

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
		AMORCE
01:01:00		Opening Credits
01:01:36		2 apes in lab
01:03:12		space shots
01:03:37	Ronald Wright	In defining progress, I think it's very important to make a distinction between good progress and bad progress. I mean, things progress in the sense that they change. Both in nature and in human society, there appears to be a clear trend towards increasing complexity as change proceeds. We tend to delude ourselves that these changes always result in improvements, from the human point of view.
01:04:13	Super.	Surviving Progress a film by Mathieu Roy and Harold Crooks
01:04:19	Ronald Wright	We're now reaching a point at which technological progress and the increase in our economies, and our numbers threaten the very existence of humanity.
01:04:28		space shots
01:04:42	Super.	What is progress?
01:04:46	Male	What is progress? I think... that's too hard a question.
01:05:01	Robert Wright	Hum...
01:05:04		various shots
01:05:24	Male	When I think of the word progress...?
		various shots
01:05:38	Pres. Obama	Progress will not come easy, it will not come quick. And today, we have an opportunity to move forward.
		various shots
01:06:05	Colin Beavan	It seems like we're stuck in this trap for the last 200 years since the Industrial Revolution where we think progress is more of the same. Like we should make our machines better and get more machines. But we've been doing that for 200 years, so doing more of that is not progress. We're like stuck in this, it's like a record. Ta-tum, ta-tum, tatum...
		various shots

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01:06:57	Ronald Wright	Things that start out to seem like improvements or progress, these things are very seductive, it seems like there's no downside to these. But when they reach a certain scale, they turn out to be dead ends or traps.
01:07:12	Super.	progress traps
01:07:15	Ronald Wright	I came up with the term progress trap to define human behaviours that sort of seem to be good things, seem to be, to provide benefits in the short-term, but which ultimately lead to disaster, because they're unsustainable.
01:07;30	Super.	RONALD WRIGHT Auhor
01:07:32		And one example would be going right back into the old Stone Age, the time of, when our ancestors were hunting mammoths. They reached a point where their weaponry and their hunting techniques got so good that they destroyed hunting as a way of life throughout most of the world. The people who discovered how to kill two mammoths instead of one had made real progress, but the people who discovered that they could eat really well by driving a whole herd over a cliff and kill 200 at once, had fallen into a progress trap; they had made too much progress.
		various shots
01:08:16	Ronald Wright	Our physical bodies, and our physical brains, as far as we can tell, have changed very little in the past 50,000 years. We've only been living in civilization for the last 5,000 years, at the most, which is less than .2% of our evolutionary history. So the other 99.8, we were hunters and gatherers, and that is the kind of way of life that made us.
		various shots
01:08:51	Ronald Wright	We are essentially the same people as those Stone Age hunters. What makes our way of life different from theirs is culture has taken off at an exponential rate, and has really become completely detached from the pace of natural evolution. So, we are running 21 st century software, our knowledge, on hardware that hasn't been upgraded for 50,000 years, and this lies at the core of many of our problems.
		various shots

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01:09:29	Ronald Wright	All of this is because our human nature is back in the hunting-gathering era of the old Stone Age, whereas our knowledge and our technology, in other words, our ability to do both good and harm to ourselves and to the world in general has grown out of all proportion.
		various shots
01:09:49	Gary Marcus	One thing to remember of course about the human mind, is that it's not that fundamentally different from say, the brain of a chimpanzee.
01:09:56	Super.	GARY MARCUS cognitive psychologist
01:09:59	Gary Marcus	Most of the human brain, the basic structure of the brain is much older than, than the human species. Some of it goes back to bacteria, some of it goes back to worms, some of it originated in the first mammal, some of it in the first primates, some of it in the first human beings. Very little of it however, changed in the last 50 thousand years. And so, most of what we do, we do with hardware components that are much older than any of the problems that we face.
01:10:26		shots with chimps
01:33:21	Daniel Povinelli	When I first began to study chimps, I thought that the task was to just map out more and more similarities,
	Super.	DANIEL POVINELLI behavioural scientist
	Daniel Povinelli	to find areas of cognition that hadn't been studied yet, and simply show that chimps were just like us.
01:10:48	Super.	why
01:10:51		shots of chimpanzees
01:11:12	Daniel Povinelli	You can imagine teaching a small child to stand up a block upright. And you can teach a chimp to do the same thing. 'Oh, I'll set up the block here, set up a block here. I can see everything, it's very, very clear. And I get a, a piece of fruit for doing it'. But what happens when you introduce a small subtlety into the situation, where you trick them and just make the block off center, just enough that it keeps falling over. Well, the chimp will come in, set up the good block. Set up the, the block that we've tricked them with, but then it falls over.

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01:11:54	Daniel Povinelli	Well the chimp can see that it's not the way it's supposed to be, so they try again, and they try again. And they move it to one place and they move it to another place and they keep trying to get it to stand up, because they know what is supposed to happen, but they have no understanding, or no inclination to ask why? What unobservable part of the situation is causing that block to keep falling over?
01:12:19	Daniel Povinelli	The young child will enter, set up the good block, try to set up the, the, block that we've tricked them with, but when it falls over, well first they'll try again and maybe try again, but very quickly, they'll turn it over, feel the bottom of it, shake it, try to discern what unobservable property of that block is causing it to fall over. That's the fundamental core difference I believe between humans and chimps. That humans ask why. We're constantly probing for unobservable x phenomenon to explain the observable. It's what's driven us to discover gravity. It's what's driven us to probe into the mysteries of Quazars. And it's the same thing that drives us to probe into the mysteries of each other, in our everyday lives. Why does she keep doing that? Why does he keep behaving like that? He must think this, he must believe this. I, I don't understand. Why? Why? Why? Why? Why?
01:13:23		shots of chimpanzees
01:13:31	Daniel Povinelli	So the upside of the human capacity to ask why, to continually probe behind appearances and to try to find out how the world really works, is we develop fabulous new medicines, we develop fabulous new therapeutic techniques to take care of people. We invent a whole cascade of modern technology.
01:13:52		space shots
01:14:17	Daniel Povinelli	But the downside is that we invent the whole cascade of modern technology.
01:14:31	Jane Goodall	Arguably, we are the most intellectual creature that's ever walked on planet earth.
01:14:37	Super.	JANE GOODALL primatologist

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01:14:40		<p>So how come, then, that this so intellectual being is destroying its only home? Because we only have the one home.</p> <p>Maybe one day people will be on Mars, but for the moment we've got planet Earth, and we are destroying, we are polluting, we are damaging the future of our own species, which is very counterproductive from an evolutionary perspective.</p>
		various shots
01:15:20	Daniel Povinelli	<p>This capacity, that seems so wonderful to us, the ability to ask why, the very ability that undergirds modern science has a double edged sword.</p> <p>If humans go extinct on this planet, I think what's going to be our epitaph on our gravestone is "why?".</p>
01:15:50		space shots
	Astronaut 1	Think I overdid that one.
	Astronaut 2	Yeah. One clean out of sight!
	Astronaut 1	Ha-ha-ha! You think you're so clever...
01:16:04	Gary Marcus	<p>We have the ability to think into the future, but most of our mechanisms, most of our brain mechanisms evolved before we had any ability to think forward to the future and when – it made some sense for decisions to be short-term, and so a lot of our brain mechanisms, what I call our ancestral mechanisms or our reflexive mechanisms, are tuned to making snap decisions, right away, like fight or flight. You see the lion: either you're going to fight or you're going to run. No time to think about, you know, long-term consequences. And that's good when we're stressed about something immediate that we can deal with, for example. But those very systems that work by reflex are not so good at cooperating with these more modern systems, the deliberative* systems that allow us to make long-term decisions and say 'Well, is this good for me? Is it good for my society, for my planet?'</p>
01:17:01	Super.	not enough planets
01:17:04	Ronald Wright	<p>Between the fall of the Roman Empire and Columbus sailing, it took 13 centuries to add 200 million people to the world's population. Now it takes only three years.</p> <p>A simple thing like pasteurization, the warming of milk so that the bacteria are killed and the control of smallpox. Things like that have led to a great boom in human numbers.</p>

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		various shots
01:17:36	Ronald Wright	So, overpopulation, which nobody really wants to talk about because it cuts at things like religious beliefs and the freedom of the individual and the autonomy of the family and so forth, is something that we're going to have to deal with. We probably have to work towards a much smaller worldwide population than 6 or 7 billion. We probably need to go down to a half that or possibly even a third of that, if everybody is going to live comfortably and decently.
01:18:10	Ronald Wright	The other side of this problem, and perhaps the more dangerous side, is the footprint of the individuals at the top of the social pyramid who are consuming the most. Somebody in the United States or Europe is consuming about 50 times more resources than a poor person in a place like Bangladesh.
01:18:30		various shots
02:00:11	Ronald Wright	If China were to reach the level of consumption of, say, the United States or Europe, it's very unlikely that the world could support the addition of a billion consumers at that level.
02:00:22		various shots of China
02:00:43	Vaclav Smil	I'd say in China maybe 200, 300 million people are, quote-unquote, "affluent," you know, they could afford a lot, relatively speaking, you know, all we get in the west, in India and also whatever, 200 million, you know? So, you add up these, these affluent segments of population in these developing countries, so modern technologies, but still you come up with no more than one-and-a-half, maybe two billion people.
02:01:04	Super.	VACLAV SMIL interdisciplinary scholar
02:01:07	Vaclav Smil	So there is still five billion people waiting to tap into these bonanzas of, you know, plentiful food, cars, decent housing, right, higher education for their children. So the potential demand for resources, even, even should we be extremely careful and extremely frugal, potential demand for resources is immense.
02:01:41	Chen Ming (subtitles 's-t')	<i>I don't know how many miles I've driven, but by guiding these road trips, I've done over 50 000 kilometers.</i>
02:01:54		CHEN MING driving club tour guide

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02:01:57	Chen Ming (s-t)	<p><i>Who's driving this truck?</i> <i>Let's try it again!</i> <i>You're almost there.</i> <i>Stop!</i> <i>Go!</i> <i>Stop!</i> <i>Careful!</i> <i>A bit more</i> <i>Let's go</i></p>
02:02:28	Super.	Chang Ming guides newly affluent Chinese on cross-country car tours
02:02:36	Chen Ming (s-t)	<p><i>"Traveling to the West" is based on a myth about a monk and three disciples in search of a Buddhist scroll. I'm like the monk, the master, I'm leading the members to the West, to find out the real meaning of life, to reach true enlightenment.</i></p>
02:03:32	Chen Ming (s-t)	<p><i>Across the river, there is a small village. None of them have refrigerators. They have to go 30 kilometers to buy meat once a week.</i></p>
02:03:56	Chen Ming (s-t)	<p><i>My own quality of life has improved dramatically over the past years. We used to have tomatoes only in the summer and the fall, never in winter. Now it's different. Whenever I want, I can eat tomatoes, watermelons, meat, seafood. We couldn't have imagined that when we were little.</i></p>
02:04:43	Chen Changnian (s-t)	<p><i>I think the opinion of the world about China's economic development... has not changed over the past 30 years.</i></p>
02:04:52	Super.	CHEN CHANGNIAN professor / Chen Ming's father
02:04:58	Chen Changnian	<p><i>Of course there have been some problems as well, for example, the environment. The situation in Beijing before the Olympics was very bad but has been improved a lot.</i></p>
02:05:17	Chen Ming (s-t)	<p><i>Stop, this can't be talked about like this. We have been trying to avoid this, I've been trying to control this during the whole trip. This is not your interview, I know the whole world knows this, no need to come from your mouth.</i></p>

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	Chen Changnian (s-t)	<i>Stop it.</i>
02:05:34	Chen Ming (s-t)	<i>Why should I stop? What you said is problematic; we've been working to control this.</i>
	Chen Changnian (s-t)	<i>It's ok.</i>
02:05:41	Chen Ming (s-t)	<i>I've been working for so many years to get there I am. What you're doing is hurting me. Do you understand?</i>
	Chen Changnian (s-t)	<i>I don't understand.</i>
02:05:51	Chen Ming (s-t)	<i>What you're doing is hurting me.</i>
02:05:53	Chen Changnian (s-t)	<i>So China's economic future ...</i>
02:06:14		Chen Ming driving city shots
02:06:40	Victor Gao	For thousands of years, you know, China has the longest continuous civilization in the world.
02:06:46	Super.	VICTOR GAO director China Association of International Studies
02:06:50	Victor Gao	And it is only during the recent period of time, when the European countries started to industrialize, that China started to lag behind. And therefore, you know, between the first Opium War, in around 1840, all the way to about 1978, China went through a roller coaster of great cumulations, wars of aggression by foreign nations, Japanese aggression against China, civil war, collapse of the Ching Dynasty, Great Cultural Revolution, chaos in China that when Deng Xiaoping reemerged in 1978, he basically pointed out the only correct path.
02:07:33	Super.	Victor Gao was Chairman Deng Xiaoping's interpreter when China took the capitalist road
02:07:40	Victor Gao	We need to go onto a path of growth and China needs to modernize and industrialize and I think that's, you know, the beginning of China's correct development onto a right path.
02:07:54		various shots

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02:08:11	Super.	natural capital
02:08:14	Ronald Wright	Some people have written about natural capital, the capital that nature provides, which is the clean air, the clean water, the, the uncut forests, the, the rich farmland, and the minerals, the oil, the metals. All of these things are the capital that nature has provided. And until about 1980, human civilization was able to live on, what we might term, the interest of that capital, the surplus that nature is able to produce, the food that farmland can grow without actually degrading the farmland or the number of fish you can pull out of the sea without causing the fish stocks to crash. But since 1980, we've been using more than the interest, and so we are in effect like somebody who thinks he's rich because he's spending the money that has been left in his inheritance, not spending the interest but eating into the capital.
02:09:09	Archives – Ronald Regan	The last time I visited the New York Stock exchange was in 1980 and the mood sure was different then. Government with its high taxes, excessive spending and overregulation, had thrown a wrench in the works of our free markets. With tax reform and budget control our economy will be free to expand to its full potential, driving the bears back into permanent hibernation. That's our economic program for the next four years: we're going to turn the bull loose!
02:09:59	Chinese speaker (s-t)	<i>Reform and modernisation must be speeded up. Progress should be based on economic growth.</i>
02:10:09	Margaret Atwood	The world is, is this big. It's not this big, and it can't be this big, it's just this big, it's a finite sum.
02:10:19	Super.	MARGARET ATWOOD author
02:10:22	Margaret Atwood	Instead of thinking that nature is this huge bank that we can just, this endless credit card that we can just keep drawing on, we have to think about the finite nature of that planet and how to keep it alive so that we too may remain alive. Unless we conserve the planet, there isn't going to be any "the economy".
02:10:54		various shots
02:11:01	Ronald Wright	The Ice Age hunter is still us, it's still in us. Those ancient hunters who thought that there would always be another herd of mammoth over the next hill shared the optimism of the stock trader, that there's always going to be another big killing on the stock market in the next week or two.
02:11:18		Shot of Stock Exchange

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02:11:55	Ronald Wright	<p>If you were watching the earth, say, over the last five or 6,000 years, and you're speeding up your film, what you see is civilizations breaking out like forest fires in one pristine environment after another. And after a civilization has arisen and sort of burned out the natural resources in that area, then it dies down and another fire breaks out somewhere else.</p> <p>And now, of course, we have one huge civilization around the world, and we have to confront the possibility that the entire experiment of civilization is in itself a progress trap.</p>
02:12:41		<p>Overlapping news broadcasts on stock market plunge</p>
02:13:16	Archives – George W. Bush	<p>When will the economy turn around? I'm not an economist, but I do believe that we're growing and I can remember, you know, this press conference here where people were yelling 'this recession this, this recession that' as if you're economists. And I'm an optimist, you know, I believe there's a lot of positive things for our economy.</p>
02:13:38	Ronald Wright	<p>Faith in progress has become a kind of religious faith, a sort of fundamentalism, rather like the market fundamentalism that has just recently crashed and burned. The idea that you can let markets rip is a delusion, just as the idea that you can let technology rip, and it will solve the problems created by itself in a slightly earlier phase. That, that has become a belief very similar to the religious delusions that caused some societies to crash and burn in the past.</p>
02:14:08	Super.	<p>a short history of debt</p>
02:14:11	Michael Hudson	<p>Written records go back about 4,000 years, and from 2,000 BC to the time of Jesus, it was normal for all of the countries in the world to periodically cancel the debts when they became too large to pay. So you have Sumer, Babylonia, Egypt, other regions all proclaiming these debt cancellations and the effect was to make a clean slate so that society would begin all over again.</p>
02:14:41	Super.	<p>MICHAEL HUDSON economic historian/former Wall Street economist</p>

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02:14:44	Michael Hudson	<p>This was easy to do in a society where most debts were owed to the State. It became much harder to do, when enterprise and credit passed out of the hands of the state into private hands, into the hands of an oligarchy. And the last thing they wanted was to have a king that would actually cancel the debts and restore equality.</p> <p>Rome was the first country of the world not to cancel the debts. It went to war in Sparta, in Greece, to overthrow the governments and the kings that wanted to cancel the debts.</p> <p>The wars of the first century BC ended up stripping these countries of everything they had, not only did it strip the temples of gold, it stripped the public buildings, it stripped the economies of their reproductive capacity, it stripped them of their waterworks, it made a desert out of the land. And it said a debt is a debt.</p>
02:15:53	Ronald Wright	<p>The collapse seems to have been closely linked to ecological devastation which led to all sorts of social and economic and military problems. In the early stages of the Roman Republic, you had fairly egalitarian land owning systems, the peasants had access to public land, but as the Roman State became more powerful and the lords and the generals began to appropriate public land for their own private estates, more and more peasants became landless. At the same time, erosion was a serious problem, so bad that some of the Roman ports silted up with all the topsoil that got washed down from the fields into the river, and archeologists have been able to establish how badly degraded much of Italy was by the fall of the Roman Empire and how it took a thousand years of much reduced population during the Middle Ages for fertility in Italy to rebuild.</p>
02:16:55	Michael Hudson	<p>What was absolutely new in the Roman Empire was irreversible concentration of wealth at the top of the economic pyramid, and that's what progress has meant ever since. Progress has meant: 'You will never get back what we take from you'. That's what brought on the Dark Age and that's what's threatening to bring in the Dark Age again, if society doesn't realize that if it lets the wealth concentrate in the hand of a financial class, this class is not going to be anymore intelligent in the long-term in disposing of the wealth than their predecessors were in Rome or in other countries.</p>
02:17:45	Simon Johnson	<p>Well the term oligarchy, obviously, it sounds a little esoteric, it just means a small group of people who've got a lot of political power based on their economic power.</p>
02:17:54	Super.	<p>SIMON JOHNSON former chief economist International Monetary Fund</p>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

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02:17:56	Simon Johnson	We like to think of the United States as being much more democratic, much more spread out in terms of who has the power. And an oligarchy is something that's usually associated with relatively poor countries. But that view has to be updated, because we've got an essential part of, of that problem, that structure, in the United States today.
02:18:15	Simon Johnson	The people who've got all this economic power were in the financial sector: it was Wall Street, if I can use that, that shorthand expression. Wall Street became really powerful; they used that power to buy influence in, in Washington, to get more deregulation, so to get more of the playing field shaped in the way they wanted which was no government intervention, no restrictions on what they were gonna do. That enabled them to make a lot more money, which brought them more political power, and this went on for a considerable period of time, until, of course, there was an enormous crash.
02:18:46	Archives – Rep. Michael Capuano	But basically you come to us today on your bicycles after buying girl scout cookies and helping out Mother Teresa, telling us 'We're sorry, we didn't meant it, we won't do it again. Trust us'. Well, I have some people in my constituency that actually robbed some of your banks, and they say the same thing: they're sorry, they didn't meant it, they won't do it again. Just let them out. Do you understand that this is a little difficult for most of my constituents to take, that you learned your lesson?
02:19:25	Simon Johnson	The bankers can't stop themselves, it's in their DNA, in the DNA of their organizations, to take massive risks, to pay themselves ridiculous salaries, and, and to collapse. And the, the more that reasonable, responsible people in the center, and the Left and the Right, see this, the closer we'll get to finally constraining the power of, of these out of control financial oligarchies.
03:00:08	James Dimon	It's not a mystery, it's not a surprise, and we know that we have crises every five or 10 years. You know, my daughter called me from school one day and said, "Dad, what's a financial crisis?" And without trying to be funny, I said, "It's the type of thing that happens every five to seven years." And she said, "Why is everyone so surprised?" So, we weren't, we shouldn't be surprised.
03:00:32	Ronald Wright	I read scrawled on a wall somewhere that every time history repeats itself, the price goes up.
03:00:41		stock shots of past civilizations

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03:00:47	Ronald Wright	If you look at the increasing complexity of civilization, what you can see towards the end of the classic Maya period is the enormous amount of effort being put in to build palaces and temple precincts that are controlled entirely by the nobility and from which one imagines the peasantry was excluded, just as the ordinary folk are excluded from gated communities in many countries today. And one imagines also that therefore the people at the bottom were becoming more and more disenchanted with the rulers as they felt that the social contract that had once existed, that the rulers were kind of the mediators between the gods and themselves, and would help them get good weather and good crops and all of that. As they saw that beginning to break down and the rulers in effect losing touch with the people who they claim to represent is a pattern I think we can see a lot in the modern world now.
03:01:49	Michael Hudson	Every society in history, for the last 4,000 years has found that the debts grow more rapidly than people can pay. The problem is a small oligarchy of 10% of the population at the top to whom all of these net debts are owed to. You want to annul the debts to the top 10%. That's what they're not going to do. The oligarchy is running things. They would rather annul the bottom 90% right to live than to annul the money that's due to them. They would rather strip the planet and shrink the population and be paid rather than give up their claims. That's the political fight of the XXIst Century.
03:02:30	Super.	debt pushers
03:02:33	Michael Hudson	Well, my job on Wall Street was to be Balance of Payment Economist for the Chase Manhattan Bank in the 1960's. My first job there was to calculate how much debt could Third World countries pay. And the answer was, 'Well, how much do they earn?' And whatever they earn, that's what they can afford to pay in interest, and our objective was to take the entire earnings of a Third World country and say, ideally, that would be all paid as interest to us.
03:03:04	Clip - Male	Look, don't give me a hard luck story, I hear them every day and quite frankly, they bore me. The facts are simple: In 1973, this bank gave you a loan, and you still haven't paid it back. Admittedly, you paid back the initial sum, but not the interest, which, to date, amounts to 9 times the amount originally borrowed. Nine times. So you better get your act together. Times are tough, and we're all having to clamp down. And don't look at me like that. This is a bank, not a charity.
03:03:57	Kambale Musavali	The number one costs for foreign lending through some of the multilateral institutions such as IMF or World Bank is the death toll on the continent.
03:04:08	Super.	KAMBALE MUSAVALI Friends of the Congo
03:04:12	Kambale Musavali	We can look at the support of dictators that took place 30 years – from 1960 until 1997 of a brutal dictator.

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03:04:23	Archives – Mobutu (s-t)	<i>I, Mobutu, Sese Seko Nkuku Ngbendu Wa Za Banga, I swear to uphold Congo's laws and constitution.</i>
03:04:37	Kambale Musavali	He was given humongous loans. Everyone knew he wasn't using that for the population; he was propped up as one of the biggest leaders in the whole African continent.
03:04:49	Archives – Richard M. Nixon	Your country is young, only 10 years of age. And it has had a period of progress in that period which has been an example for nations throughout the world. You have moved forward economically, you have established unity in your country, and you have a vitality which impresses every visitor when he comes to Congo.
03:05:21	Kambale Musavali	What is interesting is all the money plundered from all the international debt is found in Western banks. So as he was removed from power, the money never returned to the Congolese.
03:05:34		stock shots
03:05:41	Kumbale Musavali	The population didn't have access to medical services, didn't have access to adequate education or living wage. And it continues until today. Now the Congo has a 14 billion dollar debt. It's been structured in a way where the people do not benefit and the human cost is so high. You know, in the Congo, we have 6 million deaths since 1996.
03:06:08		stock shots
03:06:19	Margaret Atwood	Rich countries lend a so-called developing country a big whack of money. Debt is incurred on behalf of people who have nothing to do with it, that don't know anything about it. Then they are expected to pay, pay the price, by, by scraping off their livelihood, turning it into money and giving it to somebody else.
03:06:38	Kambale Musavali	How could the money given to Congo benefit to the people? Use some of the funds to make sure that there are strong institutions within the country that will protect against human rights violations and so many other issues that we face. But these funds are not used for that because whenever it's given, they tell you specifically what projects you have to use it for. And mainly it is usually mining projects to get access to our resources.
03:07:15	Super.	digging holes
03:07:33	Boy (s-t)	<i>When I watch the news on TV, I see that they are deforesting the Amazon and I don't understand why ...</i>
	Teacher (s-t)	<i>What are the interests behind it?</i>
	Boy (s-t)	<i>Economics.</i>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
03:07:58	Michael Hudson	You can relate the destruction of the rain forest in Brazil directly to the Wall Street and London financial sector. The story begins in 1982, when countries couldn't pay their debt anymore. And the result is that the Latin American countries, generally, stopped paying, because they said, 'We're already paying all of the balance of payment surplus we have to the banks. We don't have any money to import to sustain living standards, we don't have money to import to build new factories and to pay the debt'. So the International Monetary Fund, at that point, said, 'Don't go bankrupt, you have an option. You can begin to sell off the public domain; you have plenty of assets to sell to pay us. You can sell off your water rights, your forests, your subsoil mineral resources, you can sell us your oil rights. And so, Brazil, Argentina, and other countries began to sell off their resources to private investors. And the private investors bought these resources on credit.
03:09:09	Marina Silva (s-t)	<i>Up until very recently, people believed that natural resources were practically infinite, and the only valued commodities were those that had been transformed by man.</i>
03:09:23	Super.	MARINA SILVA former Minister of the Environment, Brazil
03:09:26	Marina Silva (s-t)	<i>We are now discovering there are services provided to human life on earth by nature, and the population that inhabits certain geographical locations are the keepers of these services provided by nature.</i> <i>When I was confronted with a situation that presented a threat to all that richness and beauty, I had to fight against those who believed that the forest was synonymous with backwardness or that it went against the idea of progress.</i>
03:10:14	Super.	Marina Silva widened the campaign against deforestation through IBAMA
03:10:24	Raquel Taitson Queiroz (s-t)	<i>IBAMA is the federal government's environmental agency and was created to deal with Brazil's ecological issues .</i>
03:10:39	Super.	RAQUEL TAITSON QUEIROZ environmental police officer IBAMA

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
03:10:42	Raquel Taitson Queiroz (s-t)	<p><i>When I started in Ibama, I thought that I could defend my ideas, my ideals, if I was an inspector. What I can do is so small compared to what is going on right now.</i></p> <p><i>This red section is where we should look.</i></p> <p><i>Some of our operations involve logging practices. We pay visits to sawmills and determine whether the mills use legal timber.</i></p>
03:11:45	Enio Beata (s-t)	<p><i>Please consider that all my workers have families. There are no thieves working here like the outside world is talking about.</i></p> <p><i>Our fear is that you will close down the mill, because of a small infraction.</i></p>
03:12:20	Super.	ENIO BEATA Sawmill Owner
03:12:23	Enio Beata (s-t)	<p><i>I provide jobs to many people. But the way it is going we will need to stop operating the mill. I will have to lay everyone off, and try to find another way to survive.</i></p> <p><i>There's nothing for you to do today. Go home.</i></p>
03:12:50	Marina Silva (s-t)	<p><i>In the Amazon, small towns workers become violent against IBAMA, simply because they are economically dependent on deforestation.</i></p> <p><i>As a result, these civil wars are occurring in our Amazonian cities.</i></p>
03:13:15		stock shots
03:13:24	Blairo Maggi (s-t)	<p><i>This is our life! The forest is like a mother giving milk to her child. Do you have an Amazon forest in your country? They say the Amazon is the lungs of the USA. Because it produces air for the American people. If we destroy it, everyone in the US will die, but we poor Brazilians will die too, if we don't cut it, we'll starve. We'll all die!</i></p>
03:13:57	Male (s-t)	<p><i>The big farmers like the governor of this state, have already cut millions of trees here... But who will pay for that? It is us who only cut 1 or 2 acres to plant food for our sustenance to be able to feed our families.</i></p>
03:14:16	Anio Beata (s-t)	<p><i>The people responsible for destroying the Amazon are the big farmers, the international corporations, the biggest farmers are senators, deputies, colonels. They're the ones destroying the Amazon forest. Them. Not us.</i></p>
03:14:34	Marina Silva (s-t)	<p><i>It is very frustrating because we know that the people we catch are not those really behind deforestation. Most Brazilian politicians own agro-businesses. They are producers of soy beans, or cattle ranchers, so there is a conflict of interest.</i></p>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
03:15:05	Michael Hudson	They're cutting down the rain forest, they're emptying out the economy, they are turning it into a hole in the ground to repay the bankers. That's the financial business plan, that's how it ends up. Because the bankers can always take their money and begin digging holes in another country and emptying out that country. That's the global financial system.
		deforestation footage
03:16:13	Boy (s-t)	<i>If we don't take care of the Amazon forest, it will become the Amazon desert because when one cuts trees in a forest one creates a desert.</i>
03:16:43	David Suzuki	The economists say if you clear-cut the forest, take the money and put it in the bank, you could make 6 or 7 percent. If you clear-cut the forest and put it into Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, you can make 30 or 40 percent. So who cares whether you keep the forest, cut it down, put the money somewhere else. When those forests are gone, put it in fish. When the fish are gone put it in computers. Money doesn't stand for anything and money now grows faster than the real world. Conventional economics is a form of brain damage.
03:17:11	Super.	DAVID SUZUKI geneticist /activist
03:17:15	David Suzuki	Economics is so fundamentally disconnected from the real world it is destructive. If you take an introductory course in economics, the professor, in the first lecture, will show a slide of the economy, and it looks very impressive, you know, raw materials, extraction process, manufacturer, wholesale, retail, with arrows going back and forth. And they try to impress you because they think, and they know damn well, economics is not a science, but they're trying to fool us into thinking that it's a real science, it's not. Economics is a set of values that they, then, try to use mathematical equations and all that stuff, and pretend that it's a science. But if you ask the economist: in that equation, where do you put the ozone layer, where do you put the deep underground aquifer as a fossil water, where do you put topsoil, or biodiversity? Their answer is, 'Oh, those are externalities'. Well, then you might as well be on Mars: that economy is not based in anything like the real world. It's life, the web of life that filters water in the hydrologic cycle, it's microorganisms in the soil that create the soil that we can grow our food in. Nature performs all kinds of services, insects fertilize all of the flowering plants, these services are vital to the health of the planet. Economists call these externalities ... that's nuts!
03:18:36		nature stock shots

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
03:19:04	Jane Goodall	Unlimited economic progress in a world of finite natural resources doesn't make sense. It's a pattern that is bound to collapse. And we keep seeing it collapsing, but then we build it up because there are these strong vested interests, we must have business as usual. And you know, you get the arms manufacturers, you get the petroleum industry, the pharmaceutical industry and all of this feeding into helping to create corrupt governments who are putting the future of their own people at risk.
04:00:12	Michael Hudson	<p>You can imagine lilies growing in a pond. Lilies grow very rapidly, they double every day. They're going to cover the whole surface, and there won't be any way of the fish getting oxygen, and all the life is going to die in the pond. That's how rapidly things can grow. One day you're half full of lilies, the next day, you're dead.</p> <p>You could say that today we're in the point at which the lily pond is half full. The life is being snuffed out of national economies, and the debt goes on doubling, how long can it do it? It has one day to go.</p>
		stock shots
04:01:06	Ronald Wright	<p>All the civilizations of the past, and I think our own, only seem to be doing well when they're expanding, when the population is growing, when the industrial output is growing, and when the cities are spreading outwards.</p> <p>Eventually you reach the point at which the population has overrun everything, the cities have expanded over the farmland, the people at the bottom begin to starve, and the people at the top lose their legitimacy. And so, you get, you get hunger, you get revolution.</p>
04:01:45		stock shots
04:02:13	Robert Wright	Now, one kind of scary thing about the moment we're in is that for the first time there's kind of only one system. So, if the whole thing goes down, you won't have what you've had in previous eras of epic collapse, which is that even a one civilization goes down, and it may take a while to recover, there are other robust civilizations that are kind of the guardians of progress.
04:02:40	Super.	ROBERT WRIGHT author Nonzero: The Logic of Human Destiny

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

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04:02:45	Robert Wright	In that sense, some of the things that have been reassuring in the past about progress don't necessarily apply to the current situation, because once, once you get to the global level, you've only got one experiment working. That's just the inevitable culmination of its growth ever since the Stone Age, and there were weigh stations along the way like the Roman Empire, and now here we are, and more and more people are in the same boat, and they face problems and either they will solve them together or suffer together, and you know, possibly on a catastrophic scale.
04:03:20	Super.	escaping the trap
04:03:28	Stephen Hawking	We are entering an increasingly dangerous period of our history. Our genetic code still carries a cell fish with aggressive instincts that were a survival advantage in the past. But I'm an optimist.
04:03:48:23	Super.	STEPHEN HAWKING theoretical physicist
04:03:59	Stephen Hawking	If we are the only intelligent beings in the galaxy, we should make sure we survive and continue. If we can avoid disaster for the next two centuries, our species should be safe. We have made remarkable progress in the last hundred years. Our only chance of long-term survival is not to remain inward looking on planet Earth, but to spread out into space.
04:05:03	Craig Ventner	I was at a conference a few years back with George Lucas, and he came up and said, 'You know, you know, there's, there's only two hopes for humanity, either we find another planet to colonize after we've destroyed this one, or perhaps your technology', meaning what we're doing with the genetic code, 'might be able to allow us to transform ourselves or other aspects of the planet where we could continue to live here'.
04:05:33	Super.	J. CRAIG VENTER biologist/CEO Synthetic Genomics
04:05:34	Archives – Bill W. Clinton	We are here to celebrate the completion of the first survey of the entire human genome. Without a doubt, this is the most important, most wondrous map ever produced by humankind.
04:05:46	Craig Ventner	We are announcing today, for the first time our species can read the chemical letters of its genetic code.
04:05:57	Craig Ventner	For the last several years, my team has been actually sailing around the world, collecting all the species in the ocean, the micro species on filters, and we isolate all the DNA, all at once from all of them. I have a novel way of looking at these genes. I view them as the design components of the future.

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

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04:06:17	Craig Ventner	It's, it's a mind boggling concept even though we're doing it every day, that we can simply start with four bottles of chemicals, write the genetic code and change the genetic code of species, basically developing new species. And we can try and find ways to make fuels that other people haven't even imagined; we can do this with novel sources of food. We're limited by, only by our imagination, and whatever biological reality is.
04:06:50	Craig Ventner	When we consider trying to replace oil, we use billions of gallons of oil a year, it, it's, I can't even, I think I have a pretty good imagination, envision what a billion gallons of oil is, and making a billion gallons of oil from invisible microbes is a certain leap of faith, but it, it, in fact, that's, that's how we proceed in science.
04:07:24	Craig Ventner	Instead of writing software for computers, we can now write software for life.
		stock shots
04:07:41	Craig Ventner	By changing and taking over evolution, changing the time course of evolution, and going into deliberate design of species for our own survival at least gives us some points of optimism that we have a chance to control our destiny.
04:08:02	Archives – Craig Ventner	We're here today to announce the first synthetic cell. This is the first self-replicating species that we've had on the planet, whose parent is a computer.
04:08:16	Super.	God R us?
04:08:19	Gary Marcus	One of the challenges that, that faces the human species is we are more and more in a position of acting like gods. This has been true for a while, because we've had the ability to change the climate, for example. This is gonna be even more true with genetic technologies, we're gonna be able to manipulate other species, and eventually ourselves. We are going to be in a position of controlling our own fate in a way that no creature has ever in, you know, a billion years on the planet had an opportunity to do.
04:08:54	Jane Goodall	I once wrote a poem in which a mad Bishop said, 'And man became God, became greater than God than the God would have man'. I do not see anyone living in this materialistic society as being anything like God. I don't know what God is, but in my wildest dreams I would never conceive of God or a god as being like a modern human being in a materialistic society.
04:09:29	Craig Ventner	We're, we're anything but Godlike. I, I think the challenges are so overwhelming to all of us that we're all trying to just use whatever new tools we can to try and change the future.
04:09:45	Jim Thomas	Synthetic biology is a progress trap par excellence.
04:09:48	Super.	JIM THOMAS author The New Biomasters

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
04:09:52	Jim Thomas	Biologists have pointed out that these engineering approaches is all very well, and the engineers can try to treat life as though it was some sort of computer or engineering substrate, but ultimately the microbes are gonna end up laughing at them, that, that life doesn't work like that.
04:10:23	Jim Thomas	I think the problems that we're seeing now, whether we're talking about hunger and massive inequity, whether we're talking about climate change or the loss of biodiversity, have been driven over the last 200 years by a system of over-production of stuff, and over-consumption of stuff. And, and then that's been inflated and inflated and inflated to the point where it really is not in any way reasonable. The, the companies and, and those within governments who have supported that, that approach are now saying that they will provide new technologies to continue that consumption of stuff, that level of production. It's just not realistic.
04:10:59	Promotional video	Exxon Mobil and Synthetic Genomics have built a new facility to identify the most productive strains of algae. Algae are amazing little critters. They secrete oil which we could turn into biofuels. It also absorbs CO ₂ . We're hoping to supplement the fuels that we use in our vehicles to some day help meet the world's energy demands.
04:11:18	TV journalist	What is harder: mapping the entire genome set that makes up a human being, or making algae produce energy?
04:11:25	Craig Ventner	Making algae produce energy is not hard but doing it on the scale to have a major economic and environmental impact is going to be a huge challenge. But we have a good partner with Exxon Mobil to try and get it to the scale that it needs to be, billions of gallons a year. A lot of engineering's required for facilities the size of San Francisco. I think they're serious and we're serious.
04:11:50	Jim Thomas	What we're seeing alongside the development of synthetic biology is a massive corporate grab on plant life. Literally speaking, that means a grab on land, and a grab on seas, as well, where people are being moved off of land to make way for the growing of plant life that can be transformed into plastics, chemicals, fuels and so forth. What drives synthetic biology is not an attempt to, to save the planet, or, or help humanity but an attempt to, to increase the bottom line for certain very large corporations.
04:12:20	Craig Ventner	If we're going to feed the upcoming 9 billion people, we can't afford to use our prime crop land for trying to produce the billions of gallons of fuel that we use. What we're doing with writing the genetic code, changing the species, allows us to use desert land for, we just need sunlight and CO ₂ for using these new engineered algae, for example.

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
04:12:51	Vaclav Smil	<p>Synthetic biology, but you know, it's frightening, but I'm, I'm very sympathetic to it in so many ways. It would be nice to get a more water-efficient plant, but still, it would still need water. Craig Venter cannot create a plant which needs no water and no nitrogen, or which totally fixes all its nitrogen by sucking it from the air, you know, it's just, it cannot go that far. This doesn't fundamentally change the game. What fundamentally changes the game, and what people don't want to hear, and I encounter this all the time, and people say, you know, don't talk to us like that, because this is a no-starter, but for me this is the only starter: we have to use less.</p>
05:00:08	Super.	limits
05:00:11	Vaclav Smil	<p>The poor people need more, there is no doubt about this, there is no discussion there. If you are average village somewhere in Rajasthan or Punjab or Nigeria, you need more, period. Just like basic human decency compress you to say these people need more, more clean water, more basic food, more education for their children. The discussion closed right before it begins, right. But as far as us is concerned, we certainly could and should do with much, much, much less.</p> <p>People have been conditioned that things have to always get, go better, and immediately, if you say, limit something, people think this is not getting better, but it would be. This is a non-starter. People saying you should eat less, you should eat less meat, right. That's even – that's a non-starter, right. You should use less electricity, right. You should burn smaller cars, the other day I saw the Vice-President of GM talking about a new GM, right, and the model he's *, and a journalist was asking him, you know, 'But your cars are still so heavy', and he says, 'Yes, we are working on it'. What is there to work on it, right? There's so many things which we could do, you know, not to surrender our standard of living, not to kind of live in a gutter, right, but we don't need one and a half tank car to go from red light to red light in a city.</p>
05:01:20	Vaclav Smil	<p>People are not willing to go back on these things, most of them simply are not, because they've been totally hijacked by this material culture. Let's not underestimate the, you know, the, the, the persuasion, the power of this material culture is immense, it's just immense.</p> <p>I've seen so many people being so genuinely unhappy that they cannot afford a 50,000 square foot, oh, sorry, \$50,000 bathroom remodeling, really, right, I mean, there's something wrong with that value set, really, right, you know, because bathroom is a place where you usually spend like, whatever 10 minutes to take your shower, brush your teeth, really, so it doesn't have to be worth... But you know how much, how much money people are, again, on my mind, because we are thinking about redoing our bathroom, really, right, so it's on my mind, and so it's very interesting. So, for me it's a chore, because it has to be done, really, but for many people it's kind of a life affirming thing, you know.</p>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

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05:02:06	Vaclav Smil	<p>People are renting storage spaces, right, which they will never access in X amount of years, to store the junk which they cannot store in their 5,000 square foot homes, really, right? So, do we need it really? So, it's, it's just amazing, really. So, it's, it's, it's, this is very difficult to put the genie in the bottle, so everything is defined in this material thing, really.</p> <p>I could make it a lot more coherent, but, you see, this is difficult, because when you make it a lot more coherent, you make it prescriptive, and prescriptions never work, really, because I don't have the solution, I can't sit here and say to you, we should follow this, and by 2030 everything click, and we all living happily ever after, really, right, you know? So, I'm making it deliberately incoherent, I could be, you know, I could be very doctrinaire, I could, but, you see, I live for 26 years in a communist society, I'm inoculated against any doctrinaire, grand solutions, saying, you know: this is the pattern, this is the master, this is the paradigm which we have to follow, you know, I'm just totally set against it. So, I'm making things deliberately kind of, you know, messy, incoherent, uncoordinated, because that's how life is, we don't know what pattern will emerge.</p> <p>As long as we are living amidst of this sea of affluence and opportunities and material riches, it's just very difficult to make these individual voluntary resolute step and saying: enough. back. limit. Very difficult.</p>
05:03:26		stock shots
05:04:02	Marina Silva (s-t)	<p><i>I think we have reached the era of limits. Although we are free, we must live within the limitations of nature. It is impossible to defend models that cannot be universally applied because we would have to start from a premise that some people have rights and some don't. Thus there is no technological problem, but an ethical one.</i></p>
05:04:29	Colin Beavan	<p>I was walking around pointing my finger at everybody and you know, 'You people', you know, blaming the culture for its consumption and finally one day I came home and the air conditioners were on even though there was no one home. And it was like, wait, you know, I'm going around blaming everybody else but the fact of the matter is is that my lifestyle requires a huge amount of resource too. So how can I blame other people? And I realized that before I go around trying to change other people, maybe I should look at myself and change myself and keep my side of the street clean. So I came up with this idea that I would live as environmentally possible free and see how that affected us.</p>
05:05:09		<p>COLIN BEAVAN writer / engineer director – No Impact Project</p>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
05:05:13	Colin Beavan	<p>This No Impact experiment we did, we live in New York City, which made it unusual because most people can think of environmental living as some sort of a back to the land thing. But of course, back to the land is not the right idea when it comes to saving our habitat. If all of us in New York were to go back to the land, we would very much destroy the land.</p> <p>We're not biologically consumptive. This is not got to do with human nature. Human nature is to do what everybody else does. That's human nature. That we want – and it's wonderful, it's like, 'I want to be with you. I want to be the same as you. I want to love you and I want you to love me'. That's not bad. So that's – but that's also part of the problem. 'I want to be the same as you and you consume, so I'm not going to be the first not to consume'. But it also tells us that if we can move from non-consumption to consumption, we can also move from consumption back to non-consumption.</p>
		Stock shots Times Square
05:06:22	Jim Thomas	<p>We need to begin by saying we're at the end of a failed experiment and it's time to say goodbye to it. It's an economic experiment, it's a technological experiment. It's been going on for a couple of hundred years and it's not worked; it's brought us to this point of crisis. Then we can start to sanely and intelligently say: How can we live within the real limits that our planet gives us and create a safe operating space for humanity?</p>
05:06:49	Jane Goodall	<p>Admittedly, we've used our brain in ways that are detrimental to the environment and society, but brains are beginning to get together around the planet to find solutions to some of the harm that we've inflicted. And, you know, we humans are a problem-solving species, and we always do pretty well when our back is to the wall.</p>
05:07:09	Super.	the planetary brain
05:07:11	Robert Wright	<p>It's easy now to see kind of a giant social brain, or planetary brain, because it's in, it's in the physical form of the Internet, it, it looks so much like a nervous system, you almost can't miss the analogy.</p> <p>We might say that there have always been a lot of little social brains around the planet, getting bigger, starting to form little interconnections among themselves. Now more than ever you could say there's a unified social brain.</p>
05:07:39		stock shots
05:08:00	Robert Wright	<p>Even if the overall arc of history is toward an expanded moral horizon, more and more people acknowledging the humanity, more and more different kinds of people, there's always the risk of backsliding, and it can be catastrophic. From a point of view of strict self-interest, it is imperative that we make further moral progress, that we get more and more people to acknowledge the humanity of one another, or it will be bad for pretty much of all them.</p>

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
05:08:27	Robert Wright	If we don't develop what you might call the moral perspective of God, then we'll screw up the engineering part of playing God, because the actual engineering solutions depend on seeing things from the point of view of other people, ensuring that their lives don't get too bad, because if they do it'll come back to haunt us. So you know, kind of half of being God has just been handed to us and then the question is whether we'll master the other half of being God, the moral half.
05:09:09	Robert Wright	The bad news is that the enlightenment is, is sometimes hard to come by because of human nature, in some cases, because, you know, we, we've got these kind of animal minds, designed for a very different environment, facing novel problems, so the enlightenment part is gonna require some real education and reflection and self-discipline that may not come naturally.
05:09:45	Ronald Wright	I think what we're up against here is human nature, we have to reform ourselves, remake ourselves in a way that cuts against the grain of our, our inner animal nature, and transcend that Ice Age hunter, that all of us are, if you, if you strip off the thin layer of civilization.
		stock shots
05:10:28	Ronald Wright	We always have been the initiators of this experiment, we've unleashed it but we've never really controlled it. But now it's more likely that we're going to come to grief because of environmental problems. If we do, then that is really nature saying the experiment of civilization is a failed evolutionary experiment, that making apes smarter is a, is a dead end. So, it's up to us to prove nature wrong, in a sense, to show that we can take control of our own destinies and behave in a wise way that will ensure the continuation of the experiment of civilization.
		stock shot
05:11:19		ape in lab
05:11:54	Super.	director Mathieu Roy
		co-director Harold Crooks
		screenplay Harold Crooks Mathieu Roy
		camera Mario Janelle Jean-Pierre St-Louis

SURVIVING PROGRESS

Complete Transcription

TIME CODE	PERSONS	LOCATION AND DIALOGUES
		additional photography Dany Racine Mark Achbar
		editor Louis-Martin Paradis
		original music Michael Ramsey featuring music by Patrick Watson
		location sound Louis Piché Claude Lahaye Joao Godoy
		additional sound Philippe Scultéty Marcel Chouinard
		post-production sound Marcel Pothier
		Associate Producers François Girard
05:12:47		Stock shots of cars on road
		end credits