

How to Survive the Seven Deadly Apocalypses

John Major Jenkins, Ph.D. (Prophet of Doom)



During my own personal apocalypse, I found myself strolling down the Red Carpet in Hollywood next to Mickey Rooney and George Hamilton (he once played a vampire, by the way). There were scary monsters, blinking flashbulbs, bright teeth and big hair. What was I doing there? How did I get there?

It was late 2009, and “2012” was finally on the mainstream radar. With seven books on the topic under my belt, Sony Pictures had invited me to the premiere of Roland Emmerich’s 2012 disaster movie, which many have called “apocalypse porn.” I was well aware of this, having had to watch it three times, but I was determined to spread the gospel: the button I made and attached to my lapel read “The End is ALWAYS Near.” This was my hopeful invitation to engage reporters ranging from MTV to the BBC in an extended dialogue on the paradoxical nature of postmodern end-times existentialism. It didn’t go well. The MTV girl shoved a mic in my face and asked “what will you miss most about the earth when 2012 arrives?”

“Uhh,” I stammered, “umm ... MTV?”

Nearby, I heard Mickey and his wife reacting to the dire Maya prophecy. She concluded: “I certainly hope the Maya were wrong!” She obviously assumed, like most people, that the Maya actually did predict the end of the world in 2012 (which they didn’t). But this got me thinking. All my research has pointed to the conclusion that the Maya *didn’t believe in an apocalypse in 2012*. But what if they WERE wrong? What if they didn’t anticipate that a violence-addicted global civilization sick with its own excesses and greed would be ruling and ruining the planet? In all my twenty years of proselytizing about the Maya’s “transformation and renewal” doctrine, I had overlooked the Power of Not Now, the endless ability of modern humans to delay responsibility, to fiddle while Bellvue burns, to camp on the couch munching potato chips while reptiles keep getting elected.

And there I was, schmoozing on the Red Carpet. The tension of unspeakable surreality was thick. Suddenly, the skies were rent asunder. In a shimmering vision that shattered my misguided resolve, a crazy-eyed Charlie Frost (a.k.a. Woody Harrelson playing the movie’s long-haired “apocalypse prognosticator”) sauntered up to me with a lit spliff and whispered in my ear: “never hesitate to procrastinate.”

That was it. I’d been converted. It was like a Zen koan, triggering a new realization. Hollywood had given me my much needed epiphany.¹ I had a vision of all the many different types of apocalypses, unfolding before my eye like a very bankable seven-sequel franchise. I’d finally received my Ph.D.; I’d graduated to the fiscally promising status of **Prophet of Doom**. My mission was clear: help guide other unrealistically optimistic fools through the unavoidable seven deadly apocalypses.

The Seven Deadly Apocalypses, and How to Deal with Them

1. The Running in Molasses Apocalypse

This is the slow, drawn-out apocalypse, not the sudden global explosion. You’ll be wishing for the Sudden Termination version after a few years of this one. It’s the piece-by-piece whittling away at your dignity and self-esteem, a million tiny nicks and cuts inflicted by unseen and unstoppable pests. It’s like that old grizzled prospector in the movie *Little Big Man*, who reappears to Dustin Hoffman at long intervals throughout the movie, each time with one less body part. Time is slowly cutting him to pieces. It begins with an eye patch and proceeds, years later, with the hand stump and then, next time he appears, the peg leg — what could possibly be next, and how long can he go on? Sadly, this is the situation Ma Earth finds herself in (“Mother Earth” is too formal for me). How

long can she go on as we, the swarming viral pests, keep inflicting millions of tiny nicks and cuts?

What to do: Adjust your goals. Stop driving a car and stop buying food wrapped in sixteen levels of packaging like disposable Chinese nested dolls. Adapt. Let go. It's all good.

2. Zombie Apocalypse

This is the favorite apocalypse of many otherwise normal people. Zombies! Ahhhhh! You know, you've seen them, drooling and lumbering through the streets of slanted B-movie urban landscapes. I think this is the way we all secretly wish it will happen. It's actually the sub-text of those romance novels that women of a certain age devour. The Beef Industry would do well to have a flesh-eating Zombie as their spokesperson. They wouldn't even have to pay him/her/it, because him/her/it is dead. Hey, why not? Commercials for insurance companies and banks use cavemen and Vikings.

I have a certain affiliation with the Zombie tribe. I was one myself. Yes, I am a recovering Zombie. For four years in the late 1990s I ... I ... oh, the shame ... I worked in a cubicle. Dilbert was my hero. I stumbled death-like through the halls of corporate America, drooling greetings to my compatriots likewise shuffling by. Bleary-eyed, sleep-deprived, hungry for just a little taste of the living. I am a recovering Zombie.

What to do: Lighten up. We all have a little Zombie inside of us. Invite one to dinner or coffee. They're just people, too. Even though they are dead and will try to eat your brains. On the other hand, be afraid. Be very afraid. Even our government warns us to study the ways of Zombies in preparation for the impending Zombie Apocalypse, so I defer to our tax-supported government officials at the CDC on this one: <http://www.bt.cdc.gov/socialmedia/zombies.asp>. Surely they know what's going on.

3. Localized Apocalypse

This is the non-universal type of apocalypse, which nevertheless seems like a universal apocalypse to those involved. Think of the tsunami in Japan, Katrina in New Orleans, the tornado in Joplin, Missouri. Or the drought and famine in Africa in the 1980s, or the genocidal holocaust of Jews in Germany or the Maya in Guatemala. Well, Fort Collins just got this one with the High Park fire west of town. Colorado is burning!

What to do: Well, what *did* you do? The universal conflagration, or *ekpyrosis*, might not be so universal. However, a real crime regarding our local fire, not much talked about, is how the insurance companies are screwing most of the people who lost their homes. Change the channel, citizen. Move along. There are no droids here.

4. Media Apocalypse

I have a lot of personal experience with this one. Let's have a fireside chat, shall we? Pull up a chair. My conclusion: The media is a vampire. It sucks you dry while dumping

toxic, nihilistic, unsustainable values and created wants into our heads, through viscerally manipulative imagery. Sigmund Freud's cousin, corporate America's advertising guru Edward Bernays, manufactured our consent. Google "The Century of the Self" by Adam Curtis.

What to do: Divest from the beast. Stop buying stuff you don't need; see "The Four Cable Stations of the Apocalypse" below.

5. The Personal Apocalypse

Well, we've all been there. It feels like the walls are caving in, even though on some level you know it's just happening to you. Our lives are defined by these primal personal tragedies. It all began when Bobby pulled your hair in the playground. You were 27; he was your second husband. The cops came. A domestic abuse charge was unavoidable. Courts, lawyers, bankruptcy. I hate it when that happens.

What to do: Bobby, don't pull Sally's hair!

6. Spiritual Apocalypse

Just send \$49.95 to my Paypal account and I'll send you my easy 12-step Guide to Handling Your Spiritual Apocalypse! (Yeah, I learned a few things in Hollywood.)

7. The Self-fulfilling Apocalypse

This one is for the creative types. Choose your poison. You could choose to visualize whirled peas, but where's the fun in that? Let your hair down, get crazy. You know who you are. The problem with this one is that we don't orchestrate our self-fulfilling apocalypse from a conscious part of our minds. It arises out of deeply ingrained fears and dreams, driven by watching the Four Cable Stations of the Apocalypse (see below). But don't be a follower! Invent your own apocalypse. For example, if you meditate long enough, and sincerely enough, that a deluge of delicious craft beer will flood the earth, it just might happen. What a way to go.

What to do: It depends on which self-fulfilling apocalypse you choose. In the above example (a craft beer deluge), I'd say throw a party.

Buzz kill newsflash: We will all one day experience our own ultimate personal apocalypse, because we are mortal beings and will all one day die. Now let me candy-coat this a little. The original etymology of the Greek word *apocalypse* is "the revealing," or "the unveiling." In other words, what gets destroyed is the veil of illusion that prevents us from seeing the true, eternal, infinite Ground of All Manifestation. Okay, don't get me started. When we contemplate apocalypse, however, we may wish to recall its partner-principle, the thing that the apocalypse reveals: *apokatastasis*. The return to the original conditions.

The Four Cable Stations of the Apocalypse

Riding roughshod over the postmodern landscape, relentlessly driving home their message of impending doom with nightly programming (read: *mind control*), the Four Cable Stations of the Apocalypse have arrived. They are in your living room. These devious emissaries of doom invert facts and truth to manufacture fear and lies. The History Channel, the Discovery Channel, National Geographic, and NBC's Syfy Channel are a united front. The executive producer of the Ancient Aliens program also produces *Kendra* and *New Jersey Housewives*. As a minor theological point, these Four Heralds of Doom are merely secondary manifestations of a dual-deity called "Sony Pictures / Warner Brothers." And above that dual-deity is the One Holy God, also known by the name of "Money."

According to the *Gospel of Money*, Ancient Aliens will return in 2012, landing in crop circles, prepared to give us a DNA tune-up as scheduled long ago by Quetzalcoatl's brother, Jehovah. How exciting. How convenient. And I don't even have a warranty. Wait a minute! I don't want no aliens messin' with my genes! We better buy some guns, raise the borders very high, and get our Zombies mobilized lickety-split. Amen.

1. Every article should have at least one footnote. Here's mine. You can enjoy my Red Carpet escapade at <http://www.youtube.com/user/mandalay37>. Be forewarned that my "renewal" message has now been revised. I've been converted. Now, I'm convinced that the world will end in 2012. Really.

John Major Jenkins is a Colorado resident since 1985. He is not a real doctor, but he does play one on T.V. He will be speaking at SPRE in Fort Collins on November 16, 2012. He is the Director of *The Center for 2012 Studies* and his books include *Maya Cosmogenesis 2012* and *The 2012 Story*. Website: <http://Alignment2012.com>.