Massive Many-to-Many Connectivity Changes Everything

Our society is being rewired, and public policy doesn't yet understand that. Massive Many-to-Many Connectivity (MM2MC) is creating new society-scale phenomena that are overturning our conventional assumptions about how societies work.

Here Are Four Examples:

Public policy hasn't accounted for the adverse consequences of any of these, yet.

1. Economic Inequity

Zipf's Power-law Effect in Interconnected Markets
Leads to Economic Inequity
and Market Oligopoly

In the presence of MM2MC the Invisible Hand doesn't scale. Instead, Zipf's Law applies.

Absent countervailing social policies, Zipf's Law guarantees serious economic inequity. We have abundant evidence that this is occurring.

2. Grow-or-die Imperative in Large Public Corporations

Industrial Markets and Capital Markets are Coupled

In the case of large public corporations, there are <u>two coupled markets</u> operating: the industrial markets in which they operate, and the capital markets in which they are financed. Zipf's Law applies in both, and a corporation's operations and finances are coupled. The consequence of competition in these two coupled markets is that large public corporations must grow faster than their competition in order to thrive.

3. Threats to Sustainability

The Grow-or-Die Imperative is Incompatible with Sustainability

It is Leading to

- a. Resource Exhaustion
 - b. Toxic Pollution
 - c. Climate Change
- d. Political Disruption

Case study: Los Angeles's love affair with Big Oil and Big Auto in the 20th Century. https://la.curbed.com/2017/9/20/16340038/los-angeles-streetcar-conspiracy-theory-general-motors https://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/08/the-urban-oil-fields-of-los-angeles/100799/

Sustainability threats:

- a. Example: arable land. The "Green Revolution" has kicked the can down the road and is creating:
- b. New toxicities we are finding every day in many ecosystems, on land and in the oceans.
- c. So far we've found no working alternatives to High Extraction/High Energy economies to support industrial-intensity civilization.
- d. The political consequences of Global-warming/Sea-level-rise Migration are beginning to appear all over the world: Central America, North Africa/Eastern Mediterranean, Southeast Asia. Our state-centered political institutions can't cope.

4. Threats to Public Health, Safety, and Democracy

A large fraction of America has an unacknowledged <u>Epidemic Attachment Disorder</u>, consequent to High Connectivity/Social Media. It is manifesting as

- a. Antivax/Antiscience violence
 - b. Mass shootings
 - c. Violent insurrection
- d. Increasing self-harm (particularly in young people)
- e. Rising threats of violence to politicians, civil servants, and doctors
 - f. Public violence based on magical conspiracy theories
- g. In the American Right, the flow of absolute power has reversed, from the base and dark donors to the leadership, corrupting Constitutional practices

This is an in-process argument with multiple moving parts.

MM2MC appeared only recently with Social Media and Smartphones, but America might have responded better except that the public had been softened up for decades by an increasing personal-stress burden caused by destructive social policies begun in the 1970's.

http://melconway.com/CBH/Historical Overview.pdf

Evidence that we as a people don't understand the public-health connection between personal stress and its social manifestations is in our incarceration data.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incarceration in the United States

(Re. g: That the 2020 Presidential election was valid and "Stop the Steal" is a lie is acknowledged by many Republican leaders, but only on deep background. Also see "Dark Money" by Jane Mayer.)

"Mass disinformation" is often cited as a cause, but it is a symptom. (The current debate over the regulation of Facebook reflects this failure to acknowledge the new reality.)

<u>This is a public-health problem</u>, not a result of any sociopathic individual. Donald Trump was the opportunist who showed up this time, but history has repeatedly shown us that when the public's defenses are down, some opportunist will show up. The <u>damage</u> might be caused largely by the leader and his enablers, but the <u>epidemic takes hold</u> because the population's defenses are down. <u>Without the epidemic, the damage goes nowhere.</u>

Note the parallel to conventional public health: the correct policy response to the threat of epidemic is to strengthen the public.