

One Hundred Billion Children's Sky

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Epistemic Status: Strongly endorsed. Pay Attention!

Recommended Prior Reading: [Beyond the Reach of God](#), [Two Visions](#)

Part of the Series: [Death](#)

The first time I truly saw the night sky was in October of 2018. I was doing work on the CFAR venue in Bodega Bay. My coworker and I were returning for the night from the Home Depot in Santa Rosa. We were coming back over the coastal mountains and heading down for the bay when I noticed that there was a second route we could take, which would take us over the top of the hill instead of around it. I suggested we might get a good look at the sky up there because of how dark it was.

We stopped the truck between two remote pastures, cows noisily sleeping in the fields nearby, and turned off the lights. After our eyes adjusted, the sky opened up and the whole world seemed to fall away. My perspective seemed to invert, and it felt like at any moment I might fall off the truck bed and go tumbling into the infinite. The more stars you can see, the more depth the sky seems to have. It was no longer a flat ceiling hovering above, it was infinity.

Carl Sagan once remarked that astronomy is a humbling and character building experience, and I felt that in a way I never had before on that dark night in northern California. I had seen space on screens, I was always interested in science fiction, I intellectually *knew* the universe was out there.

And yet, seeing it in this way, physically placing myself as that tiny animal in the context of all that vast stellar machinery altered my view of the world in a way that I still feel ripples forward to this day.

Over a hundred billion humans have lived on the Earth. One hundred billion pairs of tiny fragile eyes, peering upwards into that strange and unreachable darkness. Most of those people are dead now, their names lost to history, but it was their sacrifices that brought humanity this far; which have brought the stars this close.

On that night, I felt in my bones the promise held by the night sky. The triumphant vision of expansion and colonization, humanity spreading across the light cone to touch every corner of that sky. The wild, exciting, harshness of the universe almost daring us to claim it, and I wanted it. I wanted more than anything else for us to get that future, to reach out and travel amongst those stars. The same stars that my ancestors saw, and one hundred billion others.

There are many ways to work towards that future, there are many roles that need to be filled if we are to seek it. The stars will not come to us easily. This is the beginning of a series about a *particular* role in the work of building that future.

There's a lot of traps on the way to a spacefaring society, and some of us are going to have to watch out for them. People who look at all of the worst possible futures, the bleak and dead branches on the tree of possibility, and work to keep humanity off of those trajectories. This is not easy work, it will not make you feel good. Most of the time it probably won't feel rewarding. It is *necessary* work, but it is not for everyone or even most people.

In this series, my goal is to help, direct, and advise one who decides to pursue such a path. The reason *this post* exists is because nobody fucking takes infohazard warnings seriously. We're clever monkeys, far too clever for our own good, and when people see infohazard warnings, most of the time they're simply too curious to let the warning stop them. Well allow me to sate your curiosity and actually explain what these posts will be about to the best I am able so you can make an informed decision about whether or not you want to be exposed to this stuff.

This series will deal with themes such as the death & extinction of the human race and the facile lies that society relies on to keep running. This stuff will hurt to contemplate. It will not be a pleasant reading experience. I can't say any more directly than that. You should only do it if you actually want to put yourself into the *particular role* that is defending humanity against extinction. Otherwise *stop reading this* before you hurt yourself.

Part of the Series: Death

Next Post: Doors and Corners