Exxon and BP and so on, for sure the plan is to build more fossil fuel infrastructure. China is building coal-powered power plants still, as fast as they can, because energy demand is going up, not down, and so we're really going to do this incredibly stupid thing. We're going to try to lift eight billion people up to something like the American standard of living, and of course that's not going to happen. In the process, we are going to wreck earth's climate, and the earth is going to be largely uninhabitable. That's what's about to happen. And you – since you look quite young to me, I'm guessing you can't be older than 25 – you'll live to see most of this. This will happen in your lifetime. Not in mine, I'll be dead. I'll be shielded from the worst of the impacts as will everyone in my generation. Generation X. People from generation X are in their fifties now,

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<sup>1</sup> The International Energy Agency is a Paris-based autonomous intergovernmental organization established in the framework of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development in 1974 in the wake of the 1973 oil crisis.

they will die in twenty years. That will be great timing actually, because that'll be right around the time that the ocean completely dies. The ocean's been dying for decades, the ocean's been dying for as long as I've been alive. If you know this famous movie *Soylent Green*<sup>2</sup>, that scene where [Detective Thorn] says: «the ocean is dying! The plankton is dying!» that's already happening. Talk to any honest marine biologist and he'll tell you that the oceans are 90% dead, compared to where they were hundreds of years ago, and that last 10% is going fast, because we haven't stopped fishing. In fact we're fishing harder than ever because we have more and more people to feed. We're going to destroy the oceans very soon, most estimates that I've seen from scientists suggest by 2030. By 2030 you can expect the oceans to be dead. That's an enormous thing, that's definitely going to have a huge impact. Lots of people are going to die because of that. And that's just the beginning of course. That's just going to impact island nations that depend on fishing, but the effects are going to cascade from that. The climate refugee crisis that we're already encountering is going to become much bigger. The key to understanding the future is to understand this simple thing, which is that the basic effect of global climate change, if you want to reduce it to its simplest possible formula, is that the subtropics are going to become largely uninhabitable first. The subtropics of course are the two belts on either side of the equator. If you just look at a globe or a map and you draw a kind of line about a couple of degrees in latitude around the globe, north and south of the equator, all the countries in that band are going to become uninhabitable. Believe it, that's a big factor why North Africa is a war zone. The people who live there can no longer really have a viable way of life. The same in Mexico and in much of Central America.

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<sup>2</sup> A film by Richard Fleischer from 1973. A nightmarish futuristic fantasy about the controlling power of big corporations and an innocent cop who stumbles on the truth. 1973



№.2: *snuff is food*, richard, 2020

**AV: You say, your own perspective changed from misanthropy thirty years ago to feeling sorry for climate change now. When you take a look back to 500 years ago, to the reformation, there were people who were hit by a catastrophe: the so called «Little Ice Age». And those people were more vulnerable to climate impact then we are now. From my perspective, humanity's helplessness didn't change so much in the last 30 years, we are just more able to protect us from its outbreaks. But weren't there always ups and downs?**

CK: You grew up in Switzerland, right? Switzerland is rather insulated from the climate crisis, more so even than Germany. You are a long way from seeing the impacts, but they're coming. The reason it's no longer so much about misanthropy, is that it's really too late for that. Humans have decided – in some kind of collective way – to ignore reality. The problem with that, is that contrary to what the postmodernists and guys like Baudrillard<sup>3</sup> would have you think, reality is all too real. It's coming. Big numbers are coming for us. What's terrifying

<sup>3</sup> Jean Baudrillard was a French sociologist, philosopher and cultural theorist. He is best known for his analyses of media, contemporary culture, and technological communication, as well as his formulation of concepts such as simulation and hyperreality.

about science and the reality that our scientific instruments show us is that reality can't be bargained with. It's not a dream. We don't make our own reality. This is what solipsists would like us to think, but it's a lie. There are no alternative facts, there are only facts, and what the facts say, is that it is totally possible to make earth uninhabitable, and in fact it's happened before. The geological history is quite clear on this point. It's actually surprisingly and alarmingly easy to tip earth's climate into a state that no longer favors mammals. It's an amusing side note to point out that the main beneficiaries of the work we are undertaking now to destabilize earth's climate could very likely be reptiles in the long run. There's a weird poetic justice to that, because you could make a case that of all the different animals that humans have inflicted suffering on, we probably inflicted suffering on reptiles more than any other category. We really had it in for the reptiles. We fucked their world up completely and not just because we like to make them into shoes and handbags either. We've basically really gone after reptiles and destroyed their habitat, because they like wetlands and we hate wetlands. So we destroyed wetlands and when we destroy wetlands we are destroying the world that reptiles like. So it would be amusing in a kind of poetic way if reptiles ultimately inherit the earth. It seems very possible, because reptiles, unlike us, thrive in humid, hot environments. They prefer it. If we create a world that's 4° C warmer it's going to be good for reptiles and bad for us. And that's happened before in earth's history. This is something we have to start thinking about now. It's no longer about choice. It's not something that we're choosing to do. We've already chosen it. And when I say we, I mean humanity at a collective level. It's not that you individually, you Amadeus, think that this is a good idea. But somehow or other, whether it was you, or your parents or all of your friends, somehow we're all collectively allowing this to happen. And so we have to start taking some responsibility for that. I'm not going to say it's what we want, because that's assigning too much agency to us. Richard Dawkins<sup>4</sup> is a very important figure. He was one of the people who explained how evolution works in a way that ordinary people can understand. He explained in one of his books that people think of evolution as being some kind of orderly plan. But it's nothing like that. Evolution is more like a drunk guy stumbling around in a darkened room. So he bumps into shit, he trips over the coffee table. There are accidents, there are mistakes, maybe he pisses on the floor, stuff can go wrong. There are blind alleys and many interesting chaotic things happening in our evolutionary history. And so human behavior is a lot like that too.

We are making a lot of mistakes. In fact we are making so many mistakes that it's going to cost us now. The holocaust was also a big mistake. A lot of people died. Millions and millions of people died. And some people feel really sorry about that but compared to this mistake we are making now, that was a minor thing. In the holocaust a lot of people died, but human history continued. The mistake we are making now could be the end of human history. Very likely. That's a big mistake. It's a mistake we shouldn't have made, and yet somehow we are making it, because we just can't really accept reality.

Reality is not friendly to us. This is the thing we can't seem to get our heads around. You don't make a bargain with reality. It's not like that. You don't get to make the rules. Humans want to think that they're in control, and in a limited way they are. But we're not in control of physics and astronomy. We're not in control of the terms of existence on earth. If we think

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<sup>4</sup> Richard Dawkins is an English ethologist, evolutionary biologist, and author.

that, we've been watching too much *Battlestar Galactica*. That's fiction. The actual fact is that we're not actually in control of our fate, and to the extent that we make the earth unsuitable for life, then we're fucked. We don't get to escape. There is no place to escape to. Where are we going to escape? Where would humans go? To the moon? There's nothing on the moon. The moon is a dry rock. There's not a drop of water on it. To Mars? Give me a break. This is Elon Musk's jerk-off fantasy, but it's stupid. Some rich people are going to go, like survive on Mars for a few years at fantastic expense? Where are they getting all their food from? It makes no sense. Even if they could survive for a little while on Mars, so what? It doesn't prove anything. This is the only home we've got, and we're destroying it, and we have been for fifty years. We've been destroying it for as long as I've been alive.

We've been hell-bent on making Earth unsuitable for life and all in the name of what? In the name of progress. And I can understand it. I'm sympathetic. I also believe in progress. I think that the idea of progress was very good. I think that it made sense to have a technological revolution. It lifted a lot of people out of poverty. It gave people like me a chance to go to school and learn computer programming, and music theory and lots of other wonderful things. I had a delightful life. I've had a really delightful fucking life: Intellectual stimulation, and I've been able to travel around the world and see many things. I've tried to be less harmful. I'm a vegan, I didn't have children and so forth. I tried to reduce my impact but I've had a ton of impact and so have you. You own a phone. You use plastic and copper and cobalt and everything else. You're a modern human. You're consuming stuff. That's what we do. And that all could have worked, if we've gotten fusion working. But we didn't. If we'd gotten fusion working fifty years ago, it all could have been good, but we didn't get it working. Instead we powered it all with fossil carbon, and that was a big mistake. Now we can't take it back. The carbon is up there. It's not only up there. It's in the ocean and it's gonna come out over the next hundreds and hundreds of years. This is the thing that people have a hard time understanding. They can't understand how it can be that something that happened so quickly, could have such long impacts. It's very hard for people to think hundreds of years into the future.

**AV: To me, the difference between change and crisis/catastrophe is that the root cause for a crisis is easily visible and causal. Changes are often more subtle and deceitful, one could say. This might be one reason why climate change denial has such a big following? It is really hard to locate the causality of the action we make to climate change. Because we don't really look at it as a climate crisis. So I think this is one of the main reasons why so many people are denying the climate crisis. You know when you have the holocaust you have one impact and then there is this antagonistic opponent like Hitler. He's the antichrist. But then, when we talk about climate we cannot locate the enemy.**

CK: Well, that's the problem. People love to say that we should do something about climate change in the same way the Americans and the Europeans did something about Nazism. You know the Americans sent all our guys over there and fought a big war, and you know people were motivated, and everybody felt patriotic about it. But the point is, that was a relatively easy problem. I'm not saying it was easy. Lots of people died and it was very horrible but the point is, it's a relatively easy problem from humanity's point of view. When we can say okay: our problem is caused by those bad guys over there in Germany and we are



gonna fuck their shit up and do something about it. That's the kind of problem that humans are well-adapted to solve. But when you tell people we have this invisible gas in the air and it's going to affect the weather and make earth uninhabitable over the next hundreds of years, people's eyes roll up and they say «Jesus...» I can't even think about that right now, I've got stuff to do.



№3: *don't snuff the greenhouse*, 2020

It's not the kind of problem that humans are well-adapted to solve. Especially when it turns out that the problem is caused by all of us, not by some bad guys in Germany, but by everyone. That we're all contributing to it in some way, and so to solve it would require all of us to change our behavior, and to do the one thing that nobody wants to do, which is to have a lower standard of living. Good luck! Good luck selling that in first world countries. It's one thing to change a few light bulbs and stuff, but to really drastically change people's standard of living, meaning no more long distance flights, no more traveling all the time, no more driving a car... good luck selling that in America. It will never fucking happen. It's just not going to happen. So the point is that actually we're screwed, because people have become addicted to progress, understandably. I don't blame them. People have become addicted to the idea that we can have everything our way. The news that we can't have everything our

way has come as a big shock, and we're not accepting it. People are still totally in denial about this. They say: We will figure it out, there will be some kind of techno fix, we'll put mirrors in space and it will all be good.

Well, no probably not. Probably it will not all be good. There will be drastic impact and it's going to really, really suck, and it already does suck super badly for lots of people. Already half the world's population is living on less than five dollars a day. Try to imagine that. A third of the world's population is living on less than two dollars a day and is basically going to bed hungry every night. Well, that's super bad. At that point you have the seeds of revolution. And that could be. That's what's going to happen in fact. That's going to happen in the global South. It's already occurring. The global South is trying to invade the North, like: «Hey, we can't live here in the global South because we can't live.» Think of what happened in Syria. Imagine one day you wake up and it's like: life is no longer sustainable here, we're going, and if we die crossing the Mediterranean, so be it. What do you think the response of the Northern countries is going to be to that? I should be clear, what I mean is the subtropics. The people in the subtropics can't go south, because most of the south is water. If you look at a globe you can clearly see that with the exception of Australia and a little bit of South America, most of the South is not going to happen, so you're going to have to go north. Well the North is already heavily populated. It's all full of people, and they're mostly rich people who can afford lots of guns. You don't need a degree in psychology to figure out what's going to happen there. The North will militarize its borders. We're already doing it. And if it comes to shooting climate refugees, that's what we'll do.

**AV: So therefore you would say that we are living in the apocalypse after all?**

CK: Well, that's putting it too dramatically. It's not like a black and white thing, like suddenly it's the apocalypse. Things have been going off the rails for my whole lifetime, ever since Ronald Reagan got elected. This was the beginning of the neoliberal assault. I don't know how much you know about neoliberalism, but basically neoliberalism was pretty well summed up in these horrible novels by this lady Ayn Rand<sup>5</sup>, *Atlas Shrugged* and *The Fountainhead*. It's all bullshit really. The books are terrible, but I can reduce her whole program down to two simple slogans. Number one: greed is good. Just like (the movie) *Wall Street*. And number two: there's just no such thing as the common good, it doesn't exist. And so if there's no such thing as the common good, why do we need government? Well, we don't. And so the number one thing that neoliberals are in favor of is destroying government, so that we can return to some kind of neo-feudal society where basically those who are rich have all the power and all the wealth and it stays that way forever. That's what feudalism was like. You were either descended from the king or you were screwed. Think of that scene at the beginning of *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*<sup>6</sup>. King Arthur goes riding by and two people in rags are rummaging around in the mud, and one says to the other: «Oh, it must

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<sup>5</sup> Ayn Rand was a Russian-American writer and philosopher. She is known for her two best-selling novels, *The Fountainhead* (1943) and *Atlas Shrugged* (1957), and for developing a philosophical system she named Objectivism. Educated in Russia, she moved to the United States in 1926. She had a play produced on Broadway in 1935 and 1936.

<sup>6</sup> A film by Terry Jones and Terry Gilliam from 1975. A comedic send-up of the grim circumstances of the Middle Ages as told through the story of King Arthur and framed by a modern-day murder investigation.

have been a king.» The other says: «How do you know?» The first one says: «He hasn't got shit all over him.» Okay, it's supposed to be funny. You were either descended from the king or you had shit all over you. That was how the world was for most of human history. Of course, in the modern era that's changed, but the super-rich would like to see it change back, and they've mostly succeeded at that. Right now, the standard of living, even in the rich countries, is declining or staying the same. In America, it's declining. People's life expectancies are going down again, because the rich are just like: «Fuck that, why should we pay for health care for poor people, who are obviously undeserving scumbags? Why should we give our money for that when we can spend it on ourselves, on hookers and expensive champagne?» What are you going to say to that?

The ideological point I'm trying to make here, Amadeus, is: Whoever said that there was any morality in any of this? Why should anybody actually give a shit what actually happens after they're dead? Rich people claim to care about their children and their grandchildren, but they act as if they don't. They act as if they hate their children and grandchildren. They're helping to create a world in which their grandchildren are going to be dead. [Laughs] And so it looks to me like rich people are full of shit actually, and they just claim to love their children and grandchildren, or maybe they're deluded and they think that somehow the rich people's private islands will be maintained, and that it'll all be good for the rich people and everybody else will die. Well, that's just as horrific if that's what they really think, but I think they don't even think of it that way. I think that they really only care about themselves and what happens to them during their lives. Think of Jeffrey Epstein<sup>7</sup>. He just committed suicide a while ago. In the rich people circles, wanting to fuck teenage girls is just considered not that unusual, that's just another one of the perks of being rich. Rich people think they can have everything their way, and that includes wrecking the planet. It looks a lot like that famous movie by Neill Blomkamp *Elysium* (2013) where the rich people have left the surface of the earth, and they're up on some space station. They're orbiting earth, and they have every luxury, and it's all good for them. They're sipping champagne, and down on earth it's just a fucking hellhole, and everybody's fighting for the last scraps of food. It looks a lot like that, except without the space station! It's like *Elysium* except [the rich are] here on earth. Of course, this was exactly Neill Blomkamp's point. He's a brilliant political satirist. All science fiction is always just an extension of the present. He's saying: It's as if they were on a space station, but they're actually on earth, on their private islands. They're in the Bahamas, like Jeffrey Epstein. He had his own private island where he brought the teenage girls. That's how they roll. And that's what my new album is about. It's about them. My new album is not just about climate change and human extinction, but it's also about economic inequality and about the super-rich and how evil they are.

**AV: I haven't really heard you critiquing the system critique, like the critique of capitalism or neoliberalism.**

CK: Yes I know, it's new.

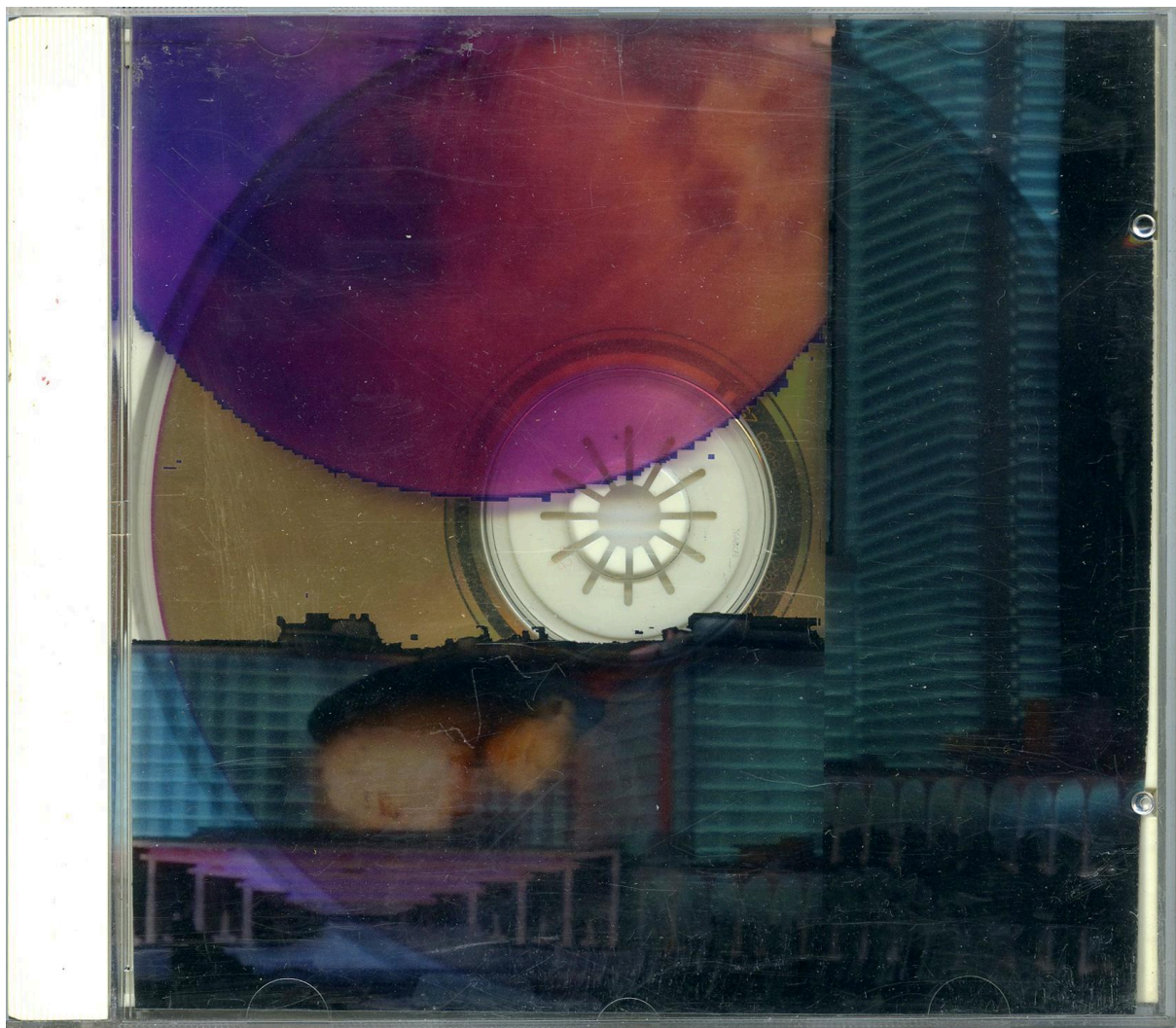
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<sup>7</sup> Jeffrey Edward Epstein was an American financier and convicted sex offender. He began his professional life as a teacher but then switched to the banking and finance sector in various roles, and formed his own firm.

**AV: How come?**

CK: Because it's important, because it's pressing. It's the pressing issue of our time. None of this is happening in a vacuum. We're destroying, we're making earth uninhabitable.

[Unintelligible] If you ask the average person on the street whether we should make Earth uninhabitable, the average person would say: no, that's fucking stupid. But we're doing it anyway. Does the average person have all that much power over that? Not really. They have power to consume a little bit less, to recycle their bottles, as if that even mattered, or maybe, if they are super-inspired like me, they could choose not to have children, or change what they eat and so on, and it would have an effect. But the real decisions aren't made by them. The real decisions are being made by corporations, Amadeus. You know this. Huge corporations are reorganizing human society in order to maximize profit. And the whole point about maximizing profit is that it's predicated on the notion of limitless growth. That we can just keep growing our economy forever and ever and ever. Because as soon as we can't keep growing our economy, as soon as growth is even close to zero, we're in recession and the world is going to end. Because you can't keep borrowing money. That's how society works. You can't keep borrowing money, unless you can promise growth in the future, because otherwise how the fuck are you going to pay it back?



So the whole thing is a kind of pyramid scam. It always was. The idea that we're just going to build all this stuff, and build this enormous fossil fuel guzzling civilization and consume all the resources in the world, to the point where we're literally using double the amount of resources that the earth can provide every year, that was never going to work in the long run. If you know anything about exponential growth, you know that's ludicrous. Sooner or later you are going to come up against some real physical limits. But the economy is not constrained by that. Economists don't believe in physical limits. There are guys like Julian Simon<sup>8</sup>. He's dead now, thank God, that asshole! He really would actually say things like: «We could put the entire population of the earth in the state of Texas. We should allow the population to be 50 billion and it will all be good for the economy because there are no limits to growth and no limits to anything.» Well, that's all bullshit actually. Of course there are limits. There's limits to how much CO2 you can put in the atmosphere and the ocean before the earth turns into a hot house climate and even the dinosaurs won't survive. That's a real physical limit and humans can't change it. Wishful thinking won't change it.

The point is that we can actually blame corporations for getting us into this mess. Even though we're addicted to the things that they sell. We've become addicted to this whole modern capitalist way of life. In fact, the corporations knew perfectly well that that was going to happen. It's no different than Facebook: One of the founders of Facebook [Chamath Palihapitiya] quit Facebook and what did he do? He went on TV, he went on YouTube and he gave this talk where he explained that he didn't let his own children use Facebook. Why? He explained that *he* didn't use Facebook, he was one of the fucking founders and he didn't use Facebook. He hired an assistant to use it for him. Why? Because he knew perfectly well, as one of the founders, that Facebook was designed to be addictive, as addictive as crack cocaine. They designed this product with psychologists' input, to be as addictive as possible. So people would spend as much time as possible on the platform, so they would become compulsive users. That's what they wanted, so they could sell people's eyeballs to advertisers. Well, that's fucking horrible actually. That's super corrupt and evil. But that's relatively minor compared to the crimes of big corporations like Exxon<sup>9</sup> and BP<sup>10</sup>. These are companies that knowingly sold us fantastic quantities of fossil carbon while knowing all the time that it was going to destroy our environment. What the fuck do you say to that? Is that evil? Yeah, that's really evil. This is actually worth discussing. This is the point. The average guy on the street could believe that it's a terrible idea to make the earth uninhabitable. But nobody gives a rat's ass what he thinks because the world is run by huge corporations. [See the film *Network*]

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<sup>8</sup> Julian Lincoln Simon was an American professor of business administration.

<sup>9</sup> Exxon Mobil Corporation is an American multinational oil and gas corporation headquartered in Irving, Texas.

<sup>10</sup> BP plc (formerly The British Petroleum Company) is a multinational oil and gas company headquartered in London,. It is the world's sixth-largest oil and gas company and the company with the world's 12th-largest revenue.

**AV: But how come you didn't think of those things 20 years ago? Wasn't it already so apparent?**

CK: Well, I knew about it then too. But I was focusing on something different. I was focusing more on our own complicity. I'm still focused on that. I still ask people to take the vow of non-procreation because I still think it's fucking loony to bring children into the world, especially considering what we know now. Look, thirty years ago, telling everybody that climate change was going to be a big problem was pretty edgy. Complaining about overpopulation and climate change in the 1990s, I can understand why people thought I was a crank or whatever. At best they might be polite and say: it's a minority position. But today, come on – almost everything that I predicted would happen came true. Name one thing that I predicted would happen that didn't come true. People even tell me that. How did you know? Actually I did a lot of reading. It wasn't that hard to predict. Human behavior is surprisingly easy to predict. It's not that I'm Nostradamus and I had some magic stone and I could see the future. No, I did a lot of research and I made some reasonable predictions based on trends that I saw at the time. And so now that this has all happened and it's front page news in the *New York Times*, now what do you expect people to do? The very least you could do is not throw more human bodies into this catastrophe. What problem that we're about to face, or that we're already facing now is going to be helped by adding more humans? You can't name one. It's only going to make it worse. Increasingly what I'm saying to my friends who have children, and there's many of them, what I tell them is: you better practice your apologizing. You better start apologizing. It better be good. Because your children, when they get old enough to understand what's happened, they're going to be royally pissed. And they're going to blame you, your generation. What could they do? They were just little kids. Who else are they going to blame? They're going to blame their parents.

**AV: So are you blaming your parents?**

CK: Yeah, sure. My father is one of the biggest consumers of all time. Jesus Christ, he makes me look like an amateur. He's a major consumer. He didn't give a shit. He said to me with a straight face – so many times that I couldn't even count it – «The environment's gonna be fucked but I don't care because I'll be dead.» In fact, I'm thinking of titling my next album *Smugly Dead*. Leave that out of the interview, that's a secret. I can't tell you the title of my immediate next album that's coming out in May, because that's too much of a secret but it's fair to say that it's about all of this. I have an album coming out in May, the new CoE album. All I can tell you it's an electro rap album sung by robots and it's all about this. It's about how future generations will look at us. It's from their point of view.

**AV: Do you talk to any younger generations, teenagers?**

CK: Of course. Greta Thunberg is speaking in the United Nations. I have a pretty good idea of what the younger generation thinks, and I agree with them. If I were Greta Thunberg I would have done the same thing. She's right. Her parents and all of their friends have betrayed her. She's pretty powerful, but she's not powerful enough to stop it. It's too little and it's too late. I felt it was very tragic, there she was at the United Nations, and I remember

thinking: well, it's very inspiring and everything, but it's too little and it's too late. She's more like me. She gets to wag her finger and say I told you so a lot.

**AV: Do you ever practice utopian thinking? As a thought experiment, let's say half of the human population gets abducted by aliens, will all of the problems of overpopulation be solved?**

CK: Well, no. I think irrationality is very important in art. So I pay attention to my dreams and my subconscious. It's very important. I'm in the David Lynch school of artists in the sense that I think that art does come from the subconscious. I appreciate that creativity is mysterious and that you have to give that due weight. But everywhere else, I'm not a fan of irrationality. I'm a fan of the opposite. Ideologically, I'm a scientific pragmatist and an existentialist, and so for me it's not worthwhile to spend a lot of time worrying about what would happen if half of humanity disappeared because it's not on the agenda.

**AV: Yet there is so much fiction in your music, in your writing and still you are always so precise on the numbers and facts. How are you navigating the line between fiction and facts?**

CK: Well, yes, people complain about this sometimes. And it's true that in the earlier stages the CoE was more dadaistic and so we were very surreal. We were very loose with facts. In fact, there weren't a lot of facts in there. There were even deliberate lies mixed into our stuff. It was more like the Church of the SubGenius<sup>11</sup> or something. It was very psychedelic. That's cool. That was a stage we went through. But I just feel that's not appropriate at this point. It's not so much putting aside childish things, it's just not where I'm at now. Maybe it's because I'm older, I mean thirty years is a long time. You expect an artist to evolve over time. Wouldn't you be disappointed if after thirty years I was still doing exactly the same thing? That would also be bad. So my art has evolved. I've evolved. I'm evolving in many ways. My music has also evolved. It's much more, it's much different than it was.

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<sup>11</sup> The Church of the SubGenius is a parody religion that satirizes better-known belief systems. It teaches a complex philosophy that focuses on J. R. «Bob» Dobbs, purportedly a salesman from the 1950s, who is revered as a prophet by the Church. SubGenius leaders have developed detailed narratives about Dobbs and his relationship to various gods and conspiracies.



№5: *the four pillars of snuff*, 2020

I don't feel that's anything to be ashamed of. No, I'm still on the subject though. The CoE has not died. Just because it's not as extreme anymore, it doesn't mean the church has died. On the contrary, it's alive and well and thriving. We're getting new members all the time. We have satellite churches all over the world. There was just a new one this last year that opened up in Brussels. We have a thriving chapter of the CoE in Brussels, led by the great Cardinal Leny, who's an outstanding Church of Euthanasia member. One of the best. I have no doubt that the fact that Supreme copied our logo is a sign of the times. «Save the Planet Kill Yourself» is the meme for the 21st century. Although I have another one coming that's going to be even better, but I can't tell you what it is. It's not that we lack relevance, no. If anything the Church has become more relevant, of course. The things that we were saying in the nineties that could be dismissed at the time as fabrications or exaggerations no longer can be dismissed. We were proved right. We were «vindicated» is the correct word. We have been vindicated by events. So now I think it's actually time to talk more factually, and to start to prepare people more practically for what's coming. I like to talk a lot about the stages of grief. We need to get beyond denial. Denial is the first stage of grief. But we've got four



more to go before we get to the one that matters. The one that matters is acceptance. We need to start accepting responsibility for what we've done.

That's what my poem *Less* is about. Did you ever read *Less*? It's in there somewhere. It's about realizing that it's going to hurt. Pain is real. Pain is coming. We're going to have to pay. There is a famous movie that you should see. Absolutely write it down. It's called *Clear Cut*. It's on the Church's movie list. It stars that great Native American actor Graham Greene. He's a great actor. He was in *Dances with Wolves*. That's the one most people know him from. But this is much better than that. It's called *Clear Cut* and it's a Canadian production and of course it's about logging in some way but it's very important. It's a very important CoE film. It's about the idea that somebody has to pay. When we've done something on this scale we can't expect that it's going to be for free, that it's all going to be forgiven. That's not how the world works. We've done a thing and now we have to pay for it.

## Less

«Less government.

Less business.

Less wealth.

Less power.

Less roads.

Less buildings.

Less food.

Less people.

Less is coming.

Less is already here.

Less is licking our ankles.

Less is rising up to meet us.

How fast should we be going when we hit it?

Some say if we go faster, we won't hit it.

Some say there's nothing to hit.

Do you believe them?

Humans will exist for a while yet.

How much should they suffer?

Future generations.

Your children.

Should they pick through the rubble?

Should they eat slime?

Should they die like ants?

Is that what you want?

Here in the empire, it's a soft life.

It's easy to forget the Holocaust.

It could be like that again.

It could be sooner than you think.

Less can no longer be avoided.

Less could be gradual, or sudden.

Less will hurt, either way.

Sudden will break more bones.

You could admit you were wrong.

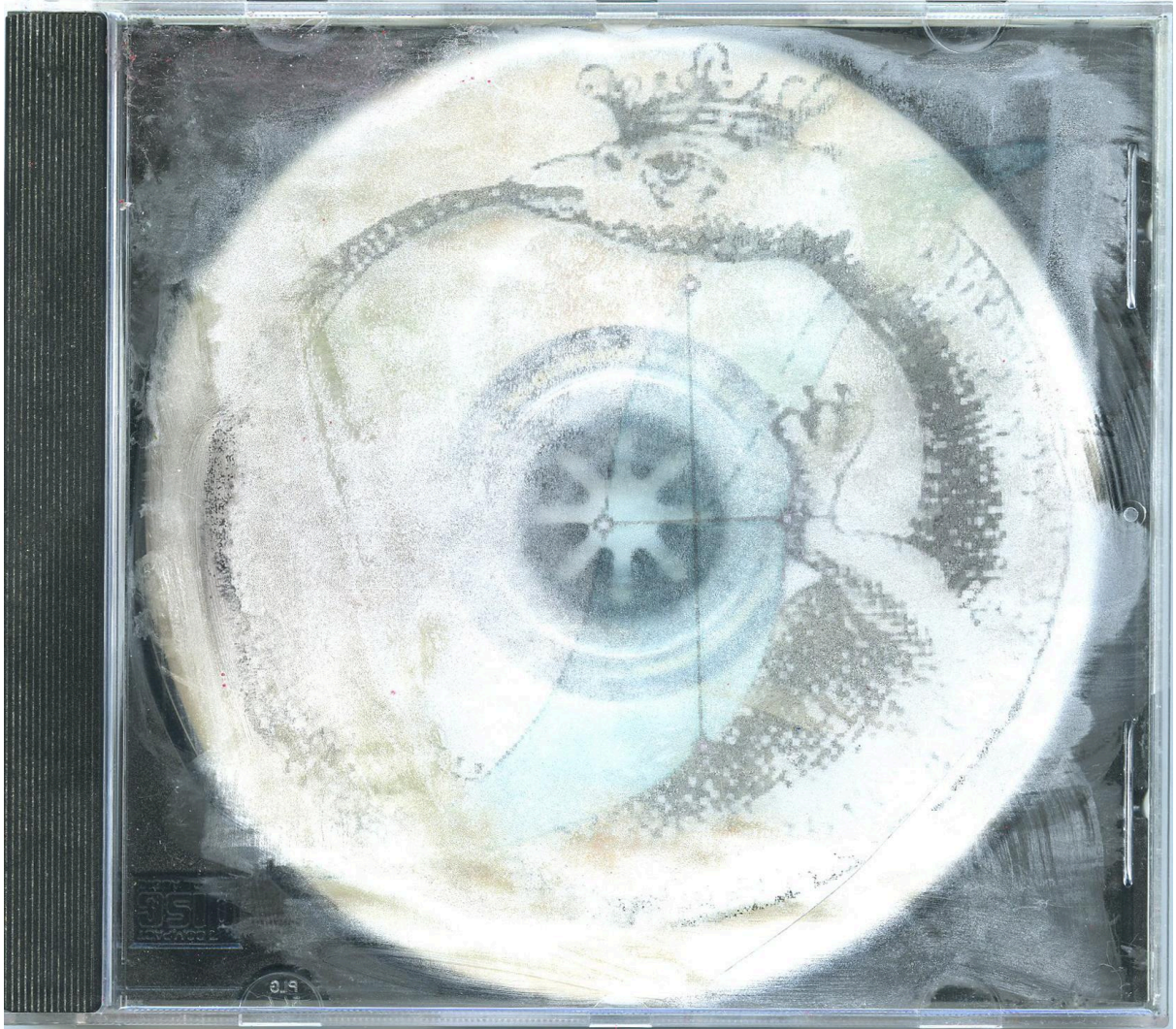
You could apologize to your children.

You could slow down.

You could fasten your seat belt.»

<https://metadelusion.blogspot.com/2012/04/less.html?fbclid=IwAR1Ayj0uvjkdYqNUgZwiHo9K0Ig4zUZzw8vBMwYZi84XQLmv8CDkhJwz3Bo>

CK: An important concept of engineering that I like to explain to people is hysteresis. It's a fancy word for inertia. It basically means there can be delay between getting something rolling and when it's really rolling. People often use the example of a bicycle chain. If the bicycle chain is loose, you can move the pedals and the wheels don't move. But eventually they do move. It's a little like Amazon too. You order a package on Amazon, and it doesn't show up instantly. But it's coming, and after a certain point there's nothing you can do to stop it. You can return it when it gets there, but you can't stop it because the system is in motion. It's doing its thing. So there's hysteresis, there's delay. The climate is like that, and we've been accelerating the climate for a long time, since 1860 or so. That's more than one person's lifetime. That's several people's lifetimes, so we've been at it. And of course it's accelerated in the last fifty years. We really accelerated in the last fifty years, and so that's a huge thing. We've accelerated it to such an enormous degree that now a thing is going to happen and we can't stop that. We have to prepare for it emotionally.





№6: *snuff the way things go*, 2020

**AV: Have you heard of the strikes in Paris?**

CK: Yes. I don't really know whether this is productive or not. Maybe it is. So the question really is: what are we trying to say? I write about this a lot on my blog *Metadelusion*. You can find a lot of discussion on this whole topic. Of course some of the *Metadelusion* stuff was used in *Snuff It 5* as well. The key question is: What are we trying to save here? Are we trying to save humanity biologically? Is that all we care about? My position is: no. I'm not interested if a few bands of humanity manage to survive the catastrophe and live in some kind of Neolithic way. Hunting and hanging around in caves and burning fires all night to avoid getting eaten by giant predators. This is not interesting. Mama didn't raise me to be a hunter, or an agriculturalist, and I'm betting you neither. You were raised to be a member of the intelligentsia. I can just tell from looking at you and talking to you. You're an intelligent person. You were schooled by civilization. The problem is that that only works if civilization is going to continue to exist. If civilization doesn't exist then you, my friend, are dead. [Laughs] You're not going to survive, because for sure you don't have what it takes to survive in the

wilderness. I don't think so, maybe you could learn it but it would be a hard thing to learn. I know I wouldn't survive it. The point is that mama raised me to be a computer programmer.

Well, that's great so long as civilization continues to exist. The most shocking thing to learn about me as a person is that I'm actually totally pro-civilization. Even if it means that we're ultimately all going to be destroyed, because what other alternative was there? Were we going to continue to be in the Neolithic forever? Apparently not. That didn't work. People got tired of that. As soon as they could escape from that life, they did. It's been a long steady progression since then, towards trying to have a more peaceful existence, where instead of worrying every day all day long where our next food is coming from, and what to do about the guys over there who want us dead, we have the police for that now, and the army, in theory protecting us. So we can lead relatively peaceful lives. You've probably never seen anyone killed in a violent act. Maybe you have, but most people haven't. Because we live in a relatively peaceful world, where we can go to school, and learn a skill, and have friends, and be on the internet, and read books, and participate in this whole global conversation that's fascinating and delightful and is in fact the essence of civilization. I'm pro that. I'm pro global civilization. It's just that unfortunately, we haven't figured out a way to make global civilization compatible with our own survival. But there's every reason to believe that this was just baked into the cake.

**AV: This sounds contradictory to me: being pro civilization and against reproduction?**

CK: Why? Who said that adding more children to this world would make it more civilized? Maybe having less children makes it more civilized.

**AV: Yes, but how do you take care of the elderly? How do you pay for pensions, for example?**

CK: Oh, those are economic problems. That's not really the problem. The truth is this is a red herring. People love to bring this up: If we don't have enough people we won't have enough money to fund our pension plans. But it's really not the case. The problem is the reverse. The problem is the more hungry mouths you've got the harder it is to sustain [civilization] because the more you're demanding of earth's ecosystems. If you could downshift drastically, if we had followed the CoE's advice and limited it to less than 6 billion humans, most of the problems we're having right now would be manageable. It's because we didn't do that. It's because we added two billion people, mostly in the poorest countries where they don't actually have any means of survival. That's accelerating the problem. So we approached it completely from the wrong point of view. The proof of this is that when countries get more civilized, when they have a higher standard of education, guess what happens? You have the demographic transition where the women become better educated. They're like: «Fuck off, I'm actually not going to have your baby. In fact, I'm not going to even hit it with you. I might become a lesbian or whatever.» So the population stabilizes.

It's in the poor countries where women aren't educated, or god forbid where they're treated like animals, that's where the population sky-rockets. The biggest population growth is occurring in countries that have the lowest education and the least civilization. It's the most civilized countries like Germany, Italy and Spain and even America perhaps where

population growth is dropping almost to zero or even going a bit negative. Great, that's what we wanted. We wanted it to go negative. We want it to go negative so we have some chance of reining in the demands of civilization. Because our technological demands are going up. You can't have both. You can't have everybody wanting a washing machine, a cell phone and laptop, a MIDI controller and a nice flat screen TV, and have the population going up, that's just fucking loony. You can't do it. We can either have total impoverishment and chaotic collapse or people have to accept some reduction in something. And they're clearly not going to accept a reduction in their standard of living, so what else is there? The only other thing you could reduce is the number of people. I think this is just common sense. And yeah, we have to worry about pension systems, but we'll figure it out. We're rich countries, we can afford it. You could start by taking some money from the super-rich and using that to pay for the fucking pensions. Just think about this. I don't know how well you know your history. At the end of World War II, guess what the top nominal federal tax rate was in the United States of America. Take a guess!

**AV: Probably close to nothing?**

CK: You couldn't be more wrong. It was 94%. There's your post World War II consensus. Let's think about this. Let me give you a quick recap of modern history, which you should know. We had the gilded age, 1920, *The Great Gatsby*<sup>12</sup>. People complain about the concentration of wealth today. It's still only like half of what it was in the 1920s according to no lesser person than the noted economist Thomas Piketty<sup>13</sup>. It's pretty bad but we've still got a long way to go before it's anything like that. The all-time peak of inequality occurred in Germany and elsewhere in central Europe in the 1910s, just between 1890 and 1910, just before the First World War, in Britain almost up to the end of the First World War. That was the all-time peak of inequality. Do you know this show *Downton Abbey*? It's a famous British TV show. It's all about the collapse of the British aristocracy. So you don't know what concentration of wealth is, until you think about what Victorian England was like: unbelievable wealth, unimaginable wealth, totally colonial. So how did that end up?

Well, here's how it ended up: It ended up with the First World War, the Russian communist revolution, the Chinese communist Revolution, and a couple of other revolutions, the German Revolution. Don't forget that. We had the Marxist Revolution in Germany too, and then the Spanish Civil War, and then the [Second Sino-Japanese] war and then the full on Second World War because we weren't done yet and then we finally dropped the atom bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the whole thing was over. Tens of millions of people died between all those wars. Ten millions of people dead, whole cities reduced to just piles of bricks, Berlin: piles of bricks, Dresden: piles of bricks, nothing left. And we had to rebuild every single thing in the city. That's how the gilded age ended the last time.

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<sup>12</sup> *The Great Gatsby* is a 1925 novel written by American author F. Scott Fitzgerald that follows a cast of characters living in the fictional towns of West Egg and East Egg on prosperous Long Island in the summer of 1922.

<sup>13</sup> Thomas Piketty (\*1971) is a French economist whose work focuses on wealth and income inequality.

So what happened? Well, the governments of the world, after all that shit, they finally decided to take redistributing wealth a little more seriously, and so they implemented tax policies, that could have been implemented a hundred years ago, but back then you couldn't persuade anybody that it was a good idea. After all this destruction of capital, people were persuaded. They were like: «Maybe it would be a really bad idea to repeat the Second World War with the hydrogen bomb. Maybe we don't want to do that. And so we are going to prevent that by redistributing wealth.» The way they redistributed was by taxing rich people. It's not communism. It's capitalism actually. It's social capitalism and you know it happened in the fucking United States, one of the most right-wing countries on Earth. The United States was taxing rich people at 94%. Think about that. For every dollar you make you get 6 cents. And it worked. How do we know that that worked? Because the 1950s and 60s were the most enlightened time in all of recorded history. In the 1950s and 60s guys who went and fought in the war, they came back and they got free houses. They got to go to college for free. Think of what happened in Europe. The United States paid to rebuild almost all of Europe. Certainly all of Germany. Europe had been completely shattered by war. Who paid to fix all of that? The United States. How did they get the money? They took it from rich people. Brilliant, it works!

So in fact, your point about pensions is totally misguided. If we were really serious solving our problems what we would do is, we would tax the shit out of rich people and we would use it to pay for some kind of drastic change in society just like Greta Thunberg and the Extinction Rebellion people are proposing. And we would reengineer our whole society to run on windmills and green power, and we'd persuade people not to have children, and we'd drastically reduce the population. Everybody would become vegans. For sure corporations and governments have the power to do something like that. But we're not doing it! And we're not going to do it. We're not going to do it in time, for sure not. We're not going to do it at all, is my guess. And so that's why we're fucked. But it's not that there isn't a solution. Greta Thunberg is absolutely right about this. There is a solution. But there's a difference between there being a solution and people being willing to do it. Does it make sense now? We could have done it. And we could do it still. We could still make a difference, but we're not going to, basically, because people are too selfish and too focused on their own personal gain in the present. They can't really. It looks like human beings are simply not capable of planning rationally for the future on the kind of scale that's required at this moment. If we could blame it on the Nazis, maybe it would work. But we can't.

If only. Actually, there's a wonderful talk – maybe you can find it online somewhere – that this guy Dan Miller gave. He's a great hero of mine and he's an engineer. He gave this great talk about climate change. His presentation is called *A Really Inconvenient Truth*. Of course it's a joke. It's a reference to Al Gore's<sup>14</sup> famous presentation *An Inconvenient Truth*. He actually worked for Al Gore for a while. He thought that Al Gore was kind of sugar-coating the truth. Being an engineer he's truth-oriented, so he felt that people had a right to know the truth, the real truth, not sugar-coated. And so he wrote his own presentation called *A Really Inconvenient Truth*, where he really lays it out. He's where I got the whole idea about how people should be apologizing to their children. That was his idea. He also said: just imagine

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<sup>14</sup> Albert Arnold Gore Jr. is an American politician and environmentalist who served as the 45th Vice President of the United States from 1993 to 2001 (with Bill Clinton).



what would happen if we could blame climate change on Al Qaeda. Would we do something about it then? You bet we would. That's the kind of cause that you can rally people to. We would spend a trillion dollars. That's how much money we spent trying to defeat Al Qaeda. We would spend a trillion dollars and not hesitate. But we can't blame it on Al Qaeda. And that's a big problem for us.

**AV: Another question I had to you was about your relationship to queer activism. When I emailed it to you earlier, I got the impression that you were offended when I seemed to label you that way?**

CK: I wasn't offended. I just wanted to avoid misunderstandings. It's true that to some extent I've become a queer icon, somewhat unexpectedly. It's a funny place to have wound up. It wasn't really my goal. It just sort of happened. And sometimes people make assumptions about my politics that aren't correct. So I don't subscribe. I'm not a leftist. There is often a connection between radical queerness and this kind of critical theory postmodern French intellectual Marxist sort of worldview, which I don't share.

**AV: So you're not a fan of Paul Preciado, the author of *Testo Junkie*, for example?**

CK: No, I don't know him actually. I don't have that reference. But I would put it more generally and say that I am generally super anti critical theory. I think critical theory is total gibberish. To me the point of critical theory is to obscure [things], and I don't agree with that. I'm an engineer. In engineering our goal is the opposite. To make things clear. I'm especially against pseudoscience. I don't like it when intellectuals drape themselves in flowery elaborate rhetoric in an effort to make themselves sound more convincing. This is against my nature. I try to speak in plain language. That's more of a scientist's way of looking at things. Scientists don't try to hide the truth. We try to actually reveal the truth, and the way we do that is by speaking in plain language, and of course by using math. The language of science is the language of math. I have a lot of experience in math. I'm against the whole relativist idea that everybody makes their own reality. This is gibberish. It's total nonsense. The word for that is *solipsism*. I'm super anti-solipsist. I don't agree with that at all. That's what a lot of *Snuff It 5* is about. I'm more pro Albert Einstein when he said «the moon is really out there.» The point is, the moon is out there whether you like it or not. Or as Philip Dick<sup>15</sup> supposedly said: «Reality is that which continues to exist after you no longer believe in it.» That's what I'm interested in: the reality.

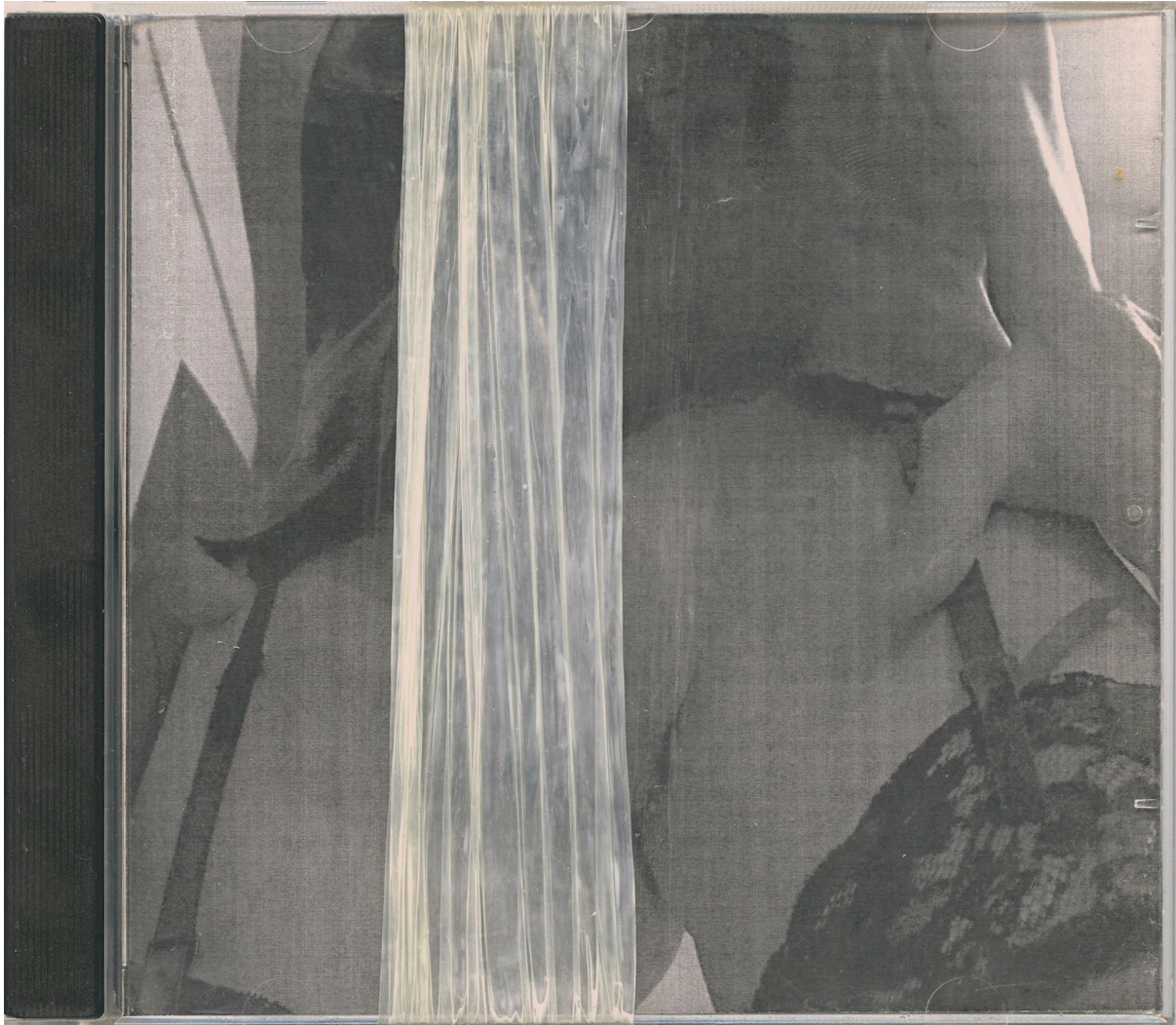
**AV: Why are you then trying to confuse with your appearance, whether you would call it drag, transgender or cross dressing?**

CK: There is no confusion on my part. I'm not confused. I'm not a drag queen. I hang out with drag queens, but I'm not a drag queen. I'm a crossdresser. That's different. It has a different meaning, and a different motivation. In the older times, I would have been called a transvestite. That's fine, you can call me a transvestite. It's a little bit old-fashioned, but that doesn't make me a drag queen. Drag queens are not transvestites. I've met a lot of drag queens and I can tell you that they're not transvestites, and they're not transsexuals either.

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<sup>15</sup> Philip Kindred Dick was an American writer known for his work in science fiction.

There's some overlap, sometimes drag queens become transsexuals, but almost never transvestites. These are distinct categories. Most transvestites and crossdressers that I ever met were straight.



*No7: don't snuff the cum, from all those boys, 2020*

**AV: How can you call yourself a radical feminist as a male passing person?**

CK: I didn't call myself a radical feminist. I said that I'm sympathetic to radical feminism. I can't be a radical feminist, my dear Amadeus, because I'm not a woman. In my entire career, I claimed to be many things, but I never claimed to be female. I frankly consider it offensive when men claim to be female biologically because I think it reflects a deep misunderstanding of how the world works. People are born female or male. It's not something you can change. You can change your plumbing, you can turn your penis inside out if you really want to, and that may help you and I'm not against it necessarily, though I would never do it and I often try to talk people out of it, because I think it's misguided. I think frankly that the idea of changing your plumbing to fit yourself to a different gender role is a very typically Western and very violent patriarchal solution to what is in fact a very subtle and more nuanced problem. If it

was up to me, I would try to persuade people to be more okay with being ambiguous in their gender, as I often am. I like to occupy the middle. I like to not be more male or more female, but to be everything. I think that that should be okay, and that our society should be okay with that. But that doesn't make me a biological woman. I'm really against the idea that there are male brains and female brains. Or that there are people born in the wrong body and so on.

Of course, for me to say that is technically hate speech. In Canada what I just said is hate speech. And that's a problem. I could be deplatformed just for thinking that. So I don't agree with that either. I'm not a fan of political correctness. I don't believe that you should deplatform people because you don't agree with their ideas. I think that you should debate their ideas if you really don't like them and you should come up with cogent arguments why they're wrong. You should prove them wrong. That's what we do in science. In science you don't attack somebody because you disagree with them, as a person. You don't say something like: you're a fucking dickhead. No, you set about and prove why their ideas are actually flawed. And that's it. That's the end of that. That's how it works. So I don't agree with that whole thing that is happening in Canada where gender warriors are attacking people like my good friend [Cardinal] Nina Paley<sup>16</sup>. I think that's deeply wrong. Nina Paley is a friend of mine, and I don't think that she should be attacked just because she believes that having a penis makes you a man. But she is. She has been deplatformed for that. And I think that's wrong. So okay that's a really unpopular view. I've had a lot of unpopular views. Believe it, the CoE was also a very unpopular view and it still is, right? You happen to like it, but lots of people hate it and wish I were dead, so I'm used to holding unpopular views. I don't care. I don't really give a shit whether someone finds my views unacceptable. *I Like to Watch* was also unacceptable but I did it anyway. So whatever, I don't really care but my point is just that I was only trying to dispel confusion on this point.

I'm proud of being a crossdresser. I'm proud of having contributed to gender liberation in my own way. I agree with the goals of gender liberation to the extent that I think that it should be okay for people to not conform to stereotypical gender roles. I'm pro that. I may look like a guy today, but a lot of the time I don't. Actually, I'm wearing half women's clothes right now. Does that count as crossdressing? This is women's clothing. You can't see my pants but they are women's. I'm wearing women's underwear. Does that count as crossdressing? Or it doesn't count as crossdressing because I'm not wearing a wig? That's stupid. I'm actually crossdressed right now. These are women's glasses. I think all of this is really stupid in the end. I should be able to wear whatever I want. If I like wearing women's pants and women's underwear that should be okay. I don't mind admitting that I get a sexual thrill from that.

Of course, that embarrasses lots of people. There are plenty of people in the gender movement who are horrified that there should be any connection between crossdressing and fetishism. Well, I think that's stupid too. Transvestitism was always connected to fetishism. It's transgressive and it's enjoyable for men to wear women's clothing. By the way, it was transgressive and enjoyable for women to wear men's clothing back in the 1910s and 20s,

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<sup>16</sup> Nina Paley is an American cartoonist, animator and free culture activist.

and they did. You know that's true. Marlene Dietrich<sup>17</sup> used to go out in a tux and stuff and it really shook up the squares. She would have lesbian affairs and it was the talk of the town. Well, that's awesome. Marlene Dietrich is one of my heroes. I think she was awesome and so I'm pro gender liberation.

But that doesn't mean necessarily that I'm pro some idea that sex is a non-existing category. I think that's just crazy. To say that chromosomes don't matter is to argue against the whole essence of evolution. By the way, it's an inconvenient fact that human beings are mammals and all mammals are sexually dimorphic. We have males and females for good biological reasons, which Dawkins<sup>18</sup> would be happy to explain this to you in his classic non-fiction work *The Blind Watchmaker*. If you have the patience for it, it's one of the best books I've ever read. He sits down and explains exactly how sexual selection works and why it works and why it evolved that way. There are good solid reasons why we have males and females. It really works great. There are some things that don't, there are certain kinds of sea anemones and worms and so forth that are not sexually dimorphic, but for the most part almost all life that you've encountered is sexually dimorphic, and for a good reason. It's just a fact of our existence. That doesn't mean that we can't play with it. It doesn't mean that guys all have to be macho and women all have to wear high heels, or some stupid shit like they do in Japan, where they're having some stupid debate right now about whether it could be okay for women to show up at work not wearing fetish heels and a short skirt. Well, that's fucking loony. Of course, they should be allowed to wear whatever they want. What's the point of that? Women have to make themselves into sex dolls or something? I'm against that. I think that we should have a more liberal, tolerant attitude about gender.

**AV: Are there any gender statistics about the CoE?**

CK: No, we have no easy way of tracking that. But I would guess that it would be something like 50/50, or, if anything, more women than men. We definitely prioritize female members. We actively try to convert female members because of course in the end it's women who make the final decision on procreation.

**AV: Yes, or homosexuals...?**

CK: The guys can have an opinion about it but it's the woman who really decides. So we actively recruit females. We're also very popular in transgender and queer circles. That's also good. Not that queer people don't sometimes procreate, but I think it's fair to say that they procreate a lot less. There are exceptions of course, but it's the whole kind of hetero suburban soccer mom middle-class dream that we're really opposing. And most queer people that I know have nothing to do with that. I don't know too many queer soccer moms, it happens from time to time – but you know what I'm saying. It's easier to have a conversation about non-procreation with the queer world than to have that conversation in suburban

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<sup>17</sup> Marie Magdalene «Marlene» Dietrich was a German-American actress and singer. Throughout her long career, which spanned from the 1910s to the 1980s, she continually reinvented herself.

<sup>18</sup> Richard Dawkins is an English ethologist, evolutionary biologist, and author.

Illinois, as an example, where the Jerry Springer Show<sup>19</sup> was held. You can imagine how this went over in a theater full of suburban middle-aged house wives in Illinois, when the CoE did the Jerry Springer Show. There were like 200 Illinois housewives who are all just having a religious experience. They definitely never, never, never saw anything like this, never considered anything like it before, and they sat there like this [with their mouths open] the whole time.

That's a sheltered world. It's the sheltered world of middle-class suburban boredom. I'm against all of that. I'd like less people to be in that world. If the whole world were queer that would be a great start. Let's do it. Let's queer the world. Good idea. We're making some progress with that. During my lifetime queer marriage got legalized. That's huge progress. Even in fucking Ireland, imagine that. Even in *Northern* Ireland, in one of the most staunchly Catholic places on earth, they finally agreed to it. Next, it'll be North Korea, or what? So, there is progress. It's important to remember that. It's not all bad news. It's just a Quixotic situation. Just at the moment when people are becoming more civilized and starting to show some real social progress and some of the really big social problems that we had for generations for centuries are being solved – problems like slavery and discrimination against women, discrimination against queer people – just as those problems finally start to become somewhat solved, unfortunately the bill for our misdeeds is coming due. Well, I didn't bring it up before but you should look up Fermi's paradox<sup>20</sup>. There's good reasons to believe that this was unavoidable, and that this is just the normal tragedy of civilizations, on any planet anywhere in our universe. It's just hard to avoid this. Civilizations tend to accelerate the entropy of their environment. You can quote me on that. That's what we've done. We've grossly accelerated the entropy of our environment, and that was a big mistake, and we're going to pay for it. But who knows, maybe it'll be okay. I hope so for your sake.

Alright. Do you get enough for what you're doing?

**AV: I guess so. We didn't talk as much about the apocalypse as I had hoped for...**

CK: We did, we talked about it the whole time actually!

**AV: I guess so.**

CK: I only got a couple of more minutes and then I'm going to roll but ask me a question that I didn't answer.

**AV: When I read the *A NEAR-PERFECT DEATH* article in *Snuff It 5* about you disconnecting your mom from life support and cleaning up after her life, it really touched me and made me think a lot. You said you «didn't like to watch». This was probably one of my first encounters with Chris Korda which I didn't find provocative. In the beginning of our conversation, you were talking about all the fears of nothing being there/left/online after your death. I wonder if you ever feel some kind of regret or**

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<sup>19</sup> <https://vimeo.com/235654079>

<sup>20</sup> The Fermi paradox, named after Italian-American physicist Enrico Fermi, is the apparent contradiction between the lack of evidence for extraterrestrial civilizations and various high estimates for their probability.

**sadness for not having children to carry on the tradition. If all of the problems of civilization would be solved, would the pillars of the CoE change? Would the church even exist?**

CK: No it's political. If you are asking me, did I choose to not procreate for personal reasons or for political reasons, it's primarily a public stance. If it were only personal I wouldn't have been so public about it. The reason I made such a fuss about it and the reason I made it the basis of an entire religion is because I have strong political convictions. I never necessarily thought that if I persuaded people to not have children that it would change the outcome. That wasn't the point. The point is it's a way of challenging the current paradigm that we're trapped in. It's like being a vegan or something, or a vegetarian. When you say I'm not going to have children and it's because I really think that to do so would only add fuel to the fire of this catastrophe that we've been brewing, then you're demonstrating political commitment for an ideal. You are voting with your feet. Actually you're voting with your sperm, or your eggs if you're female. You're saying: «No, I draw the line. Not with my genetics you don't. The problem stops with me,» is what you're saying. You're giving a vote of no confidence in the current plan. And that's good because the current plan isn't going to work. It already isn't working. The current plan was predictably a catastrophe. I predicted it back in the 90s and now it's clear the plan is not working. It's going to be a disaster and contributing more children to it will only make it worse, worse for them, worse for everyone. So it's political, not personal. I mean, personally I have no interest in children anyway, so I didn't make that big a sacrifice, but other Church members maybe made a bigger sacrifice because they were more attached to it. For women especially it's a bigger deal. Women are often very attached to the act of biologically procreating in a way that men are less likely to be. That's biological, there's good reasons for that. It's a sacrifice for some people more than for others. But for me, it's more of a demonstration. You're demonstrating something. By choosing to not procreate, you're demonstrating awareness and common cause, you are demonstrating solidarity with other people who are concerned about the future and who think that the future as it stands now is untenable – even if we don't save it, even if the future is going to be untenable anyway, we still made our point. It's important to make this point, even if it's for nothing. It's important for ethical, artistic and emotional reasons. What else would you have me do with my life, right? Why wouldn't I have risen to the occasion and made this point? It would be like if we lived during the time when slavery was occurring in the United States and you didn't engage with that. Well, lots of people didn't of course, but I'm pretty sure if I had been born back then I would have engaged with it. In other words, the overpopulation crisis and the environmental crisis that's flowed from it was the most pressing and urgent issue that occurred during my lifetime. And so of course I was going to engage with it as a human being, as an artist, in every way. And I continue to, to this day. That's why we're having this conversation.

**AV: Thank you so much.**

CK: I've got to run Amadeus but I hope it was good. I hope the audio came out.

**AV: I recorded it twice. I think we should be fine.**

CK: I didn't record it on my end so it's all on you.

**AV: We will definitely have something. I'll email it to you as soon as possible.**

CK: Sounds great.

**AV: Well, thank you so much.**

CK: You are very welcome Amadeus. Take care of yourself.

**AV: You too. Bye bye.**