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Welcome to the Idiocene

Max Cafard

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Fall / Winter 2014

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Fifth Estate # 392, Fall/Winter 2014. Max Cafard, a lifelong inhabitant of the Island of New Orleans, is a surregionalist writer and pre-Ancientist philosopher. He is the author of *The Surregionalist Manifesto and Other Writings*, *FLOOD BOOK*, *Surregional Explorations*, and the forthcoming *Lightning Storm Mind: PreAncientist Meditations*. He edits the cyberjournal *Psychic Swamp* and is a member of *Surrealists for Social Responsibility* and the *Deconstruction Workers Union of the IWW*.

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Yes, folks. It's the Idiocene
Welcome to the Idiocene

It has been proposed that the present era of life on earth should be called the Anthropocene to reflect the human domination of our planet.

However, an elegant, scientific-sounding term like anthropocene seems like a cop-out, a handy euphemism to hide exactly what kind of domination this is and what it's doing to the planet.

I propose that instead we call it the Idiocene, signifying the New Era of Idiots. Idiot comes from the Greek word "idiutns" meaning both an incompetent person and a private citizen. Idiocene is the one precisely appropriate name for an era that is suicidally stupid and ecocidally privatizing.

Would you like a simple definition of the Idiocene? You might remember the old joke about a robber who comes up to somebody on the street, pulls out a gun and says: "Your money or your life!" The victim pauses and then says, "Can I have a moment to think it over?"

That moment is the Idiocene.

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