

A detailed illustration of a post-apocalyptic city street. The scene is filled with debris, including a large bus on the left with the number '5033' and a yellow car on the right. A lone astronaut with a red visor stands in the center of the street. In the background, a car is engulfed in flames, and tall, dark buildings rise into a hazy, blue-tinted sky. The overall atmosphere is one of desolation and the aftermath of a catastrophic event.

# The End of the World

An Introduction to the Apocalypse

Week 1 Lecture | Professor Crews  
RELS 357 W

**Apocalypse**

**Rapture**

**End of the World**

**Catastrophe**

**Chaos**

**End Times**

**Prepping**

**Armageddon**



# Key Concepts

- **Apocalypse**

- From the Greek word ἀποκάλυψις (apokalupsis/apokálypsis)
  - Reveal; Uncover; Unveil

- **Apocalyptic**

- A literary genre originating in early Jewish text about the end of the world.
  - John of Patmos, Daniel, Ezekiel, 1 Enoch

**Apocalypse**: “A genre of revelatory literature with a narrative framework in which a revelation is mediated by an otherworldly being to a human recipient, disclosing a transcendent reality which is both temporal, insofar as it envisages eschatological salvation, and spatial, insofar as it involves another, supernatural world.”

-- John J. Collins, *The Apocalyptic Imagination: An Introduction to Jewish Apocalyptic Literature*





# Four Horseman of the Apocalypse

(Conquest/Pestilence – War – Famine – Death)





# Key Concepts

- **Eschatology**

- From the Greek word ἔσχατος (eschatos)
  - The Last; Farthest
- The study of the last days and how the world ends.

- **Eschatological**

- Concerning the end times

- **Apocrypha**

- Unofficial religious texts, often of uncertain origin



Dead Sea Scrolls fragment



# Key Concepts

- **Symbology**

- The study of symbols and their significance (both hidden and plain).
  - The number of the Beast (616, 666)

- **Cipher**

- A code used to hide the true meaning of a message.
  - Beast with seven heads and ten horns

- **Seer/Prophet**

- Someone who is given the ability to see the future or receive divine messages.
  - 3 Wise Men given vision of the birth of Jesus



WAW (VAV)

6



# Apocalyptic Variations

## Religious Apocalypse

Global Pandemic

## Secular Apocalypse

Ecological Disaster (Climate/Volcano)

- Zombie Apocalypse
- Robot Apocalypse
- Nuclear Apocalypse

Alien Encounter

Cosmic Event (Asteroid, Solar Flares)

General Catastrophe (Y2K, 2012)



# Apocalypse in Pop Culture

Here are a few of the places we can see apocalyptic ideas in action.

US Politics	Religion	International affairs	Environment
Biblical literalism	Judgement Day	War in Middle East	Species extinction
Support for Israel	Anti Christ & the Beast	Nuclear Threats	Climate Change
Doomsday preppers	“666”	UN/World Government	Hurricanes/Wildfires

# Early Apocalypse Stories

- Stories about the destruction or end of the world are common
  - Flood or other divine destruction - Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian texts
- Apocalyptic literature emerged in early Jewish texts (~3rd C. BCE)
  - Book of Daniel (7-12)
  - 1 Enoch
  - 4 Ezra
  - Apocalypse of Paul & Apocalypse of Peter
- Many from apocryphal texts (Dead Sea Scrolls, Nag Hammadi Codex)



# Receiving the Apocalypse

## DREAMS

- Prophet or seer is shown visions of the apocalypse (Daniel)
- Angel helps interpret visions
- Symbolic language & images

## HEAVENLY VISIONS

- Prophet or seer is taken up to Heaven to see events unfolding (John of Patmos)
- Angel guides seer, sometimes also explains events
- Symbolic language & images

# Interpreting the Apocalypse

- A fundamental challenge in making sense of apocalyptic literature is how we interpret and understand the content of these stories.
- **Literal vs Symbolic**
  - How should we understand apocalyptic literature?
- **Past vs Present**
  - Where do we locate the message of apocalyptic stories?





Harold Camping predicts the end of the world - May 21, 2011

# Public Opinion & the Apocalypse

## 2006 Pew Research Poll

Among U.S. Christians...

Do you believe in the second coming of Jesus Christ?



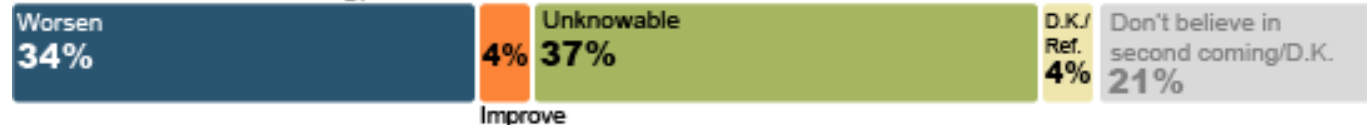
Do you believe that Jesus will return to Earth in your lifetime?



Is the time of the second coming revealed in biblical prophecies?



Before the second coming, the world situation will...



Can peoples and nations affect when Christ returns?



## 2006 Pew Research Poll

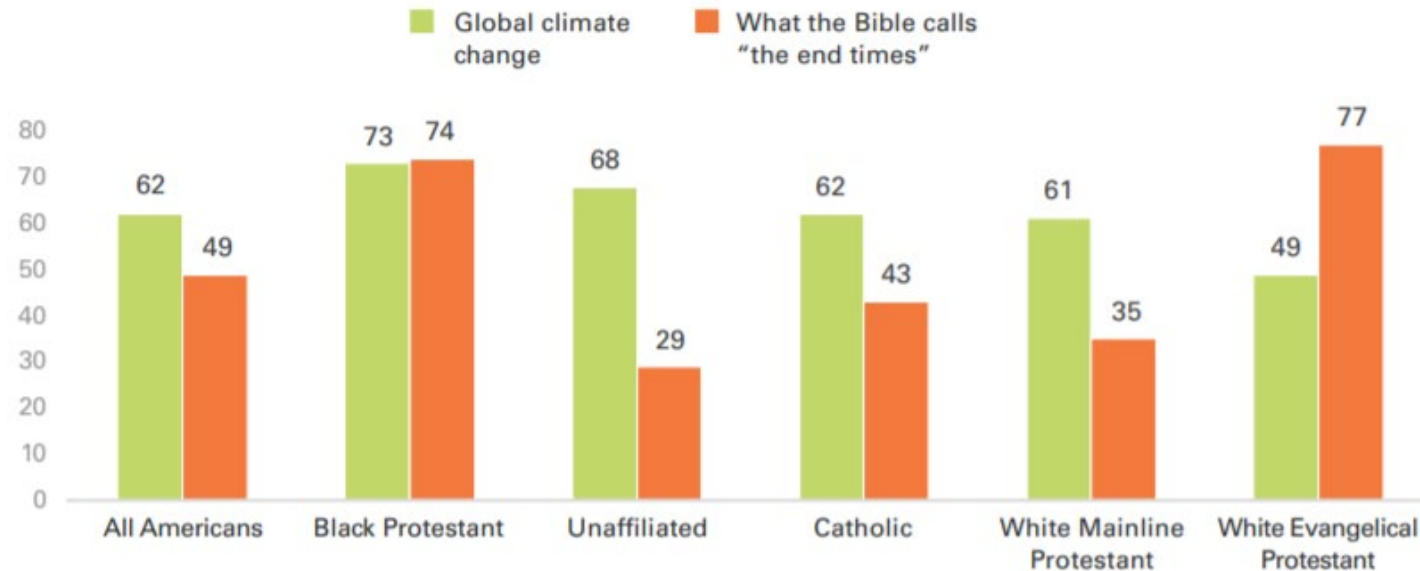
### Opinions of Christians about the Second Coming of Jesus Christ

	Time of Christ's return...		
	Believe in 2 <sup>nd</sup> coming	Is revealed in Bible	In your lifetime
	%	%	%
Total	79	33	20
Total Protestant	83	36	23
White evangelical	95	39	33
White mainline	60	19	7
Black Protestant	92	53	34
Total Catholic	70	27	12
White non-Hispanic	69	23	8
<i>Bible is...</i>			
Literal word of God	95	52	37
Word of God, not literal	76	24	11

# Public Opinion & the Apocalypse

## 2014 PRRI & AAR Survey

FIGURE 9. The severity of recent natural disasters is evidence of...

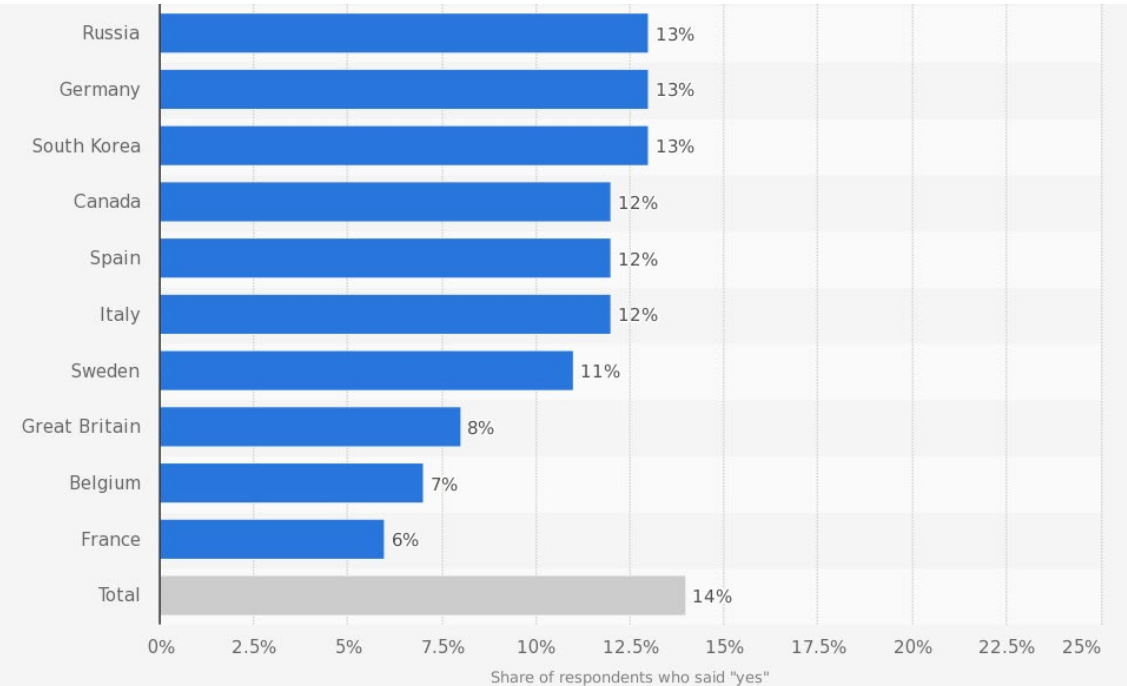
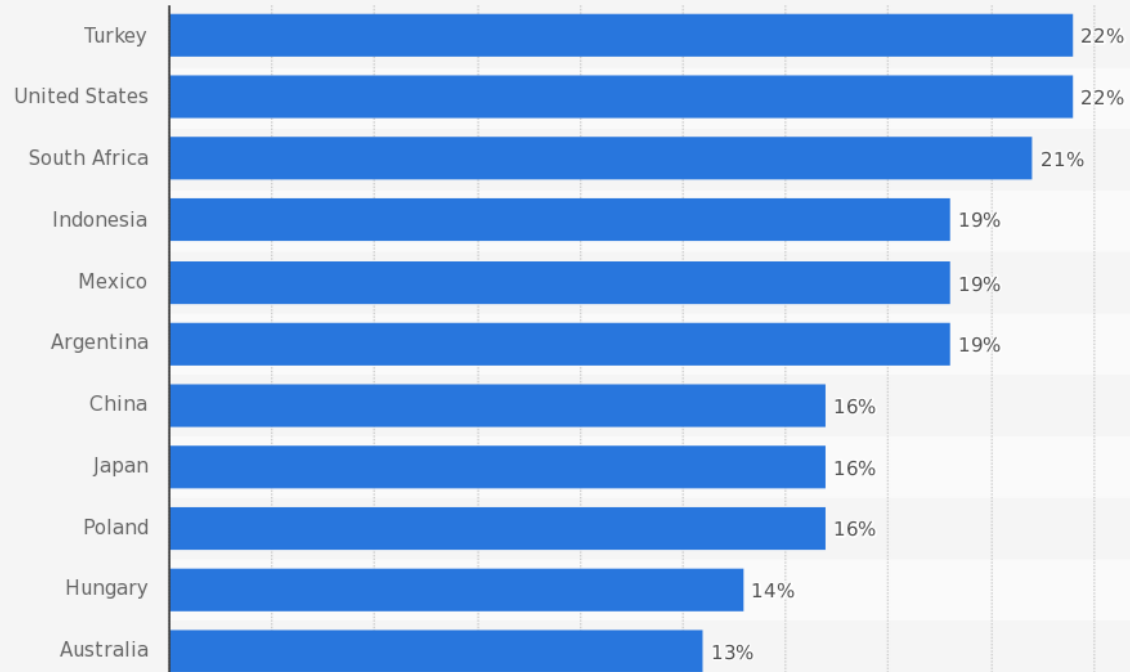


Source: PRRI/AAR, Religion, Values, and Climate Change Survey, November 2014



# Public Opinion & the Apocalypse

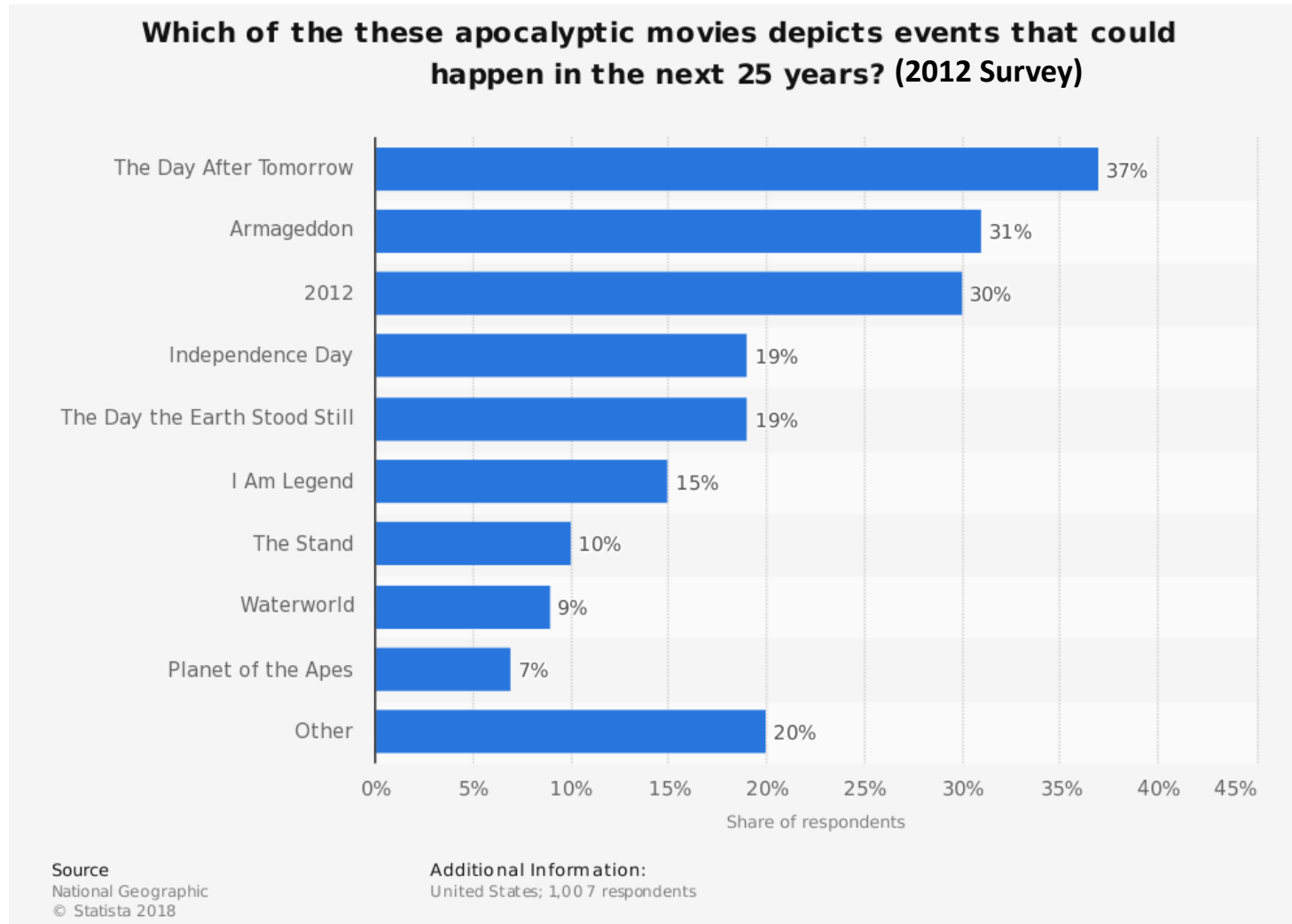
Do you believe that the world will end during your lifetime? (2012, by country)



Source  
Ipsos  
© Statista 2018

Additional Information:  
Worldwide; Ipsos; March 6 to 20, 2012; 16,262\*; 18 years and older

# Public Opinion & the Apocalypse



# The End of History?

- Francis Fukuyama - “The End of History?” thesis (1989)
  - With the fall of Communism and the end of the Cold War, Western liberal democracy and global capitalism was the final political-economic system.
  - No new political ideas or institutions would need to be invented, so the key driver of human progress and modernity had finally come to an end.

*“Have we in fact reached the end of history? Are there, in other words, any fundamental “contradictions” in human life that cannot be resolved in the context of modern liberalism, that would be resolvable by an alternative political-economic structure?”*



# The Apocalyptic Decade

The Last Myth authors argue there was a surge in apocalyptic ideas and worries starting in 21<sup>st</sup> century:

- Y2K (Dec 31, 1999)
- 9/11 (2001)
- Hurricane Katrina (2005)
- Great Recession (2007-2008)
- Mayan Prophecy (Dec 31, 2012)

# Y2K “Millennium Bug”

The first and the last Apocalypse  
20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> century



# Y2K

- Began as a worry about the 2-digit end dates (YY) used by computers.
- Although over-hyped as a potential disaster, global efforts to fix the date problem ensured no major problems occurred.

- How should we view Y2K?
  - A technological hoax ☹️
  - A successfully averted disaster 😊



- Lasting public skepticism from Y2K evident today in climate debates.



# The Rapture Index



**Rapture Ready**  
"Behold, I come quickly" Rev 3:11

[HOME](#) [FAQS](#) [TIMELINES](#) [PHOTORAMA](#) [GLOSSARY](#)



**RAPTURE**

**A GAUGE OF THE *ENDTIMES***  
**CLICK HERE NOW!**

# The Rapture Index

- RaptureReady.com created in mid-1980s by Todd Strandberg
- “the prophetic speedometer of end-times activity”





## Rapture Index (Jan 2020)

# 184

*“fasten your seat belts”*

42 indicators, expanded to 45

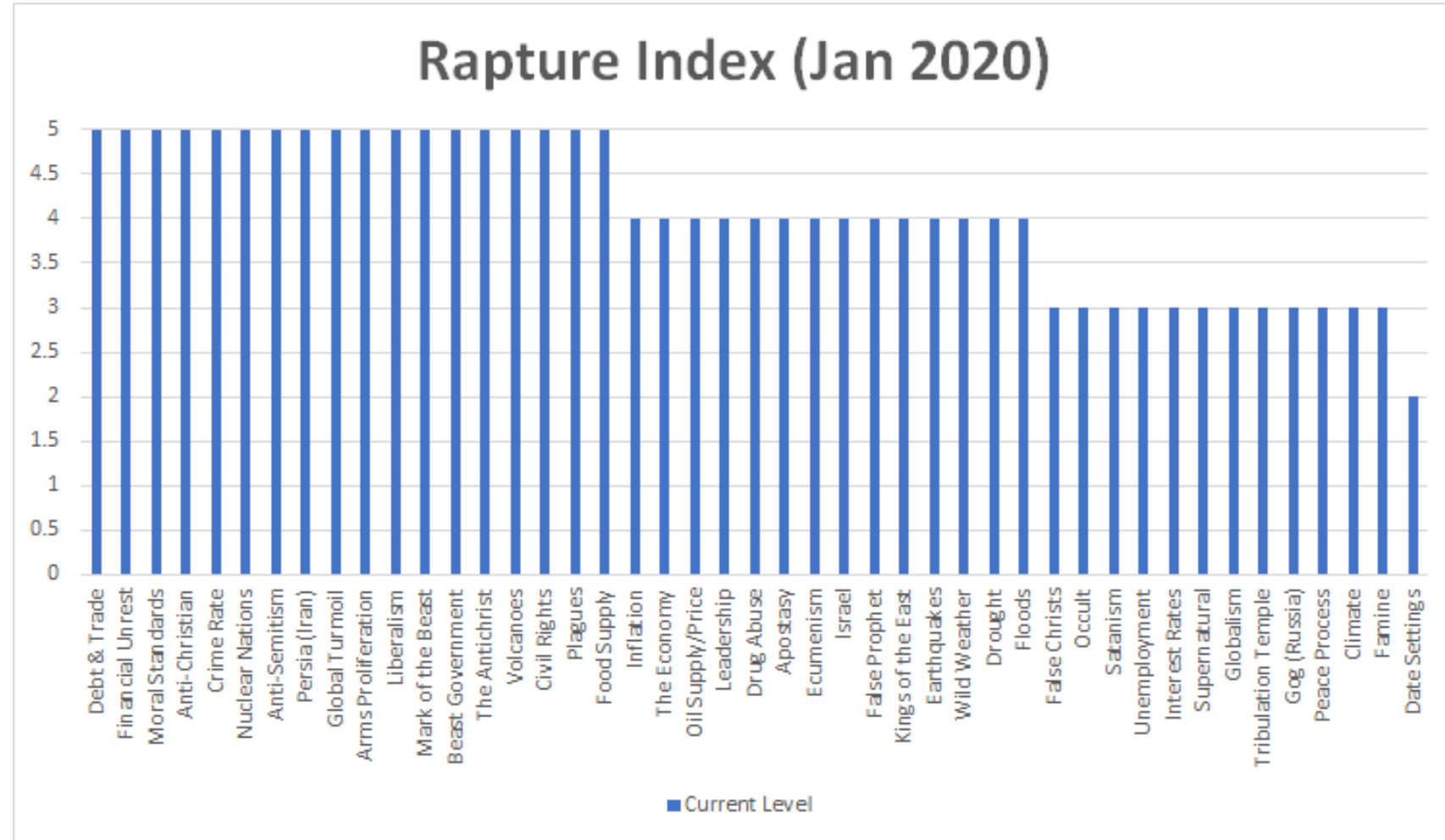
### Rapture Index

**100 and Below:** Slow prophetic activity  
**100 to 130:** Moderate prophetic activity  
**130 to 160:** Heavy prophetic activity  
**Above 160:** Fasten your seat belts

### Records

**All-Time High: 189** (October 10, 2016)

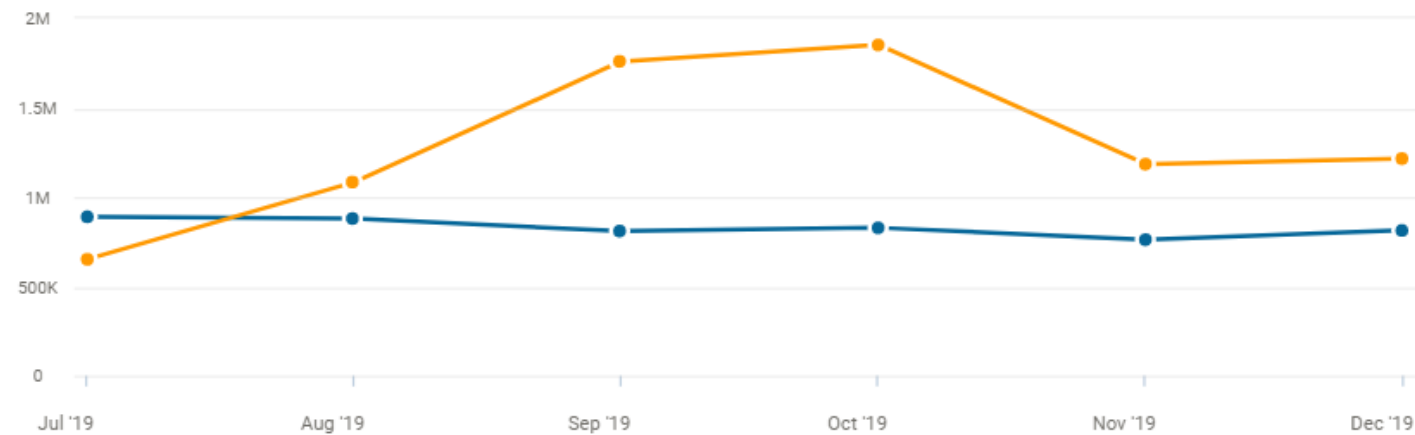
**All-Time Low: 58** (December 12, 1993)



# Traffic Overview (i)

## Total Visits (i)

On desktop & mobile web, in the last 6 months



● Rapture Ready

● CSU Chico

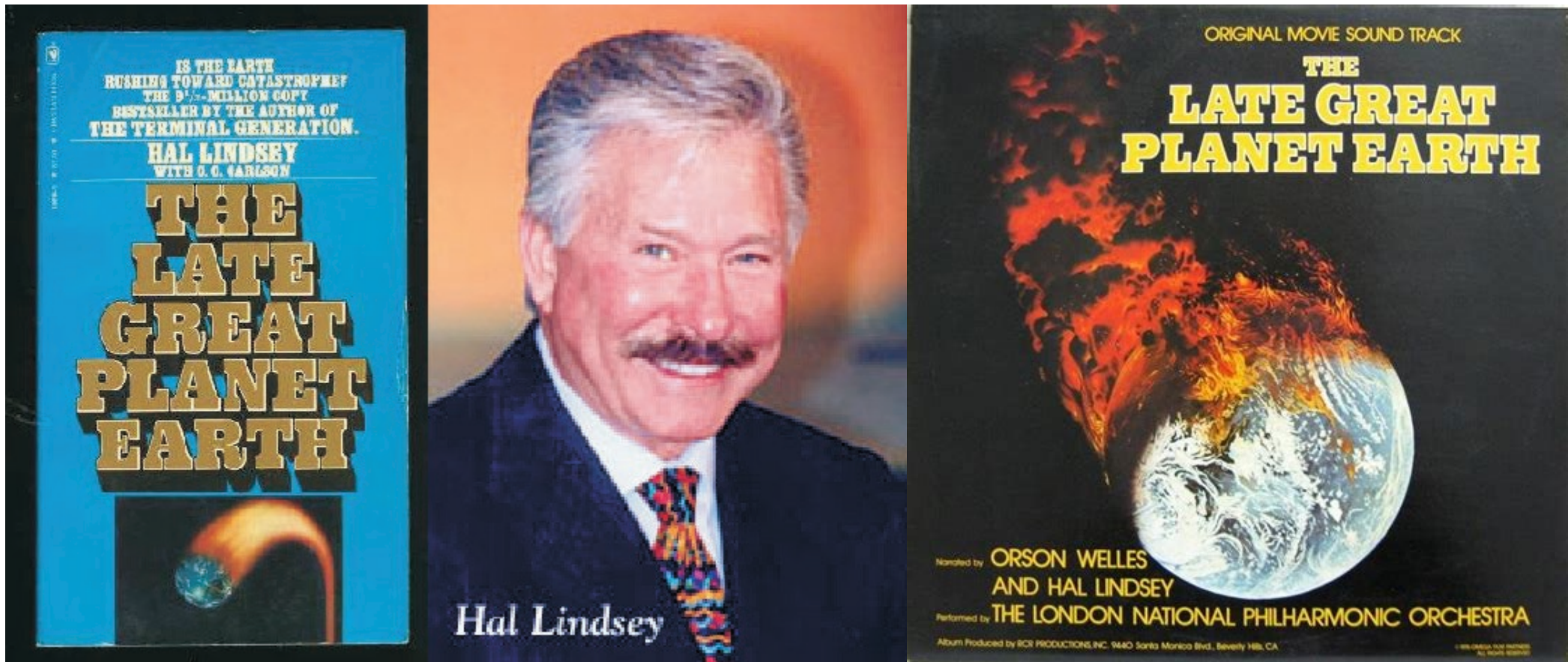
## Engagement

Total Visits	<b>813.27K</b>	<b>1.22M</b>
Avg. Visit Duration	<b>00:05:06</b>	<b>00:09:40</b>
Pages per Visit	<b>3.25</b>	<b>10.51</b>
Bounce Rate	<b>45.99%</b>	<b>23.53%</b>

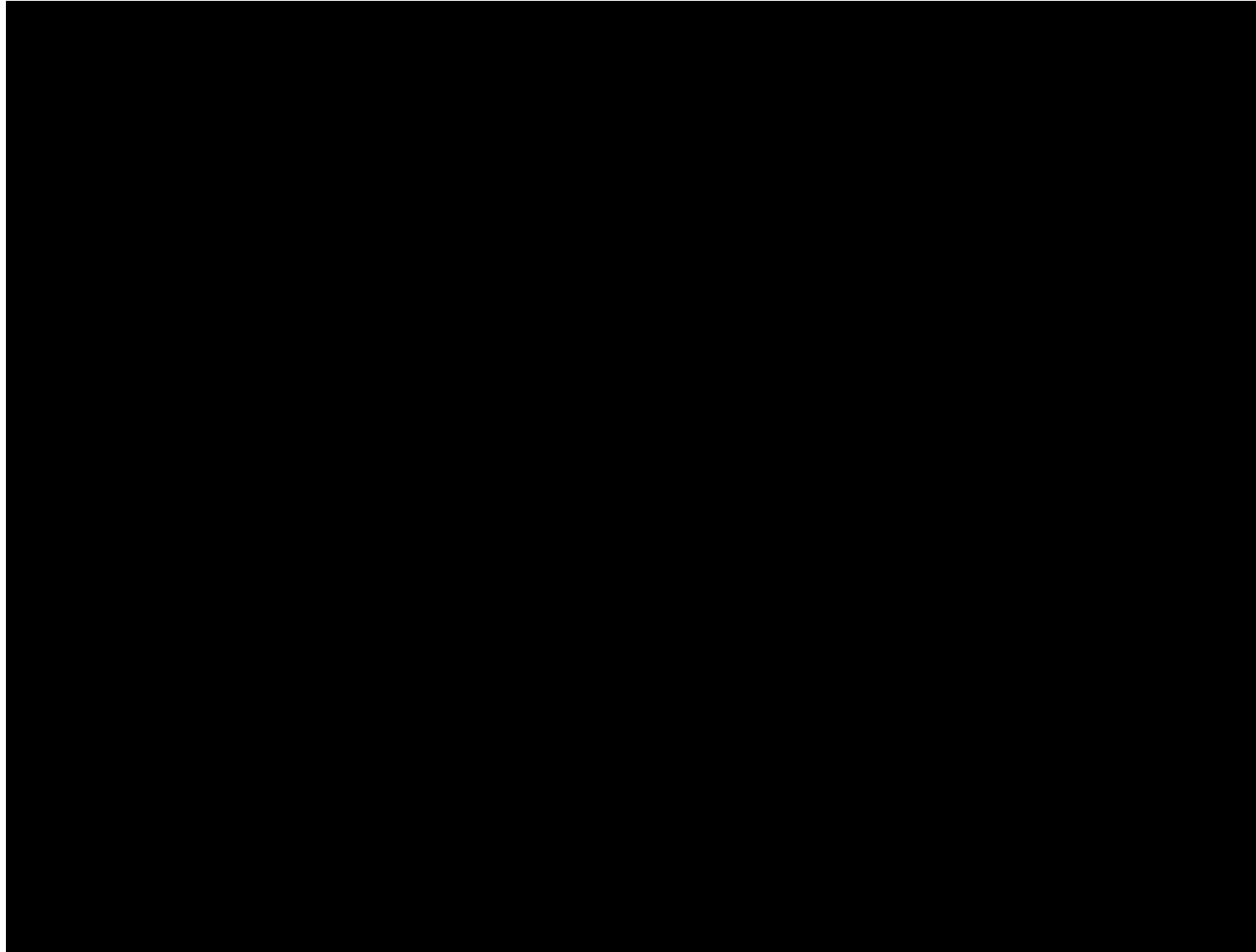
Source: Similarweb.com



# The Late Great Planet Earth

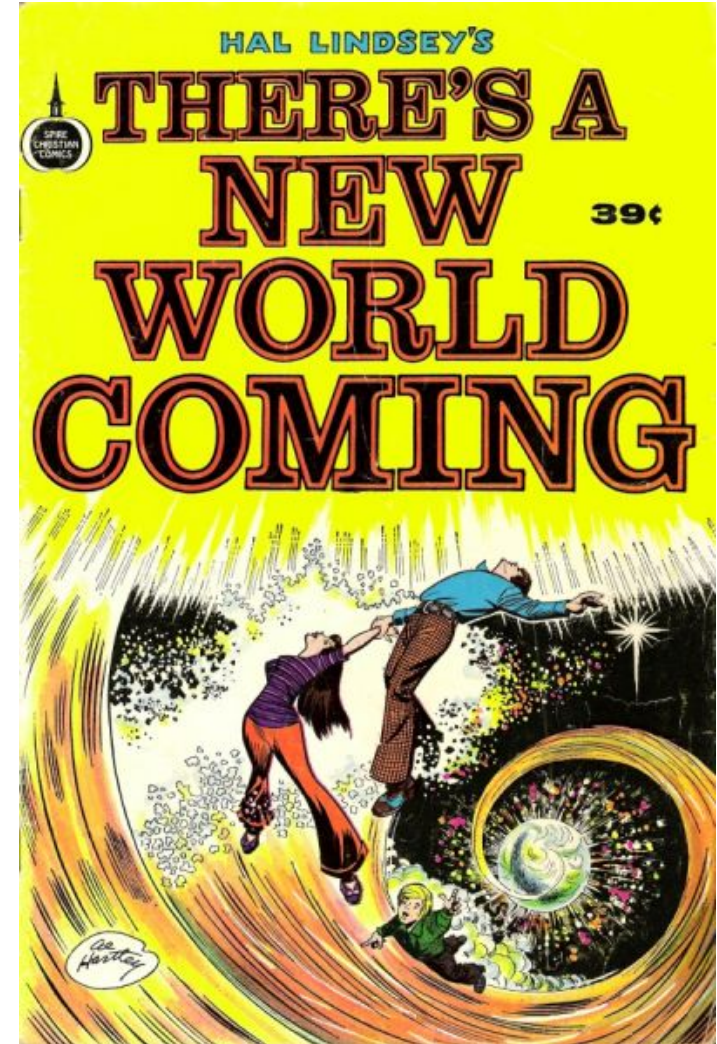


# The Late Great Planet Earth

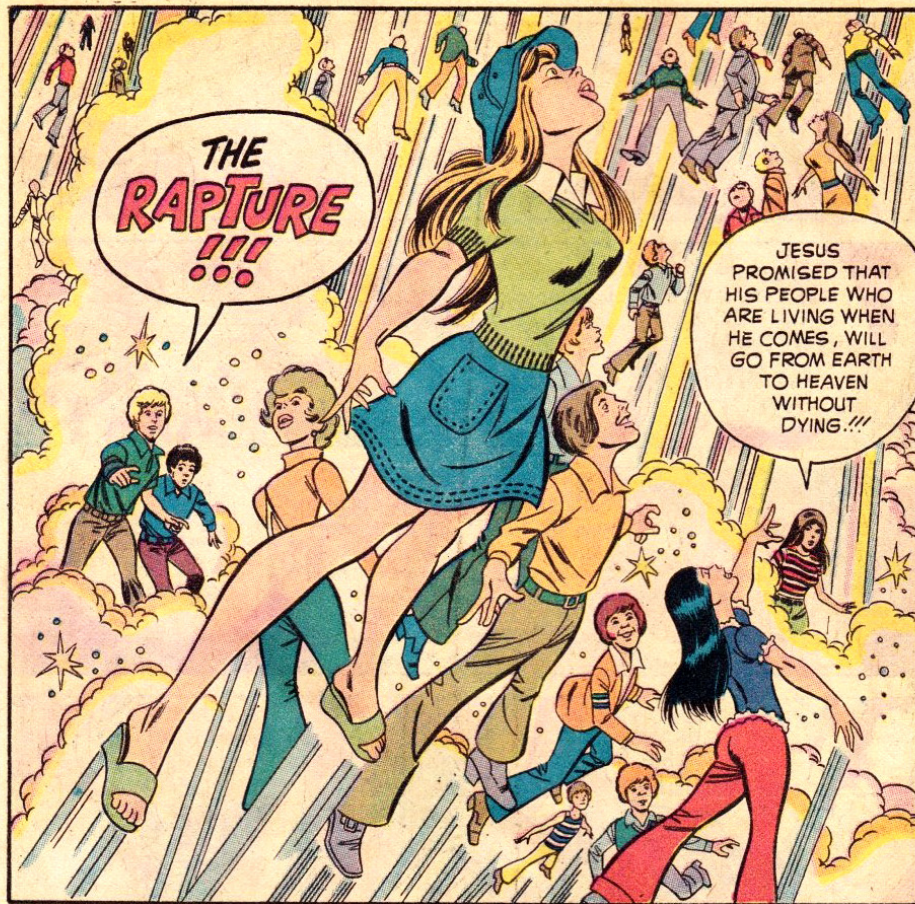


# The Late Great Planet Earth

- Book by Hal Lindsey (1973)
  - Movie narrated by Orson Wells (1976)
- Had a major impact on 70s cultural politics.
- #1 NY Times best-seller in non-fiction.
- 1<sup>st</sup> End Times book by mainstream press.
- 35+ million copies sold by 1999, 50+ languages.
- Marks a revival of Evangelical cultural politics.

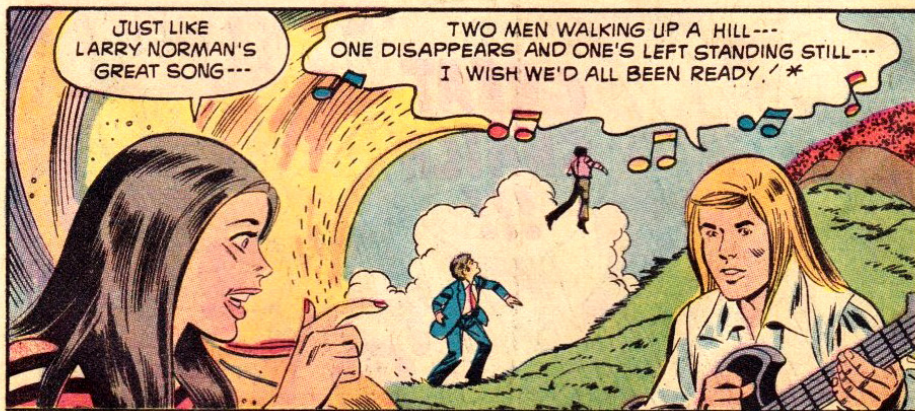






**THE RAPTURE !!!**

JESUS PROMISED THAT HIS PEOPLE WHO ARE LIVING WHEN HE COMES, WILL GO FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN WITHOUT DYING!!!



JUST LIKE LARRY NORMAN'S GREAT SONG---

TWO MEN WALKING UP A HILL--- ONE DISAPPEARS AND ONE'S LEFT STANDING STILL--- I WISH WE'D ALL BEEN READY. / \*



*As I watched the Lamb opened the scroll... and there before me was a white horse... and its rider carried a bow... Rev. 6:12*

**THE ANTI-CHRIST!**

HE'LL CHARM THE **WHOLE WORLD** INTO WORSHIPPING HIM!!!

BUT HE'LL TURN OUT TO BE **BAD NEWS** FOR **EVERYBODY**!!!

**A CURSE**!!!



# A Secular Tipping Point

- By 2000s global warming took on aspects of a secular apocalypse.
- “Climate Apocalypse” drew on pre-existing religious language/ideas.
- Visions of the “end times” now based on scientific predictions.
  - Prophetic predictions > Scientific predictions
  - Concerns about species extinction, extreme weather, rising sea levels

PLUS: HOW IGNORANT ARE YOU? TAKE THE TEST ON PAGE 58

MARCH 28 & APRIL 4, 2011 THEDAILYBEAST.COM

# Newsweek

SPECIAL DOUBLE ISSUE

GEORGE H.W. BUSH  
Was No Wimp After All  
OPRAH WINFREY  
Mends Fences  
STEPHEN KING  
on Can't-Miss TV

# Apocalypse Now

Tsunamis. Earthquakes.  
Nuclear Meltdowns. Revolutions.  
Economies on the Brink.  
What the #@%! Is Next?

Japan's Defiant Soul  
by Paul Theroux  
How to Save California  
by Sharon Begley  
Have They Found Atlantis?  
by Simon Winchester



## ALTERNET

ENVIRONMENT / FOOD ECONOMY EDUCATION RIGHTS

### ENVIRONMENT

# Josh Fox: What We Have to Do to Prevent Climate Apocalypse

*The 'Gasland' director talks to AlterNet about the dangers of fracking, his new film and how you can be a part of the solution.*

By **Reynard Loki** / AlterNet

January 22, 2016

 COMMENTS

The so-called fracking revolution has transformed America's energy landscape. With **more than 100,000** oil and gas wells drilled and fracked since 2005, the nation has secured cheap and plentiful energy, forcing a **drop** in natural gas prices. The oil giant BP believes that with this



Photo Credit: KYTan/Shutterstock



# CLIMATE TIPPING POINTS

The world has already crossed nine 'tipping points' that will lead to catastrophic climate change, scientists have warned.

■ TIPPING POINTS  
➔ CONNECTIVITY

**1**  
**Amazon rainforest**  
Frequent droughts

**2**  
**Arctic sea ice**  
Massive losses

**3**  
**Atlantic circulation**  
A slowdown since 1950s

**4**  
**Boreal forest**  
Increase in fires

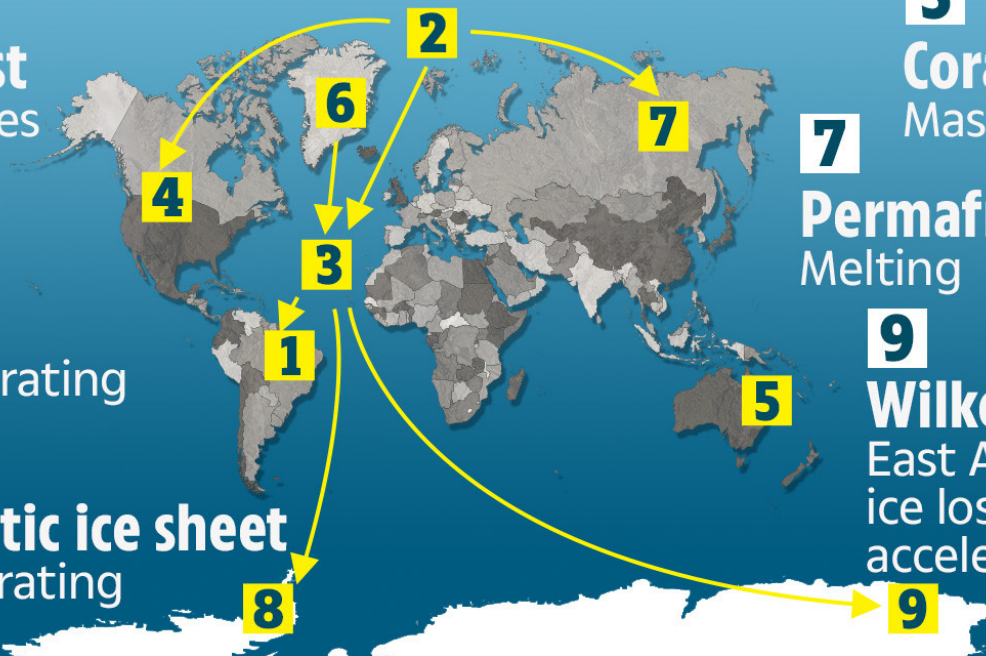
**5**  
**Coral reef**  
Mass die-offs

**6**  
**Greenland ice sheet**  
Ice loss accelerating

**7**  
**Permafrost**  
Melting

**8**  
**West Antarctic ice sheet**  
Ice loss accelerating

**9**  
**Wilkes Basin**  
East Antarctica  
ice loss  
accelerating



# Climate Apocalypse

Concerns about “the end” shift to naturalistic explanations.

- No place for Heaven/Hell in secular narrative
- No salvation or “Second Coming” for believers

## **#1) End of the world = End of civilization**

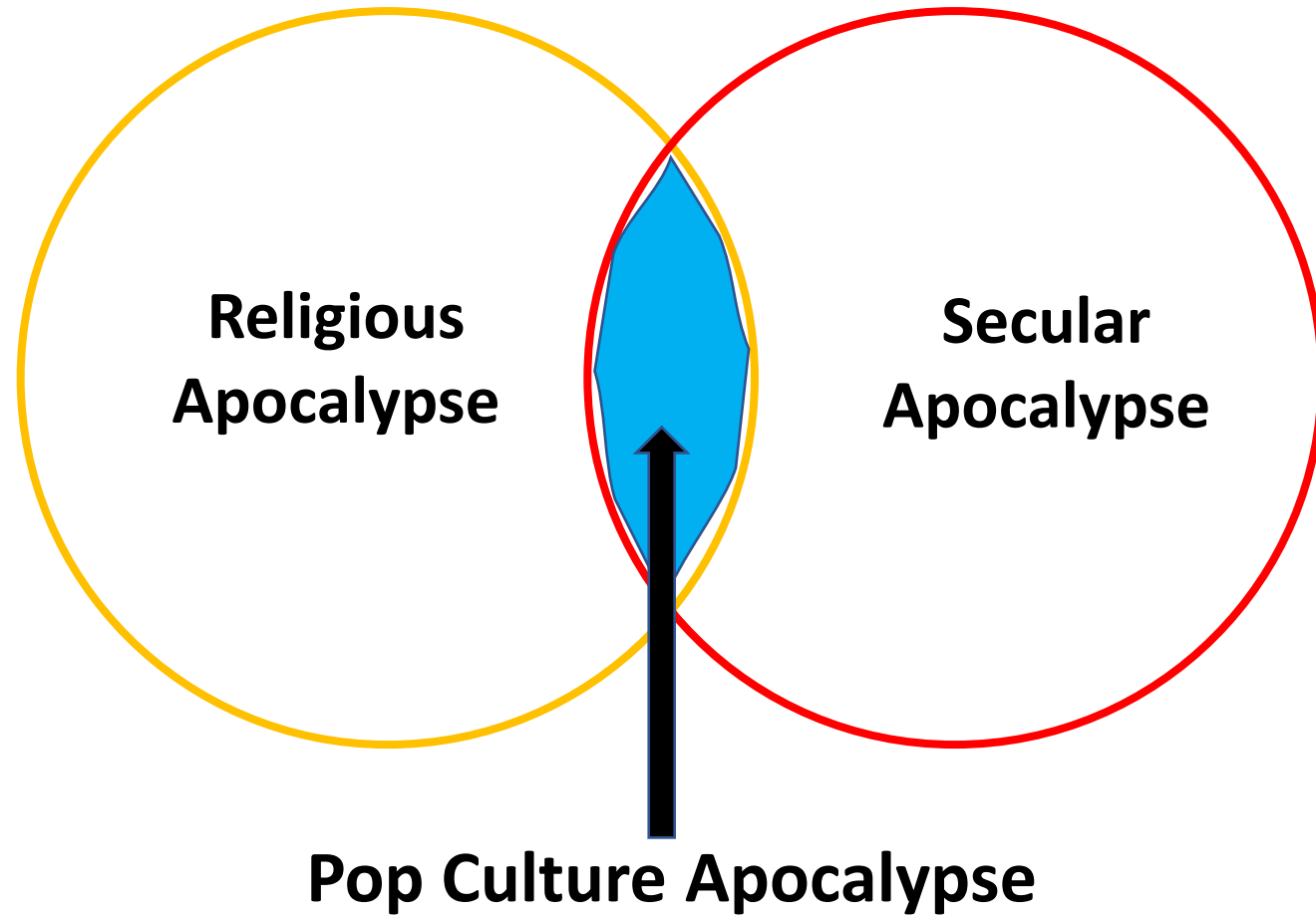
- Modern industrial lifestyle threatened
- Narrative of “Progress & Modernity” questioned
  - Connection with ideas from Francis Fukuyama and Charles Taylor

## **#2) End of the world = Ecological Destruction**

- Future of humanity requires protecting planet
- Loss of global biodiversity threatens evolutionary survival



# Apocalyptic Worldviews



# Coping with Apocalypse

Apocalyptic ideas now influence all our media & popular culture.

TV & Movies

Books

Music

Video Games

Comics

Social Clubs

Education & Research

Government & Politics

Business

realtor.com Buy Sell Rent Mortgage Find Realtors My Home News & Insights

TRENDS

## The Best and Worst Cities in America to Survive the Apocalypse

By Lance Lambert | Oct 30, 2017



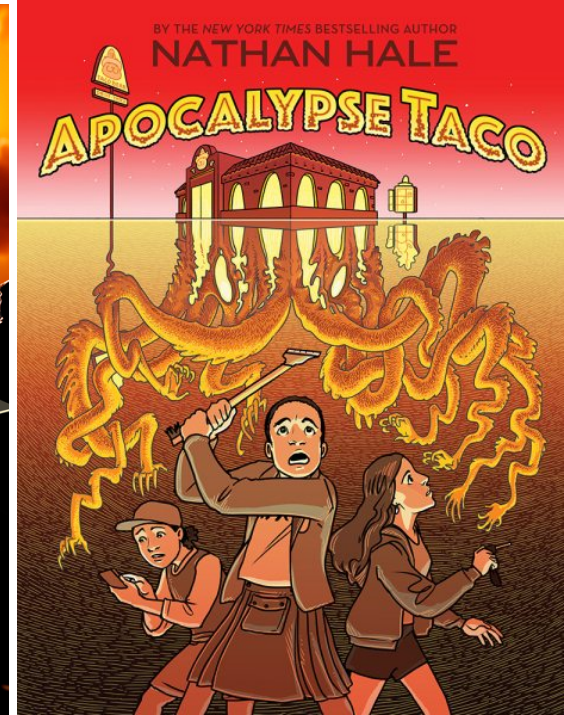
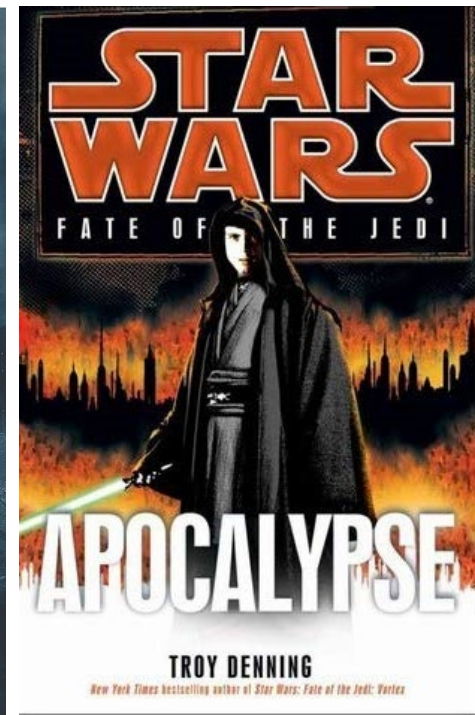
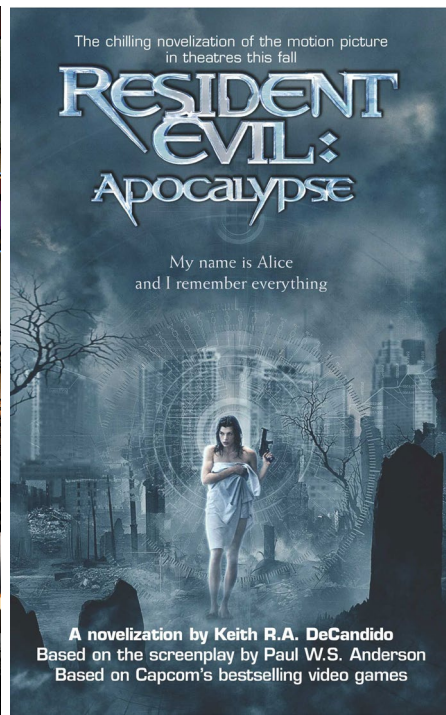
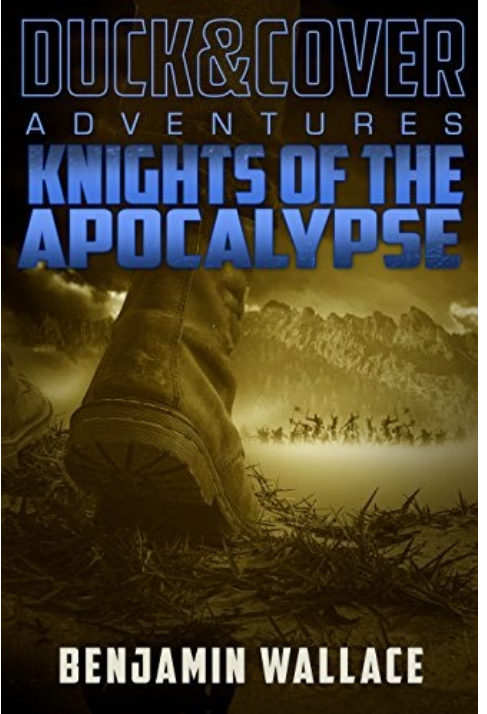
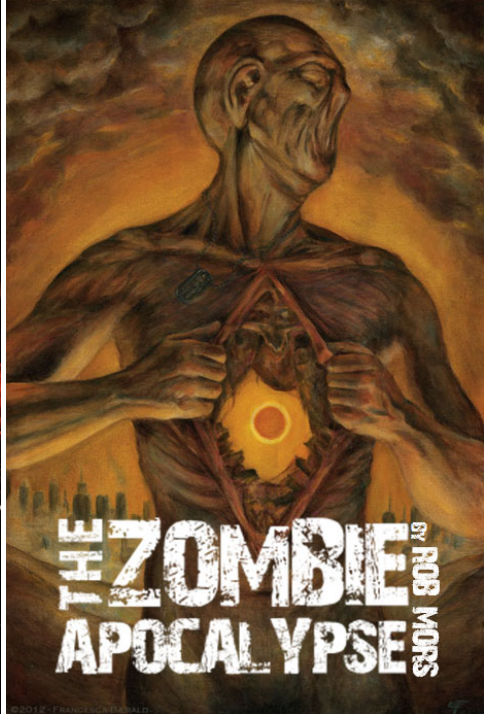
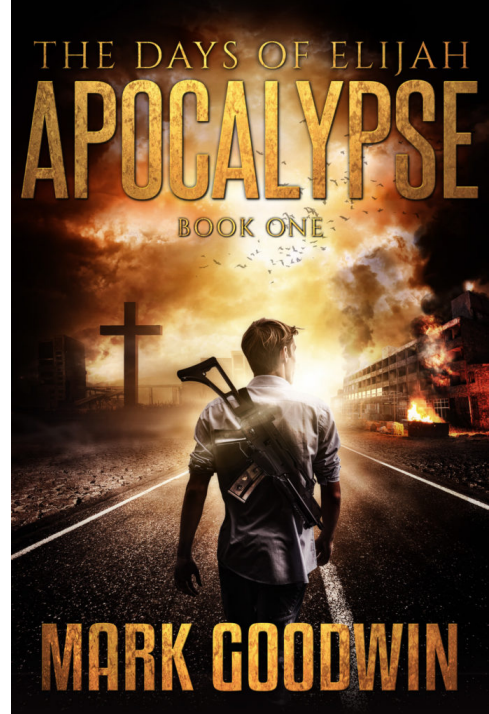
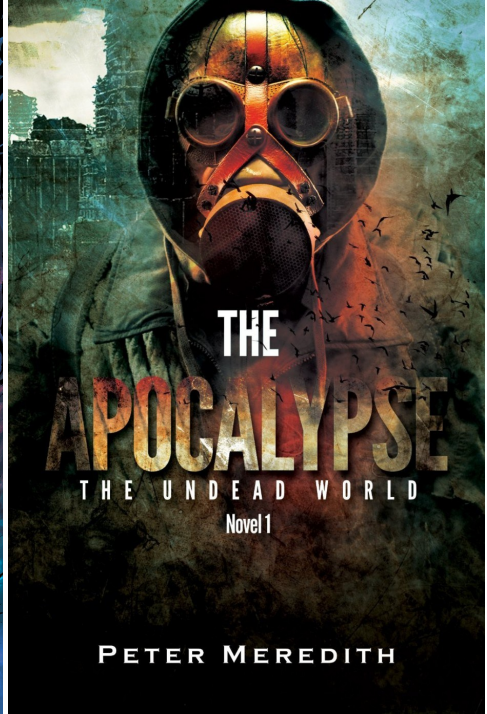
# Apocalyptic Fiction Examples

- The Planet of the Apes
- The Road
- World War Z
- Avengers: Endgame
- X Men: Apocalypse
- The Last Man on Earth
- The Walking Dead
- The Handmaid's Tale
- The Good Place
- Good Omens







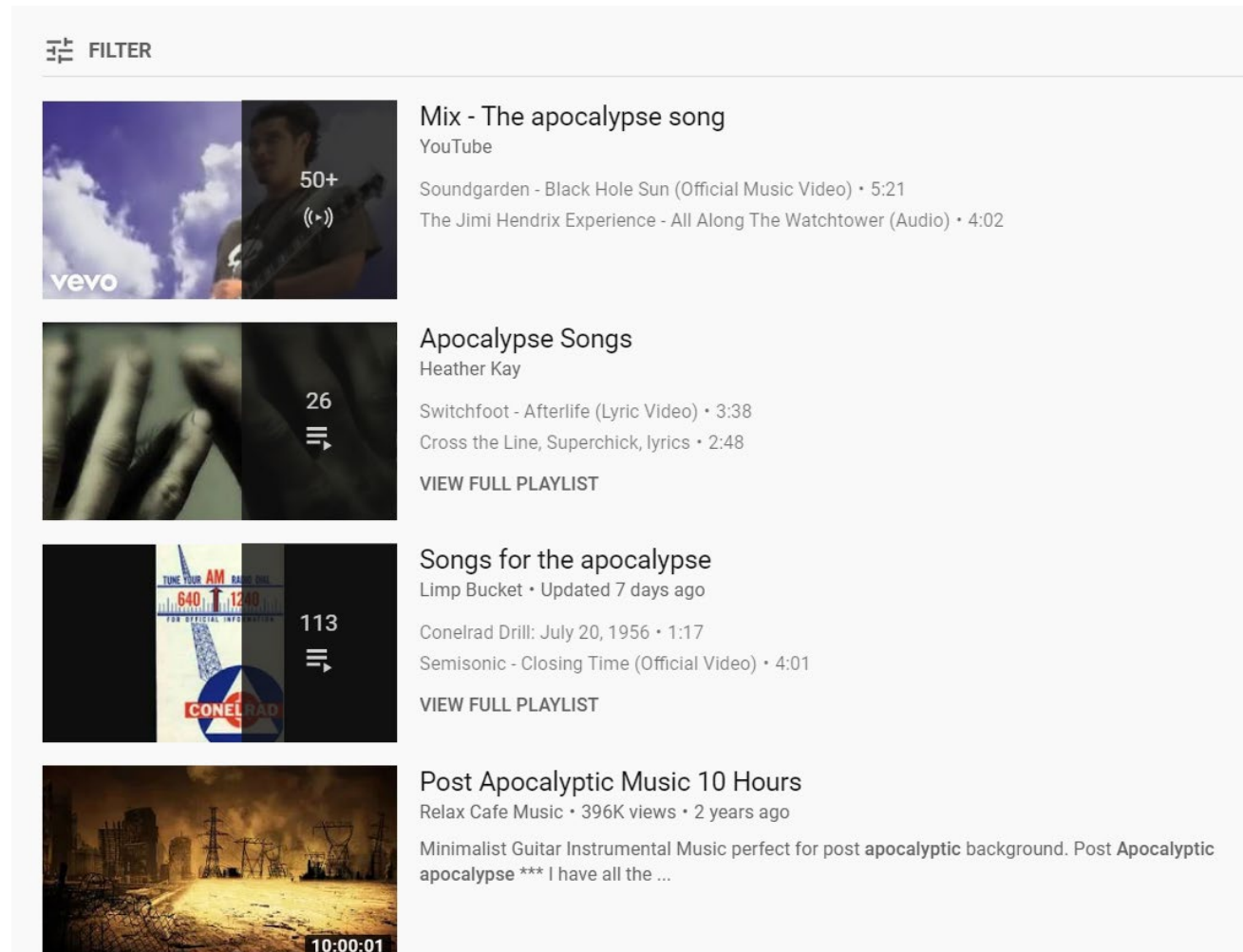




# Remixing the Apocalypse

## Apocalypse Playlists Includes...

- Songs for the Apocalypse
- Post-Apocalyptic Music 10 Hours
- Soft Apocalypse - A Solarpunk Music Mix
- 🎵 Zombie Post Apocalypse Music Mix 2 [1 Hour]
- DRAGON'S WRATH | Intense Dark Apocalyptic Battle Mix | 1 Hour Epic Music
- 8 Hours of Dark Ambient from Iron Cthulhu Apocalypse (original music, not a curated mix)



The screenshot shows a YouTube search results page for 'Apocalypse'. At the top left, there is a 'FILTER' button. Below it, four search results are displayed, each with a thumbnail image, a title, and a brief description.

- Mix - The apocalypse song**  
YouTube  
Soundgarden - Black Hole Sun (Official Music Video) • 5:21  
The Jimi Hendrix Experience - All Along The Watchtower (Audio) • 4:02
- Apocalypse Songs**  
Heather Kay  
Switchfoot - Afterlife (Lyric Video) • 3:38  
Cross the Line, Superchick, lyrics • 2:48  
[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)
- Songs for the apocalypse**  
Limp Bucket • Updated 7 days ago  
Conelrad Drill: July 20, 1956 • 1:17  
Semisonic - Closing Time (Official Video) • 4:01  
[VIEW FULL PLAYLIST](#)
- Post Apocalyptic Music 10 Hours**  
Relax Cafe Music • 396K views • 2 years ago  
Minimalist Guitar Instrumental Music perfect for post apocalyptic background. Post Apocalyptic apocalypse \*\*\* I have all the ...

# Apocalypse Without Religion

I want to leave you with a question to ponder from Steven D. Greydanus article on ‘The Secular Apocalypse’:

**“What can believers and nonbelievers say to one another at the end of the world? That is part of the challenge facing us all in our secular apocalyptic moment.”**

*Take a few minutes and think about how you might answer this question.*

# Weekly Assignment Reminder

- Remember to check our class Blackboard regularly for updates, announcements, and other related class information...
- Have you done the weekly readings and watched any associated videos? Weekly readings are listed on the [Class Schedule](#) page.
- Complete the intro discussion post video assignment for Week 1. Due on **Thu, August 27** by end of the day (11:59 pm PST) in Blackboard.



