

Chapter 1: Capitalism

What is best in life?

To care for one another, and to have adventures.

Capitalism has failed humanity on all counts for living our best lives.

Technology can help us do both of these things, building societies where all physical needs are taken care of as well as which preserve the adventure that makes life worth living. However, as technology has advanced it has increasingly served its own needs. It has such a powerful overall positive effect on the human condition that we have let the rules of technical progress dictate the rest of our society. As I discuss in the next section of this chapter, I have some theories I will present here about the nature of this technical progress structure and how it's falling apart.

What is Capitalism?

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What is capitalism? This is something that critics of it avoid a lot of the time to their detriment. If you look up various definitions, it generally goes something like this: "Capitalism is the economic system in which the

means of production are privately owned." I hate this definition, and I think it's held back our collective effort to fight it for the last 150 years.

What this definition implies is that the opposite of capitalism is someone other than "the private owners" or "the capitalists" owning the "means of production", and "economics" being based on something other than private capital. I put all these things in scare quotes because I see them all as subtle weapons to inject hidden ideology into peoples minds by the very wording of the definition. First of all, the anarchist rejection of capitalism rejects ownership of minerals, land, and machines. So any definition that talks about "who owns what" should already be rejected by the anarchist, and we have already ceded a major point by allowing this definition to stand at all unexamined. Capitalism is a system in which some people, called "owners", claim to have power over certain things which they claim the right to carry out by force if needed. Capitalism is a system in which a military state exists which both feeds of the system of privately owned extraction and enforces the power structure that governs it.

The "means of production" is also a problematic phrase. While it is a bit ambiguous, I see this phrase as at least potentially implying that this the "means" is some sort of fixed infrastructure. The implication is

that "the means of production" is a thing that exists outside of economic systems, which can be controlled by any of various types of government or state. This is total bullshit. The very structure of "production" in today's society is what I would call capitalism. The Soviet system, the various fascist systems, "democracies", dictatorships, monarchies, I would say every single one of them is capitalist. They all have this basic structure of military power creating a monopoly of force that protects a vast system to extract mineral wealth and destroy it as fast as possible by constant threat of violence. To me calls to "seize the means of production" sound like calls against a king to go seize the palace and tell the king what to do but to keep the palace and king in place. It's the same system, with slight changes. So to let the capitalists define these ideas gives them a victory before a debate even begins: it allows that the existing "means of production" should continue to exist without discussion. A true challenge to capitalism is one in which the very concept of production is reinvented. It means building industrial technology from the ground up around different values.

Another problem is with the notion of "economic system". I would argue that economics is again a part of the intellectual descent of the basic idea of the One God of monotheists. There is a Universal Heierarchy that exists, which allows numbers to be

used to assign value to things. Human value becomes a number, always either less than or greater than or equal to any other numerical human value. Part of rejecting the basic ideas of capitalism is to reject this hierarchy cast down from God. But to even use the phrase "economic system" again lets capitalism be defined in a universe in which nothing other than capitalism exists.

Indeed in some of the definitions I've found online they even add phrases like "as opposed to State ownership of the means of production". In other words the supposed definition of capitalism used by most people is not a definition of capitalism at all, but a clever propaganda piece that creates a world in which the alternative to capitalism is another type of capitalism which is re-cast as the Socialist Enemy. Since I consider all the Soviet style "communist" countries to be capitalist in their philosophical worldview, I find it not surprising that they hold the same warped view of this false dichotomy. The communists can point to "capitalism" as their enemy, where "the ruling class" "own" the "means of production", rather than "the dictatorship of the proletariat". When this becomes a nightmare like it always does and destroys the environment even worse than "capitalism", people on the right say "I told you so" and people on the left say "it will be different next time! it's all Stalin's fault!".

So if we really want to move beyond capitalism, criticisms of it need to start trying to really see it for what it is, and see just how far the viral ideas about God that underly it have wormed their ways into the very language we use to describe it.

I will give capitalism the following definition:

Capitalism is a system of belief in which numbers are used to denote all value.

That, I believe, is the heart of the matter. And it points to why experiments like the USSR have ended up having problems so similar to those in the western capitalist world. In a word, money. Money is not just metal or paper or faith in a government, it is the idea that a number, specifically an integer number (money can usually be subdivided but only up to a point) can be used to denote all human values. This is why I believe the concept is so slippery, and so hard to break out of. You can replace dollars with time dollars, bit coin, gold, silver, bags of salt or gold-backed e-dinar and it's really all the same thing: numbers. Integer numbers. As long as there is an exchange rate between a system of value and an existing currency you have not really broken free of the current system.

And what is money? The purity of numbers has proven to be incredibly powerful. Users of the number based values have literally moved mountains with the power

they have been able to deploy using money. In particular money based values have been excellent at several things, some of which are good but most of which are bad. I will now explore the nature of money more specifically.

The Nature of Capitalist Money

Our currency is based on two things:

1. suffering
2. and minerals

Turning minerals and human misery into numbers is capitalism in a nutshell, and is the basis of our monetary system.

Capitalism is an industrial system in which all value is based on human misery and minerals. By creating misery, some people use threats of violence to control land. They use more minerals, fire, and misery to create minerals ordered with a precision based on their belief in violence and control through military order. The threat of inflicting misery using military technology(not only is our technology military, our concept of military is based on our technology as well, and both are based on the One God beliefs) is how

some people known as capitalists claim "ownership". Ownership is a complex network of violent threats which allow threats of future misery and benefits paid from past misery to be added up numerically, building a ladder of power down which the physical benefits of mineral wealth slowly trickle, with the most landing at the top.

Any proposal to reform capitalism that maintains concept of numerical adding up of suffering and minerals is just capitalism with a new mask on. True reform means finding a set of moral values that informs technological figures of merit which are based on human joy, adventure, hilariousness, beauty, or other things that actually have positive value for everyone, and then re-builds our whole concept of what it means to have a technology up from scratch.

To repeat: to attempt to reform capitalism while continuing to use any of our current technology at all is a lost cause. The ideas of capitalism are built into the position of every atom in a modern technical artifact. If you want a world without capitalism you must re order every atom, completely re design how atoms go together from the bottom up. And in building this it makes sense to acknowledge that 300-400 years of industrial capitalism gave us the gift of minerals, which we can now live on forever.

Every atom. Every atom changes in how it relates to

the whole. Same physics, same atoms, but new ordering principles, breaking out of the military design concepts. No more are the ideal shapes always planes, circles, and perfect grid arrays of objects. No more are tech artifacts locked into a centrally controlling clock that tells them when to work and what to do. No more is there a wall between engineer and customer, where some things are known and some are secret: all information on construction is physically encoded in the artifact, and updated as more edits are made, even if the user does not document(data stream into the dataverse).

Capitalism as Religion

Capitalism is the hidden religion. It does not admit to being a religion and its believers(at this point almost all humans) do not realize they are in this religion but they are. Even members of various other religions decry people leaving their flocks for the "secular" world but won't directly name this as a competing religion. But a religion it is, complete with odd beliefs of all kinds.

In my observation, the beliefs of capitalism include:

1. Private property is sacred
2. All value can be added up using numbers
3. All value must be extracted from the Earth or from human misery
4. Human society is described by something

called an "economy", which is a system for laundering mine products and human misery into numerical media of exchange

5. Hard work is an intrinsic good
6. Our world can all be described by a giant hierarchy, people, animals, objects, gods, ideas, all are always ranked and this ranking is ordained by the highest authority, whatever that is.

I believe that number worship is an underlying hidden religion that is integrated into all other modern mainstream capitalist religions. What is monotheism? It is the belief that there is only one true god. But this implies that you can count gods. That is the underlying assumption. It separates parts of the universe that are god from non-god in a rigid way, breaking up gods or potential gods into discrete numbers that one can count, rank, and ultimately then put one on top of all others. From this we get hierarchy of all kinds down through the ages and all the horrors of capitalism. But if you are a monotheist note that your One True God is almost certainly also a universal part of your world. So what makes you believe you can count gods? This other, hidden, religion that is required to phrase the questions and answers about your god using numbers. So do not take my attacks on the structure of industrial monotheism as an attack on your One God--I do not deny your god, merely your ability to

count gods.

That being said, I do think this counting has led to other problems in industrial monotheism which must be combated, namely patriarchy. Monotheistic religions have a strong tendency to extend the counting hierarchy from their bearded man-god down to all Things, building an instant patriarchy into their world view. Don't do that!

Number worship, the belief in numbers as a superior picture of reality than other models. BBC documentary on history of numbers is actually blatant capitalist religious propaganda nonsense. Vietnam war, big data, the very word "rational", always the assumption that number-based ideas are superior than ideas not based on numbers.

Professionalism: A Capitalist Cancer

I am against professionalism in all forms.

Professionalism divides us. We have split up philosophy, physics, chemistry, biology, design, manufacturing, theology, art, and technology, and very much to the detriment of them all.

I'm against engineering and design as professions.

While specialization can be useful, I believe our society

has created a soul-less techno-priest class which is evil enough in its very nature that technology needs to be re-built from the ground up outside that system. If your technology needs the techno priests to function, it means your technology sucks and needs to be replaced. If it needs extraction of raw materials from the earth or any control over large tracts of land in a centralized way to function it is bad technology and needs to be replaced. If it requires secrecy or proprietary control of information and use it is bad technology. If it can't function without capitalism it is bad technology and needs to be replaced.

Specialization is fine up to about 100 people then it is a luxury for special projects. If you need someone who makes up less than 1% of the population to do something your technology needs a reset and it is bad. Our goal is total freedom for 100 people.

We need to start over from scratch and build a technology without the existing techno priests which can be built and maintained by anyone with the desire to do so, using waste streams of the old system. This has to happen in thousands of parallel tracks in many different fields of applied science and technology. I will focus on the parts relevant to my area of expertise: applied physics.

Capitalism Stifles

Innovation,

has held us back for 50 years

obsession with novelty over functionality and with dividing up lines between fields which hold back all the tools, making useless mono-tools instead of general tools.

Also a major point to make sure is in here is about ownership, and how the concept of ownership is not just IP but novelty and getting stuff named after you and all that. We need to change how we think of achievement and eliminate the concept of ownership if we are to get the full benefit of ideas. I aim to prove in these pages that capitalism in addition to a moral failure is a technical failure, that the underlying philosophical ideals of capitalism have prevented technical progress in all of our lives. Ownership is always wrong. All property is immoral and holds back progress.

Why Now?

Now is the time for *drastic* change unique in our history.

Why now in particular?

Both the positive and negative sides: danger to humanity is imminent, but also opportunity is greater

than ever before because of the vast mineral wealth that is everywhere and a critical mass of processing and communication technology. Marx was about 100 years early, and didn't have access to the information or materials we do today. Globalization and Capitalism really have literally sewn the seeds of their own destruction, by creating seeds for millions of new societies by spreading mineral wealth everywhere around the globe.

The very destruction of capitalism focuses us on the better future in several ways. For one thing, the sections of society most exploited or crushed by capitalism are often also those closest to the massive waste and destruction streams of the present system. Often the poor and dispossessed live near dangerous waste which also contains what could be priceless mineral wealth if we had the technology to bring it back. Wherever you find the most oppressed people you will also usually find the most ruined land with the most material waste. Just like the people our economy casts aside, these materials often exist outside the ownership system, they are claimed by no one and valued negative or not at all by our economic system. But this creates a potential opportunity to build very rich new forms of industry that exist without ownership or money: built by people who no one pays, made from materials considered "toxic waste" by the ownership society, and given freely to a community

who also owns nothing undermines the entire structure of the existing system.

This connection between the people and the materials cast aside is what Trash Magic is really about. People who's time capitalism does not value can use the materials it does not value to truly work magic: to build great works of art that we can live off of using the powers of our minds.

Purpose of this Book

This book is a manifesto. That is, "...a public declaration of the purpose, principles, or plan of action of a group or individual.", as it's described on manifestos.net.

Note that novelty is not my goal. I believe that the obsession with novelty in applied science is a toxin of capitalism and that by ignoring where ideas come from and using them as needed, with no expectation of novelty that much faster and better progress can be made. This work comes from the heart and mind of one person but none of that comes from just me: I assume everything I say here has been said elsewhere and that I've been exposed already to most of what I present here, in various forms, in books I've read or from people I've talked to.

Paths Out of Capitalism

I'm against the machine. That's what this is all about. I hate industrialized society, and I resent that the good products of it are used to hold us all hostage to the totality of The Machine. The military machine, the capitalist machine, the consumerist machine, the extraction of raw materials machine, the political machine, all of it. We're told that if we it's all or nothing. Don't like nuclear bombs? No vaccines for you. Sick of the Internet giants controlling your life? Well, I hope you like writing letters by hand, asshole, you must be a Luddite. That's the message over and over from the mainstream of society.

I challenge all that. I say that the course of the last 300 years of industrial development has not been just fixed by some immutable laws of nature but has in fact been the product of decisions made which could very well have been made differently while still learning how the world works and how to make useful technology to better navigate that world.