



“The pale blue dot, the only home we’ve ever known” (Carl Sagan)

OVERPOPULATION

November 2, 2014

Alex Bodnar: So um, do you think we have a population problem in the world?

José Cruz: Yes I do! Haha **boy, do I** do! Yes!. Absolutely, I do.

Alex: Uh like where are we now? Are there...

José: 7.2, 7.1.

Alex: Billion, and uh where are we headed?

José: I’ll ask you. (Mm-hmm) What do you think is a dangerous number? **Because** um, I remember talking to some people and I asked- and because I already think 7 billion is too much- I think, we’re... well, we’re not at the tipping point or anything yet but um when I was a kid, 4 billion was like a big number to me. (Mm-hmm) And then about what? 1960s was about 4 billion, um, when you get to like, the early 80s, five. (Mm-hmm) And then we went from the 80s into about the mid-nineties and suddenly it was about six and **I go**, “holy cow, that was fast!”

Alex: Mm-hmm. There’s an ambulance outside.

José: Yeah sorry, I was like...

Alex: Maybe there’s one less person in the world.

José: Yeah could be yeah! Or maybe uh, I-maybe a baby’s being born. Um and then from the-

from the mid-nineties to now, right?. Uh, you know again another billion.

Alex: I don’t know it’s it’s hard to fathom uh, such a such a huge number.

José: So so my question again, what do you think is a dangerous number?

Alex: A dangerous number would be.. I don’t know uh, well if we were to double the population to 14 billion in a short amount of time I would imagine that’s dangerous.

José: There was uh actually, **now that you mention it** there was a documentary that I was watching on one of the um science sort of channels, and it said, what if the world population immediately tomorrow, with nothing else changing immediately tomorrow went to 14 billion and they were showing all kinds of things like food shortages, and um, fuel shortages, and line ups (Mm-hmm) for this and that, and um, you know, literally your house would have twice as many people in it. (Mmm) imagine that, you know. (Mm-hmm) And and I I thought it was, it was a little **over the top** in the situation it was providing because of course it’s it’s ridiculous (Mm-hmm) that the world population should double, but they were saying that unless we start finding new ways for even like the shipping capacity of fuel (Mm-hmm) you know more like um, pipelines and and more cargo lines. and more of these, in America

this is a problem: trains blowing up because they're full of fuel. Uh they derail and stuff (Yeah) Unless all of that is changed, uh shipping is changed and retail space is changed and and elevated, we can't accommodate even 10 billion (Hmm) And that's the proportion that would be in America, much less where the real population change would be which is in the poorer countries.

Alex: Oh, the majority of population these days at least in the developed world uh, has been moving and is uh in the cities, in the urban areas and the way growth has gone in Canada, uh I don't like the way that looks. Uh, there's so much urban sprawl. Uh there's something to be said for population density. (Mm-hmm) Uh uh, the way it's done, um like in Japan uh in some Japanese cities. **But mind you** in Japan, uh there isn't much choice because uh, there isn't room for growth in that way.

José: There isn't a lot of room for growth, but the projections for Japan is depopulation. (Yeah yeah) It's an interesting conundrum, right? (Yes) Uh Japan is expected to drop to something like... The population is now about 125 million. It's expected to drop to something like 70 million, 80 million (Mm-

hmm) by 2050. That's what's expected to happen here, and then you hear these numbers about, what was it 20 million? The environs of Mexico City is 20 million people.

Alex: You could be right, yeah.

José: That is, uh wh- that's unbelievable! That's going to be fi- what is it, twenty percent? No I'm sorry twenty-five percent of the population of the entire country of Japan lives around the city of Mexico.

Alex: Or or, it's the majority of the population of Canada (Yeah) is one Mexican city.

José: Is one Mexican city! (Yeah) Uh woah, what the heck.

Alex: I I remember years ago uh seeing footage on TV of Mexico City uh so much smog and pollution and I don't know if they've changed anything. I don't know if they've brought in any environmental laws, but uh if not much has changed, then I wonder how safe it is to live for your health there.

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
790	4:53	161.77

Pointers:

Read about the tipping point: (or ask your teacher) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Tipping_Point

'**Boy do I**' putting 'Boy' in front of a grammatical question creates a stronger exclamation, 'Boy, did you lose weight!' (0:07)

People often pronounce **because** as 'KUHZ' (written with an apostrophe as 'cuz) (0:27)

I go can mean 'I think to myself...' or 'I say...' (0:57)

Now that you mention it is an expression to point out that the next idea came as a result of what the other person just said. (1:47)

over the top means 'exaggerated', or 'excessive' (2:15)

But mind you means 'but it's important to remember that ~' (3:28)

Discussion:

Do you know the projections for your country's population?

What do you think will be the world's population in 2050? Will it go up or down?

How would the world improve if there were fewer/more people?

VOA ARTICLE: "POPULATION TO GROW FROM 7 TO 11 BILLION"
<http://bit.ly/1G9Y3Gr>

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