

Urban Reader

Companion Readings and Updates

for

'Nature's Home or Growth Engine: Whereto the City?'

*(Course for Borderlands Co-operative, 2 Minona Street Hawthorn,
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Preface

This collection of materials is prepared as a companion to the author's paper, 'Nature's home or growth engine: Whereto the city', (New Community Quarterly, v.7, n.3, Spring 2009).

Actually, all the materials are sandwiched between two pieces by me. The bottom of the sandwich is the '..... Whereto the city' item which is reproduced in the Appendix. The top of the sandwich is my piece, 'Nature and Society, Nature and City', (Nature and Society Forum, April-May 2010). This appears in the Reader as Item 1, Part 1. The meat in the sandwich of the Reader is my selection of items for further consideration.

The Reader both adds to references contained in the original papers and updates them. The textual quotations and references in that paper are, of course, also available for further consideration.

'.....Whereto the city? was drafted in August 2009 and published in New Community Quarterly, (vol. 7, no.3, Spring 2009). Since that August, a further torrent of papers and articles have appeared and events have occurred, making, in this author's opinion, the arguments presented more pertinent and more urgent.

Some of those papers and events are:

- *The report of Federal Treasury projecting a population for Australia of 35.9 millions by 2050, given current immigration and birthrates;*
- *The outcry over the growing housing shortage and house price spikes;*
- *An upsurge in residential building – with particularly strenuous efforts by governments at all levels 'to remove obstacles' to apartment building. Planners have played no small part in this upsurge, especially with publications such as 'Transforming Australian Cities' and in the ongoing Infrastructure Australia reports;*
- *The (watchful) return of confidence to economic growth projections following the uncertainties of the Great Financial Collapse (now becoming the Great Sovereign Collapse?) and the continuing hyper-expansion of the Chinese and Indian economies;*
- *The weak outcome from the Copenhagen climate change summit, and governmental deferral of action (and the success of the deniers' campaign in weakening government and public resolve to act decisively) whereby action on global warming has been delayed, despite persistently worse news on the climate front.*

An event which did have a powerful personal influence on this writer was reading the posthumous collection of papers by the late Thomas Berry, 'The Sacred Universe – Earth, Spirituality, and Religion in the Twenty-First Century'. The direct influence of this remarkable man's thoughts is apparent in the paper, 'Nature and Society, Nature

and City'. (Part 1). Edward O. Wilson's conclusion, speaking globally, remains pertinent : 'We are inside a bottleneck of overpopulation and wasteful consumption. If the race is won, humanity can emerge in far better condition than when it entered, and with most of the diversity of life still intact.' (The Diversity of Life',2002, Little, Brown xxiii.)

The papers included in this Reader do not all reflect the views of this collector and many are there purely to show the state of the current intellectual scene. At least, they should not go unquestioned or unqualified. Also, some are mere data updates, while some go to the heart of value issues.

A particularly pertinent example of thinking that's in sharp opposition to the thrust of '.....Whereto the city?' is the editorial piece, 'At decades end, the world is a better place'('The Australian'). This newspaper, by the way, presents society's Mainstream single-minded economic growth-high consumption ethos at its most strident, and is probably among the most influential voices of that position. If ever an intellectual position was one to confuse, delay and distract the contemporary call to urgent action of behalf of the planet, that is it.

So it is fitting that a (hopefully) ironically-intended depiction of the future from one of that newspaper's magazines should form the scary frontispiece of this Reader.

Len Puglisi.

A note on full availability of materials:

In order to keep the spirax binding easy to use, most large items have only been included using a page or so of their content. Readers who wish to look further into any such pieces – or for any information about any items – are welcome to contact me by email or 'phone for assistance.

Contents

The contents of the Reader are listed on the divider pages throughout the collection under the following Parts' headings. These headings correspond to those in '.....Whereto the city?' (For full paper, see Appendix)

Part 1 : Engaging with nature in the city

Part 2: Generally, though, do many care?

Part 3: Nature and Growth – Attitudes and Questions

Part 4: Alternatively, there's the mainstream growth ethos

Part 5: City growth and display in residential settings

Part 6: The Mainstream takes shape in cities

Part 7: Looking inside the changing city functions and workplaces of global capitalism

Part 8: Environmental stresses that stand to question this 'growth engine' future for cities – (plus Addendum References: China)

Part 9: Looking beyond city boundaries

Part 10: Some more specific issues confronting urban planning and management

Part 11: Avoiding population growth as the major determinant of city futures?

Part 12: A comment on recent broad-scale efforts at metro planning

Part 13: Suburbs dismissed as 'sprawl', but..... (plus Addendum References - Cost Pressures)

Appendix – 'Nature's home or growth engine: Whereto the city?'

PART 1

Engaging with nature in the City

3 Photos

Pleasantville - Cover

City pads for under \$350,000

The city is not a concrete jungle. It is a human zoo

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|--|------------------------|
| 1. Nature and Society, Nature and City | Len Puglisi |
| 2. The Sacred Universe (5 extracts) | Thomas Berry |
| 3. (From) Cloudstreet (novel) | Tim Winton |
| 4. Life's Work (Interview with Jane Goodall) | |
| 5. Playing for the love of the land (Peter Sculthorpe) | Robin Usher |
| 6. How space and place dictate your happiness | Deidre Macken |
| 7. (From) Chalcott Crescent (novel) | Fay Weldon |
| 8. It's time literally to go green | Peter Fisher |
| 9. Conserving backyard biodiversity | Gary Luck |
| 10. Biodiversity: linking Singapore's fragmented habitats | Chong, Yee, Yeo |
| 11. Consilience (extract) | E.O. Wilson |
| 12. Two views of our planet's future
(re Stewart Brand & Bill McKibben) | David Orr |
| 13. The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism (extract) | Daniel Bell |

PART 2

Generally, though, do many care?

- 1. Capital Punishment – The vision of Canberra as a Garden City is in danger of being compromised with new Suburban Developments giving low priority to Landscape**
Dianne Firth
- 2. German migrants in the back yard of a rented house**
(unknown)
- 3. Sustainable living at high densities**
The Age Domain

PART 3

Nature and Growth – Attitudes and Questions

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|--|-----------------------|
| 1. Listen.....our land is crying | Mary E. White |
| 2. A gift from before clocks kept time | Peter Fisher |
| 3. Growth isn't possible
 Why we need a new economic direction
 (New Economic Foundation) | NEF |
| 4. CBI chief slams reckless growth | ENDS (Mag) |
| 5. Anticipating Environmental 'Surprise' | Chris Bright |
| 6. Cities in Civilization (Review of a book by Peter Hall) | Robert Fishman |

PART 4

Alternatively, there's the Mainstream growth ethos

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|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. The wonders of science and technology (Cartoon) | Michael Leunig |
| 2. At decade's end, the world is a better place | The Australian
(editorial) |
| 3. California dreamin' | Benjamin Schwarz |
| 4. Overindulgence | Jonathan Yardley |
| 5. Happiness breeds prosperity | Felicia Huppert |
| 6. How low can you go? | W. Aust. Mag |
| 7. Rich lifestyles cannot go on, says EPA | Stephanie Peatling |
| 8. Frugality and Footprint Converge to Question the
Consumer Culture (Intro to a Reader) | Len Puglisi |
| 9. The flaws of the free (Review of Martin Feil) | John Legge |
| 10. The Production Bomb | Peter Fisher |

PART 5

City growth and display in residential settings

1. Mansions for all

The Age Domain

2. Neighbours in hell

Jonathan Yardley

3. Scaling the heights and lows of a modern skyline

Russell Skelton

4. Dynamic engineering for sustainability

inf.net.au/D330

PART 6

The Mainstream takes shape in cities

1. City of the future

2. How cities can be expected to change

Peter Hall

**3. The World Class City Concept and its Repercussions
on Urban Planning for Cities in the Asia Pacific Region**

Arif Hasan

4. Knowledge economy at what cost?

Simon Cooper

5. The ideas interview: Saskia Sassen

**John Sutherland
(The Guardian)**

PART 7

Looking inside the changing city functions and workplaces of global capitalism

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|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Information Merchant Leaders in the New Economy | William B. Beyers |
| 2. Big Build: Property capital, the State and Urban Change
in Australia | Michael Berry
Margo Huxley |
| 3. Reinventing Cities for People and the Planet | Molly O'Meara |
| 4. The service sector – boon or bane for the environment? | Ends Report |
| 5. Globalisation and the Urban Economy | Kevin O'Connor |

PART 8

Environmental stresses that stand to question this 'growth engine' future for cities

Global warming, energy and water supply limits

- | | |
|--|-------------------------|
| 1. Vulnerability of the Sydney Coastal Councils' Region to Climate Change | Map |
| 2. Life in a hot, hungry world | Julian Cribb |
| 3. Scorching future vision | Sarok Wotherspon |
| 4. Climate change will hurt poor and elderly most | JaneGibson |
| 5. Climate change could end California Farming : CHU | Mary Miliken |

Pollution

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 6. Stronger Evidence Pollution Damages Heart: Report | Reuters,
Planet Ark |
| 7. Pollution from Asia circles Globe a Stratospheric Heights | Pollution Online |

Ecological sustainability and Footprint

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 8. Aussie ecology in for a shock | ANU |
| 9. The Ecological Footprint | Redefining
Progress |

Addendum References: CHINA

continued over....

ADDENDUM REFERENCES: CHINA

- 1. China Says Drought Now Affecting 50 Million People** Ben Blanchard
- 2. China faces up to a toxic legacy** Colleen Ryan
- 3. Brown haze harming health and crops, says UN** Andrew Jacobs
- 4. The Chinese Miracle Will End Soon (Interview)** *Spiegel* with Pan Yue
- 5. China cleans up (photo)** Peter Farley

PART 9

Looking beyond city boundaries

1. The Ecology of Cities

Lester Brown

2. Sprawl eating us out of house and homes

Debra Jopson

PART 10

Some more specific issues confronting urban planning and management

- 1. Buying time: City growth and
concealed environmental problems** **Peter Fisher
Len Puglisi**
- 2. Public transport in Australia – a density delusion** **Paul Mees**
- 3. The Granite Garden (extract)** **Ann Whiston Spirn**
- 4. Efforts in Japan to Mitigate the
Urban Heat Island Effect** **JFS Newsletter No.73**
- 5. Curbing Sprawl to Fight Climate Change** **Worldwatch**
- 6. We can't afford sprawl** **Brian Buckley**

PART 11

Avoiding population growth as a major determinant of city futures

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. People Policy – Australia’s Population Choices | Doug Cocks |
| 2. A cure for people phobia | Alan Mitchell |
| 3. Kelvin Thomson’s 14 point plan for population reform | Sustainable
Population Aus |
| 4. Sustainable Cities – Population growth a threat to biodiversity | ACF |
| 5. Population and nature – the human implications | Aaron
Bernstein |
| 6. Population Sustainability | Robert
Engelman |
| 7. Water – Related Conflicts Set to Escalate | Academy of
Finland |
| 8. Population pressure takes Earth to its limits | Marian
Wilkinson |
| 9. Population debate misses the facts | Clive
Hamilton |
| 10. ACF population initiative | SPA |
| 11. The downward spiral of hasty population growth | Jane
O’Sullivan |
| 12. The Risks of High Migration | Bob Birrell |
| 13. Australia’s population should be capped at 28 million | Bob Carr |

PART 12

A comment on recent broad-scale efforts at metro planning

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|--|--|
| 1. The higher we go | The Age Domain |
| 2. Rack ‘em and stack ‘em: a silly solution to
population growth | Peter Fisher,
Len Puglisi |
| 3. Transforming Australian Cities (extract) | C/Melb – D/Trans
(Rob Adams) |
| 4. Melbourne 2030: Planning Rhetoric Versus
Urban Reality | Bob Birrell,
Kevin O’Connor
Virginia Rapson
Earnest Healy |
| 5. Whereto the City (see Appendix) | Len Puglisi |
| 6. Public Transport Policy (see Part 10) | Paul Mees |
| 7. Energy and housing density | Pears Report |
| 8. Life’s a bitumen nightmare as cities
get hotter than hell | SMH/Paul Sheehan |
| 9. Hot, hot, hot - Brisbane’s King George Square | Courier Mail (photo) |
| 10. Box Summary: Norms for Nature’s Place in the
Melbourne Region (See ...Whereto the city? Appendix) | Len Puglisi |

Addendum References: COST PRESSURES

Continued over.....

Addendum references: Cost Pressures

Some actual and anticipated cost pressures (beyond normal inflation) arising from population, environmental and economic growth

1. Housing Deficit: something's got to give (April 2010 update) Neik Lenaghan
2. Power price shocker Ben Packham
3. Our outer suburbs are poverty traps Laurie Nowell
Mitchell Toy
4. Power bill shock as electricity soars \$240 a year Ursula Heger,
Steven Wardill

PART 13

Suburbs dismissed as sprawl, but.....

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. Today's much maligned suburbia simply
needs time to mature | Michael Chapman
Len Puglisi |
| 2. Is my street boring? | |
| 3. The Piano Shop in the Left Bank | T.E.Cathart |
| 4. Paris (photo) | Access |
| 5. Paris heat wave offers lessons in climate change (Transcript) | Daniel Grossman |
| 6. Two rows of street trees | Ann W. Spirn |
| 7. Why we need an Urban Forest | Peter Fisher |
| 8. Our suburbs can be transformed into true communities | Peter Cock |
| 9. Is Oregon's metropolis a leader among American cities
or just strange | Economist.com |
| 10. Transition Towns | Claire Galea |
| 11. Ebenezer Howard – The Beginning of Social Cities? | David Gordon |
| 12. The Virtues of Suburbia | Pat Troy |
| 13. Small, green and kind | The Age Domain |
| 14. Farewell to McMansions | The Age |
| 15. New heights of green | Herald-Sun |
| 16. We can improve life for those stranded on the urban fringe | Frank McGuire |
| 17. Seeking diversity in supply | Scott Keck |

APPENDIX

Nature's home or growth engine: Whereto the city? Len Puglisi

(Reference: New Community Quarterly, v.7, n.3, Spring 2009)