

THE JOLLY PILGRIM

By Peter Baker



An epic travel adventure

A message of hope for civilisation

Why the travelogue is innovative

The standard method of writing a travel book is to plan it, embark on the journey, take notes, return home and write the book.

The Jolly Pilgrim, on the other hand, is a spontaneous literary creation. The first chapter starts with an email Peter Baker wrote to a small group of friends in 2005 after cycling across Kent. The two-year narrative which follows is uncontrived and was recorded in real time. That exceptionally diverse series of adventures and human encounters concludes with something one could not plan for or make up – a call to arms for humanity to be more honest about itself.

While comparable to the travel writing of Bruce Chatwin, Patrick Leigh Fermour and Jack Kerouac, the works it most emulates are the parable-style travel stories *The Celestine Prophecy* by James Redfield and *The Alchemist* by Paul Coelho. *The Jolly Pilgrim* is of a different order of intellectual coherence to either of those books, and while those are works of fiction, this is a work of fact.

Cultural and intellectual significance

In extreme summary, the book's thesis reinterprets the human world from first principles: namely, that we're a fallible species of carbon-based life forms living in a mysterious universe without a rule book.

Examples:

- Our current environmental issues are reframed as the beginning of a phase of environmental instability which became inevitable 12,000 years ago, with the development of agriculture.

- Contemporary religious systems are reframed as the current form of a spiritual inheritance which has been evolving since humans became behaviourally modern, 50,000 years ago.
- The credit crisis is reframed as one in a long line of learning experiences implicit to working out (from scratch) how to manage a planetary economy.

No one in popular culture is setting out this larger historical context to contemporary life. When someone does (and sooner or later, someone is bound to), not only will it catalyse a reassessment of many areas of human interest, people will start to find their lives more meaningful and the travails of the present day less frightening.

This isn't a set of themes that will run out of juice during the twenty-first century. To get the ball rolling, *The Jolly Pilgrim* binds these ideas into an around-the-world true story of heartbreak and gritty human drama.

The author

By his early twenties Peter Baker was ghost-writing technical articles for partners at global insurance consultancies. He was awarded \$5,000 by *The Economist* for the essay *The World In 2050*. He spent four years travelling the world, visited 50 countries, lived in five, worked in three, and pursued lifelong interests in physics (in which he has a degree), economics, historical theory and evolutionary anthropology.

Delivering an artistic and intellectual project as ambitious as *The Jolly Pilgrim* required the emotional wherewithal to write while living in a one-room shed and caring for his dying mother for a year, then spending every weekend and holiday, for two years, finishing it off, while holding down a 55-hours-a-week City job.

To pick up your copy visit www.thejollypilgrim.org

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