

Addendum to:

‘Stuff that Matters Now’ Episode 31: James McCarthy

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“If you make it to the end of this podcast you’ll find a question that I wasn’t expecting, and a subsequent answer that doesn’t really reflect how I currently perceive the world. I was asked what I had seen in my travels that I admired (or some BS like that - thanks Harv!) and after attempts to deflect failed, made some stumbling comment about Switzerland. Whilst it is true that I really do admire the way Swiss agriculture is essentially a [large collection of gardens](#) that provide more or less equal parts beauty and food.

I’m not suggesting that this is the right approach for New Zealand or the world. On reflection, I think our whole species has a huge challenge in front of it and no one country (that I have seen) has a silver bullet which balances our desire for growth, living standards and wealth with our ability to support these things indefinitely, be it through technology or otherwise.

There is a lot that we can each learn from each other, and what I have noticed is that wealth combined with a certain degree of egalitarianism tends to lend itself to local environments (countries, cities, landscapes) that fill their inhabitants with pride (this is my experience and opinion - don’t go quoting me here). Rubbish, junk, abandoned shit lying all over the place is definitely not something you find in the types of countries I have described above. I’d like to see the world apply the same degree of care to the things that we can’t see, either with our eyes or over the course of a year, a decade, or a lifetime.

How we do this I’m unsure, but I’m thankful for the opportunity to clear up a mumbling, rambling thought from off the cuff.”

~James McCarthy, 30 October 2020

