

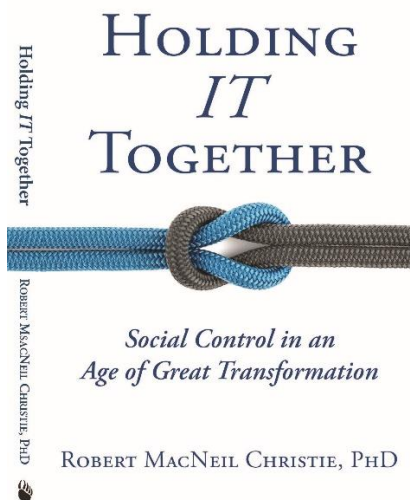
## The HOPEFUL REALIST Newsletter: *Looking at the World Today as if Facts Matter*

Robert MacNeil Christie, PhD

*Here we explore the latest facts, actions, and perspectives on the New Great Transformation of the Earth System, as it unfolds before our eyes. We apply the Hopeful Realism we all need to work through the greatest predicament in human history.*

**[NOTE: THIS WILL BE A SHORT NEWSLETTER, DUE TO THE MAJOR DISTRACTION OF AN UNEXPECTED DECONSTRUCTION-RECONSTRUCTION OF THE AUTHOR'S BROKEN WATER MAIN.]**

### *Latest News from the Hopeful Realist*



**Published July 26**, and the product of decades of research, [Holding IT Together: Social Control in an Age of Great Transformation](#) explains the global changes that have resulted in the catastrophic convergence of the crises of climate, ecosystems, economies, and politics we see intensifying today. In it, I also describe the deep changes that are now necessary in order to effectively head off societal collapse so we can more comfortably shape the New Great Transformation of our institutions and our ways of living necessary in a world of less intensive energy consumption. We will transition away from fossil fuels, the sooner the better. Later would be catastrophic. Petroleum products provided affluence for some for a while, yet is already causing chaos and environmental destruction for everyone.

[“Buy it!”](#) says the author. It is available on Amazon, and is distributed to bookstores by IngramSpark, so if you want to **support your local independent bookstore**, please ask them to order it for you.

***Holding IT Together*** can be ordered from your favorite independent bookstore in paperback, or on [Amazon](#) in paper or as an eBook. Although authors can earn larger royalties from Amazon, especially from eBooks, I hope many readers order it from their local independent bookstore, where actual humans talk about reading and literature; they cannot survive without your support. “Brick and mortar” bookstore availability will depend on your asking them to stock it or just order a copy for you. Just because a distributor has it into their catalog, does not mean the bookstore will stock it, unless that author is a celebrity, of course, or a customer asks for it.

### **Can a Party Become a Movement?**

As the enthusiasm, energy, and joy surrounding the nascent candidacy of Kamala Harris and Tim Walz continue and even amplify, I have to ask the question that had been previously answered in the negative, if asked at all. For the nation to move beyond the conventional politics of parties and their competition for power, it must focus on the extremely urgent crises facing us. Political and economic decisions, no less cultural ones, would have to start being made on the basis of the very best evidence available on the rapidly accelerating transformation of climate, ecosystems, and even industrial-consumer political economy itself—NOT on political expediency.

Until now, the political economy of 'late capitalism' remains sacred in the culture of industrial modernism. Even the politicians who seriously reflect on the monumental predicament of climate change and its increasingly devastating consequences, continue to support 'economic growth' at any cost. The culture of NEW prevails. Now, there are some great new technologies out there, which will contribute to clean energy production and use. However, the underlying problem is too much energy use and the continued reliance on fossil-fueled energy to produce everything, including the new clean-energy technologies.

Tom Steyer was a successful tech billionaire, who gave it all up to fight for climate action. He made a failed effort to gain enough attention for a run for the presidency. I saw him interviewed on Fareed Zakaria's program GPS, last Sunday on CNN. True technophile that he is, Steyer never once mentioned the ever-growing rate of energy consumption that is driving the climate emergency; it was all about new technology as the answer to everything, without any consideration for constraint.

All the party luminaries, in their speeches at the Democratic National Convention, who mentioned economics at all, referred to the Biden-Harris stellar record of achievement in stimulating economic growth, especially in relation to coming out of the economic crisis of COVID. The infrastructure bill and the Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) did a great deal to not only pull the nation out of the economic downturn resulting from COVID. It also provided some relief on the grip of Big Pharma on exorbitant drug prices, etc.

However, what will it take to begin serious actions on the most pressing predicament of all time? What will it take to cut off the extreme subsidies of the fossil-fuel corporations? Probably not a political party, however liberal on social issues and however anti-Trumpian its speeches may be. For the Democrats to overcome the cultural stagnation of industrial consumerism—and achieve the human values expressed so eloquently by Michelle Obama in what is probably the best political-convention speech ever—will require massive action completely outside the box of conventional politics.

**That new publishing company, *Omega Publishers*, which has now published [\*Holding It Together: Social Control in an Age of Great Transformation\*](#), under its imprint, Bear Claw Press™, is building its relations with the publishing industry infrastructure, which is both archaic and transforming itself in the context of electronic technology. Even now, I keep**

learning things about the complexities of bringing a book 'to market.' Because of the facilitation of electronic publication and 'print on demand' response to orders, instead of the traditional 'print run' with its warehousing of inventory, anybody can publish anything at very little cost. But how to distinguish a very good or important book from the massively large number of available titles is an ever-difficult task. Amazon is the answer for most, but most are easily lost there, unnoticed by their natural readership. But I hope many who buy ***Holding IT Together*** will do so at their local independent bookstore. Nevertheless, the paper version is available on [Amazon](#) now.

My eBook ***HOPEFUL REALISM: A Climate Manifesto*** remains available as a **free** download from [Kindle Unlimited](#). The regular Kindle eBook price is \$6.99. Please give it a rating/review on [GoodReads.com](#). Also, please [review and rate](#) *Hopeful Realism* on its Amazon page. You can do so by clicking the button on the lower left of the book's Amazon page below "Customer Reviews," and say a few words about what you think about the issues and how I frame them.

**Note:** Past issues of this Newsletter are available, archived on my web site:

<https://thehopefulrealist.com/hopeful-realist-newsletter/>

## ***LOOK UP! A Bi-weekly Featured Commentary***

**Michelle's Mama and Me.** Barak Obama, the acknowledged master of political speech, was so right when he said that he was 'stupid' to follow Michelle's speech, which I am convinced was the best ever made at a political convention. Why was it so great? Well, of course, her delivery was as close to perfect as one could imagine. She was radiant in her expression of the highest of American values.

Lately, the topic of the strength of Black women has come to the forefront in a number of ways. When Simon Biles, the strongest female gymnast ever, retorted "I love my Black Job!" in response to Trump's racist remarks at the Association of Black Journalists meeting, it reflected that same strength, as did her entire career. (See my Blog [Post](#), "I like my Black Job too!") The same strength of Kamala Harris in her campaign speeches, refusing to lower herself to respond to the crass attempts at belittlement in the Trump-and-Vance degradation rituals, was almost stunning in its transcendence of what has become 'normal' politics of bickering over personalities in the fading era of Trumpian political pathology.

But Michelle Obama's speech was grounded in the quiet power and determination of her mother. It was the rock-solid foundation of a life of quiet honor and service. She described the link to Kamala Harris' mother, the two coming from two entirely different cultures, but holding and practicing the same universal human values. I was almost taken aback when I realized that Michelle's description of that relation reminded me of my own mother. Her quiet strength of character and commitment to serving the good and right was the foundation for my own

personal development, although it took decades for me to realize the full value of her life for mine.

***Today's Featured Image:***

***There is really nothing I can say to express the power and cultural importance of Michelle Obama's [speech](#) at the Democratic National Convention last night. She articulated the essence of the fight for America's soul like no one else could. The speech was eloquent, just as a speech. But its content, in its moral instruction, was culturally as eloquent as her personal presence.***



--Image credit: ABC7 New York

***Vote!***

***Books and other Sources Related to the New Great Transformation***

It is just so important, that I am going to listen to it at least one more time. I will be looking at the transcript too. Michelle Obama's speech at the DNC captured the essence of the American Dilemma of 2024. Will we move beyond the politics of hate and division and step into the light of the politics of joy—and very hard work?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1pG9o3KeLQ>

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/21/us/politics/michelle-obama-dnc-speech-transcript.html>

I have included both the video and the transcript above. It is worth both watching and reading. Take your pick, and be inspired.

## *Quotable Quotes*

The conventional wisdom stays within the limits of our past thinking. That will no longer work. Today we need new ideas to face entirely new situations and an unprecedented global predicament.

*Our system directs us to think toward individualistic solutions like education, enhanced communication, influencing elected officials, or changing the culture, leaving the system alone. But our system is the problem. It is set up as a competition among special interests, with no provision for the public interest.*

~ Jim Rough

That is why we need a social movement more than we need any political party. For some—I'm not so sure—that movement may be found in the Democratic Party. But as long as it remains a party that thinks in the old conventional ways—from liberal to conservative and back—it will be so far from enough as to be useless. We are in uncharted waters, and our water is increasingly polluted; so are the politics of conventional thinking. We need to apply everything Michelle Obama said last night to the creation of a New Great Transformation of ourselves, our communities, and our world.

See you in two weeks. Meanwhile, stay safe, say hello to a neighbor or stranger, check out my blog posts at [The Hopeful Realist.com](http://The Hopeful Realist.com) and read [HOPEFUL REALISM: A Climate Manifesto.](#), and, buy my new book, [Holding It Together: Social Control in an Age of Great Transformation](#).