

A few observations about the near-end of the world yesterday

By [Dora Dueck](#)

May 23, 2011

1. It was an effective campaign. People everywhere noticed the billboards, the ads, and seemed to be talking about the rapture/end of the world happening at 6 p.m. yesterday. And I don't mean just the talkers on Facebook and Twitter, the ordinaries on the street, like you and me. This got itself an article on the editorial page of our city newspaper, for example, and a news report in... well, last time I checked, there were more than 4800 articles that appeared in various media. I wonder why this grabbed so much attention?

2. I have no sense of humor. Of course it was bizarre. Of course I knew it wouldn't happen. (Didn't we all, except those poor deluded people who did?) But I just couldn't get into a ha-ha or mockery mode over this. I wasn't surprised by the jokes from the secular folks, but I was surprised, I have to say, by all the jokes from Christians. I don't know why I'm feeling just a little cranky about that, but I am. Maybe I just wish we'd laugh as hard over the false prophets behind the ads for cereal, cars, Tim Hortons, you name it, that promise transcendence, the good life, justice through consumption.

3. On May 22, the end is still near. At least for me. *Memento mori*. (Remember that you must die. Remember your mortality.) Lord, have mercy.

4.

A poem by Czeslaw Milosz posted by Debra Dean Murphy at her Facebook page touched me the most in the days leading up to May 21. I don't pretend to understand what the poet intends here — I find it provocative, really — but it has me reflecting on everything so new and green this Sunday after two days of rain, and the meaning of “End,” and how we might expect yet still overlook it. With thanks to DDM for the link, here's [“A Song on the End of the World”](#) by Czeslaw Milosz, translated by Anthony Milosz. It was written in 1944, that is, in the context of the Second World War.

Originally posted at [Borrowing Bones](#).