BARRIERS 2015
(Business as Usual)

Status: DRAFT SKETCH

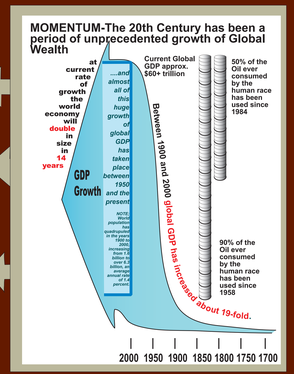
"Business as Usual" momentum *plus* **institutional inertia** *slows change*

Desire for middle class Western life-styles among 5 billion "have nots"

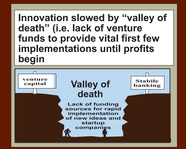
MOMENTUM - China & India will increase their share of "middle class consumption

Great success of industrial capitalism in providing durable goods people find useful & pleasurable cleanliness, convenience & comfort

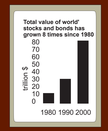
MOMENTUM-The 20th Century has been a period of unprecedented growth of Global Wealth



Innovation slowed by "valley of death" (i.e. lack of venture funds to provide vital first few implementations until profits begin



Total value of world stocks and bonds has grown 8 times since 1980



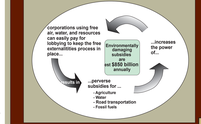
Unquestioning assumption that measured economic indictors (such as GDP) equate to actual well-being

INERTIA - Prices do not reflect full cost of ecological services and degradations of ecological commons

Finance dynamics. Recessions come at regular pace (about every 15-20 years) Takes longer to get out of them. Capital slow to invest in massive change technologies. Capital, GDP, Ave. income grow at steady pace

Economics profession and ecology theory and practice are in silos - preventing adequate thinking about sustainability

INERTIA - Nobody owns the commons and nobody in power speaks for and represents the commons of atmosphere, and the future of the climate



INERTIA - Failure to incorporate full cost of coal pollution in price of electricity in America

China Continues to Build a New Coal-Fired Power Plant Every Week

Desire for middle class Western life-styles among 5 billion "have nots"

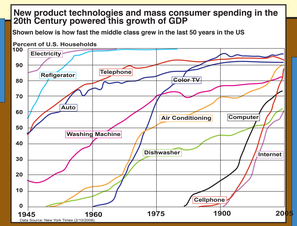
Built Infrastructure (i.e. sunk cost) impedes rapid change

Total Global Capital Assests Valued at $ ___
New assets added at ___ per year
Depreciation is over 10 to 20 years

INERTIA - Built in financing structures including depreciation schedules for assets and payments on loans and mortages over long periods of time (e.g. 20 -40 years).

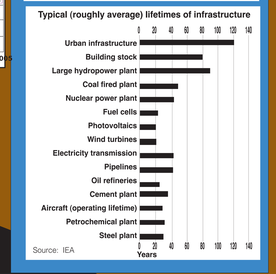
HOW MANY TRILLIONS ARE INVESTED THIS WAY? i.e.how much is "owed" on current infrastructure?

New product technologies and mass consumer spending in the 20th Century powered this growth of GDP



Physically, capital infrastructure and durable goods lasts a long time with proper maintainance. Capital invstment is thus depreciated over similar period. This is built into accounting rules and tax systems.

Typical (roughly average) lifetimes of infrastructure

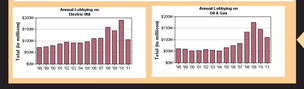


Powerful opposition by individuals & companies

Defects in democracy (in US)
- short terms
- term limits
- campaign financing
- corporate "persons" have unlimited ability to fund politicians

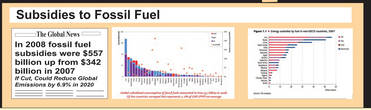
Company interests

Big oil, big coal, big power, worldwide are against significant change, research, and reduction of their subsidies. Their allies, banks, auto companies, dealers and suppliers provide a formidable opposition to progress.



US Coal, Oil, Gas, Auto, and Electric Power Companies Pouring Money into Climate Skepticism and Stopping Legislation

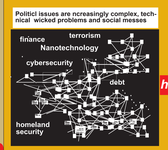
Subsidies to Fossil Fuel



Limited human cognitive capacity & time to spend on changing "lifestyles" very rapidly

disconnection from nature through 100% urban living

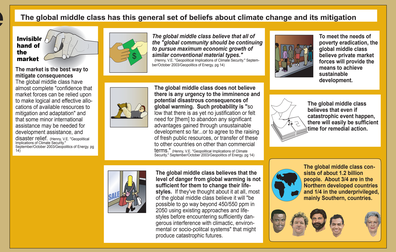
Politicl issues are ncreasingly complex, technical wicked problems and social messes



hence

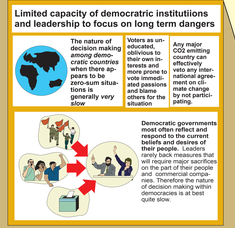
Modern Western society is increasingly resulting in psychological disorientation

The global middle class has this general set of beliefs about climate change and its mitigation



Psychology of emotion systematically applied to marketing and advertising

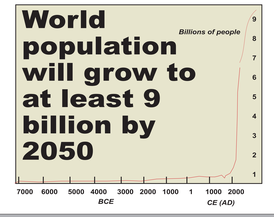
Limited capacity of democratic institutiions and leadership to focus on long term dangers



Rlentless pace of change • Furious pursuit of growth and consumption

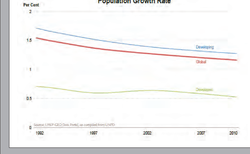
Population growth hinders sustainability progress

The UN's "medium assumption" estimates indicate a population increasing from approx. 7 billion around 9 billion people by 2050



Stabilization of the size of the world's population depends on...
which will cost approximately
0.1 percent of GDP of donor countries
Or
$40 billion per year
Source: Estimate of need from Sachs (2008); Gannon Gollado
Data: OECD 2007 GDP at about $40 trillion

The UN's data suggest that the growth rates, while still high in parts of the world, are steadily declining



For more detail CLICK HERE (or contact hornbob@earthlink.net)

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