

The Sensationalist: #9

11/9/22

“You worship what you need; you need the game”⁹⁹



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Charles Clarence Hays 3: In Requiem

Rake

Life is but a race against time
Within a cave of your own mind
Lost searching for the light
Left crying in the night
Trying to sleep as your cold anxieties
Drip but even then, in the dead of night
you will soon find rest
And eventually the drips will crystallize
And all but stop
Creating stalactite and stalagmite
Beautiful remnants of those dark
Hopeless nights when it seemed relief
Would never come, but in time it did
And those carvings on the wall turn from
Fresh wounds to scars that have set
The art of memory and the building
Of time. As life moves on by.
And even when the drips don't stop
And relief is miles away, no single step
Is beyond your power
So my son just continue on your way
And one day
The rain will cease
Giving way to a new sunny day
Please... never give up on the way

Opting Out of the U.S. Tax System

Henry Levitt

I'm a walking political policy think tank. And I don't mean this to brag; I would be hard pressed to point to a week in which I don't come up with at least one new policy idea. However, most of my policies are infeasible, unpopular, or downright idiotic--except this one. This policy is a triumph for both libertarians and people sick of self proclaimed libertarians' incessant and unsuccessful mating call of "taxation is theft". I call it, "Opting Out of the U.S. Tax System".

Abstract: This policy, Opting Out of the US Tax System, would give every U.S. adult citizen, earning under a certain income threshold, the option to not pay any taxes on the federal, state, and local level. However, individuals who choose to do this will not receive any free or discounted government services or benefits. Instead they must pay the "market price" or calculated price in full for each service. They do, however, receive the benefit of choosing which services they necessitate.

Technicalities: Individuals who opt out must earn below a certain income threshold. This is for two reasons. Firstly, higher earners naturally owe more to the government and their fellow citizens for providing the stability necessary, largely through economic means, to be as prosperous as they are. Secondly, it is infeasible that the government would collect enough tax revenue to operate if the top 10% of earners, and especially the top 1%, did not pay taxes (though it is debatable whether the latter group currently pays enough). A fair threshold is one standard deviation or less of the average income in the opter's state of residence.

Another technicality I would like to make clear is that only individuals can opt out of taxes, not businesses, companies, corporations, organizations, etc.

Finally, when an individual chooses to opt out of taxes, he or she does not have to pay any tax at all with exception to inheritance and gift tax unless both individuals (or decedent) chose to opt out in the fiscal year in which the gift or inheritance occurred. There will also be something called a "regulatory fee" which resembles sales tax, though there are key differences that will be discussed later. But of course, there will be no income or property tax.

The monies collected through services discussed below will be shared (where applicable) between the levels of government.

Now let's get into the weeds... First I will start with a discussion regarding specifics and logistics of the most common services, then I will open the discussion to some more niche services provided by the government.

Roads: The right to use roads will likely be the most common subscription service, as such, the logistics regarding their use ought to be robust and equitable. Firstly, an opting individual will be required to pay one price to use all roads--there will be no "plans" delineating between regions of road use or divisions between federal, state, and municipal roads. This is because Americans' tax dollars go towards funding all U.S. roads directly or indirectly and any plan to divide the roads one opts to pay for will be unnecessarily complex. Besides, almost all roads are connected to one another. The type of vehicle or vehicles one has registered will be a determining factor for the subscription fee because larger, heavier vehicles naturally cause more wear on roads. Ideally, the subscription price for the road service will be as close to the per capita rate for total governmental road expenditures. There are indubitably many other factors which will necessarily make a difference, but the goal is to prevent both government profit and deficit while maintaining a notion of equity.

There also ought to be an established system in which one can prove their payment (such as license tags and database information), as well as a fine for individuals who opted out of the tax system yet continue to use services they did not pay for.

Public Schools: This will be another extremely common service that opting individuals can choose to pay for. The pricing for this is much more straight-forward. It will simply be the school district's total operating costs divided by the number of students it services. This will be the yearly tuition per child.

Emergency Services: Emergency services are an interesting topic because it is where this policy is pushed to its extreme. Naturally, a government ought to strive to protect its citizens' safety. Therefore with this policy, which may dissuade tax-free individuals from calling emergency services in a crisis or even take extreme measures themselves, there exists a contradiction in interests. However, I will be taking the approach to this issue that even a benevolent government does not owe its non-tax paying citizens anything. To bring this back to the policy itself, opting individuals must choose either to pay a yearly subscription to emergency services--almost like an insurance measure--or pay the calculated hourly price for emergency services when the assistance is requested. For criminal matters especially, there does arise the issue of further expenses accumulated beyond police intervention, such as court operating costs, inmate housing in prison, all the involved salaries etc. These expenses, and many others that I will call "systems and safety" do not have a direct translation to subscription services that do not resemble a form of tax. However, I will discuss a solution below.

Systems and Safety: Because this policy aims to appease the "taxation is theft" crowd, I will give one alternative solution to a mandatory "systems and safety" fee. Before I do so, I would like to illustrate the many government services that fall under this category. Firstly, the department of defense, national guards, homeland security, FBI, CIA, TSA, and the list goes on. Next is court fees, litigator salaries, judge salaries, prison costs, etc. Also within the mix are regulatory agencies that protect broad public health, economic health, and land management. Of course there are many other governmental bureaucracies that naturally fall into the "systems and safety" category; I have only scratched the surface here. However, to reconcile these costly programs without jumping straight to a tax, a mandatory number of government work hours can be instituted. This would mean that opting individuals would be legally required to help out some government institution, without pay, in order to fulfill the "systems and safety" requirement. This would prevent deficits from accumulating and allow right-leaning libertarians to keep all their precious dollars and become involved in the community.

Social Services: Social service subscriptions will mirror that of the above policies in which an individual can choose to pay into the social service coffers, for example, in order to receive the benefit, albeit many years down the road. However, there is one difference. Once an individual opts out, they cannot buy back in unless they pay all the missing dues in the years since opting out. When an individual opts out, though, they receive the total capital they paid into the program, but no safety net.

Regulatory Fee: As there are many government institutions that protect the consumer (namely the FDA and Federal Trade Commission), there is a fee attached to products for the labor involved in regulation. Products which are affected by such agencies, which is most, will carry a per cent fee based on the type of product

purchased. This is not a sales tax but instead a recuperation of costs for the consumer protection that certain agencies provide.

Other: Of course there are a whole host of other government programs that are either free or reduced cost for tax paying citizens. This includes libraries, public parks, the DMV, healthcare, UPS, public transit, and the list can go on and on. Within the opting out plan, all the services provided will be assessed for their true cost per capita of users. It is this cost that opting individuals will have the option to pay if they desire such a service. There are certain programs that would not fit under the current paying paradigm proposed in this policy, however, I am confident that there exists a solution to circumvent taxation while also allowing the government to recoup its costs.

Within this plan, individuals will finally be required to pay no tax if they so choose, and can instead determine which government programs and services they require. And there will always be the free market as another option to government-sponsored services. Some will be able to save marginal amounts of money. Others will be content with the political morality they gained. And still others will finally realize the foolishness of the stance "taxation is theft". But with the policy of "Opting Out of the U.S. Tax System", U.S. citizens will finally have the option to be completely economically free. And with this, I finally hope to silence the insufferable complaints of self-proclaimed "libertarians" who truly do not understand a lick of political theory.

Ode to an Ignorance Rose

Henry Levitt

Growing faithfully upon the vine,
The safe haven from your apathetic foes
like a nursery, youth's timeless shrine,
I beg you, shrivel, my Ignorance Rose.

Tormentor! Tormentor! To death I say!
...O' but how sensual your nose,
March to the gallows with your bouquet!
Alas, please stay, O' my Ignorance Rose.

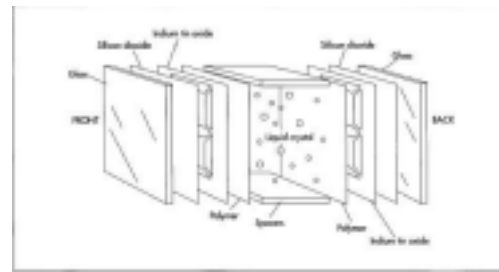
Your blood red beauty opines for naught.
In that blissful stupor illusion shows
unto blind eyes. And your love wrought
glowing iron to a ring, my Ignorance Rose.

Like a solitary migratory bird
I am condemned to flit with meager, lonely repose
And with naivete that is laughably absurd,
I pray you relinquish your grip O' my Ignorance Rose.

Liquid-Crystal displays

Leo Santisi

Liquid-Crystal displays are electronic display devices that utilize the light-modulating properties of liquid crystals combined with polarized filters in order to produce electronically manipulated imagery.



There are 5 major stages to LCD production and assembly.

1. Glass substrates

- Two glass substrates are cut to size, polished, and washed.
- Cutting can be done by using a diamond saw or scribe, and polishing involves a process called lapping, in which the glass is held against a rotating wheel that has abrasive particles embedded in it.
- After being washed and dried, the substrates are coated with a layer of silicon dioxide.
- The silicon dioxide prevents ions on the glass sheets from touching any moisture, which would alter the electric field pattern and liquid crystal alignment and therefore prevent the product from functioning as intended.

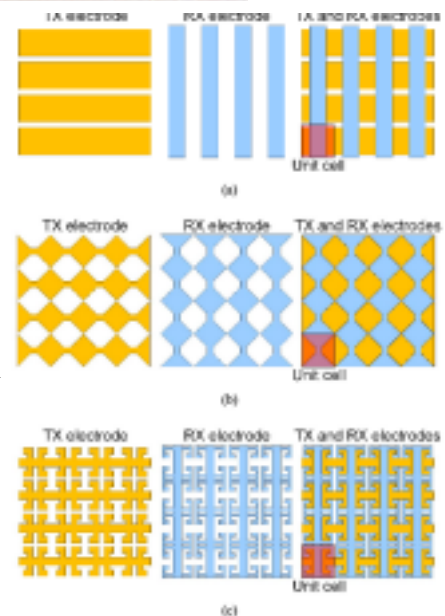
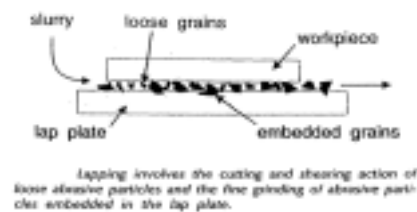


Fig. 7 The view of the TX, RX, and TX and RX electrodes in the

2. Electrode pattern

- An electrode pattern then must be “etched” onto the surface of the substrates. These electrodes are instrumental to the function of the display.
- They are applied by coating both front and rear glass surfaces with a very thin layer of indium tin oxide, and then chemically “scraping” away the areas of indium tin oxide that are not desired by using a manufactured mask.
 - There are other methods to accomplish this, but the indium tin oxide application is the most widely used.
- Regardless of the method, the patterns on the two substrates are designed to overlap only in specific places, so that no electrodes show up unintentionally.

3. Polymer Application

- A uniform layer of polymer is then layered onto the glass substrates and is cured, allowing the material to set. The surface is rubbed in a uniform direction in order to ensure the LCDs are all oriented the same way, ensuring proper function.

4. Sealant Application & Liquid Crystal Injection

- A sealing resin is applied onto the substrates.
- The liquid crystal material is then injected into the small space between the two glass substrates.
 - Since proper thickness is crucial for cell operation LCD manufacturers sometimes need to put appropriately sized glass fibers or beads in the liquid crystal material that help hold the cell at the proper thickness while the sealant material is setting.
- To make the LCDs more visible, polarized filters are added.

Manufacturers glue the polarizers to the glass and cover it with a plastic protective film to let it settle. Manufacturers

also make reflective polarizers, also used in LCDs, by using simple foil reflectors.



5. Assembly

- After the polarizers are attached, all that's left for the product to do is to let it age, and let all of the applied substances settle. When the LCD assembly is finally done, it is mounted to the circuit boards that contain control and drive electronics. These electronics will obviously vary depending on the device.
- Some devices that utilize Liquid-Crystal Displays are:
 - Fax machines
 - Computer monitors
 - Wristwatches



Walking the Dogs

Connie Mindell

Smell every grass blade
Sniff every leaf
Then there is the pit stop
For a needed relief



Keynes was an Evil Man &

Economic Theory Based on Keynesian Model

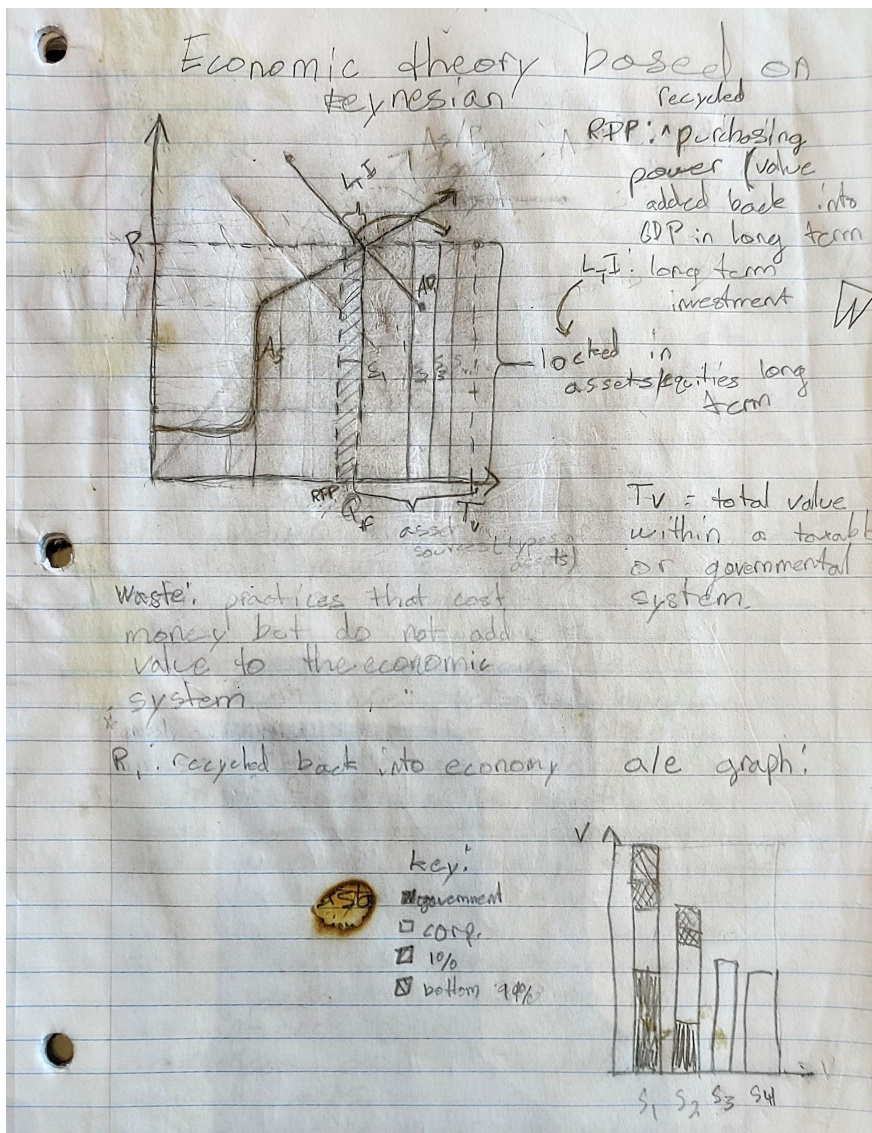
Henry Levitt

Two days ago (November 7th) I was passing by an open space right after class when I heard the most exciting thing--a preacher yelling at us depraved and condemned college students for sinning and stuff. For those who don't know, arguing with religious zealots is my favorite after-class pastime. I do it religiously, nay, with an almost physical compulsion, when the opportunity arises. Usually I will have some topic in mind to engage these lovable figures with, but on Monday, I felt the urge to go straight for the jugular. I asked said preacher how he can prove his argument isn't circular (of course an impossible task). After engaging in mild anti-question-begging, I dismantled his argument until he exposed the metaphorical chinks in his biblical armor that I was looking for. The claim, in so many words, was that the Bible is the true word of God because a character in it declared it to be so. Instead of accepting his truth like you may expect from me, I declared myself to be the second coming of Christ and the notebook in my backpack was the new New Testament. And how did I know it was true? Because I, the son of God, declared it to be so.

An adjunct preacher (a secondary preacher who approached during the heated debate) wanted to take a look at the new word of God that I proposed, and

curiously, the biggest issue he had with my notebook was that I included a farcical economic model based on the Keynes model within it--not the fact that I had just declared to be the literal son of God. And the biggest issue herein was that Keynes was apparently an evil man--again, not that I had claimed to be the second coming of Christ or had random bullshit in my Bible...

So as two preachers begin yelling at me about esoteric economic theories, I came to realize that Keynes was far more evil than your common homosexual--he's the devil reincarnated! Who knew extremist protestants held such refined animosity towards 20th century economists? Naturally they must support communism as opposed to modern capitalism, right?...it turns out, there actually is one man more evil than Keynes. His name starts with an M and rhymes with "parks". Unbeknownst to me he ate, or possibly still eats babies. It wasn't clear as to whether they believe Marx to be alive currently or not. Anyway, here's the economic theory from my Bible:



Disclaimer: I'm still trying to decipher this chart. I wrote it late at night during one of my characteristic topic binges I often partake in while high on THC and bored. This, you guessed it, was an economics binge.

THE POINTLESS PANTS PROJECT (P.P.P.) UPdAtE

This was a week of procurement, so to speak. I purchased heavy duty velcro, found scrap fabric, and located a sewing machine that I am free to use at certain times. While I am disappointed with my sluggish progress, the impetus of finally having the necessary materials is enough to get me to actually start working, and failing (a lot).

This has been The Sensationalist: #9

“Ho-hum...ho-hum. Ho-hom, ho-hom. Ho-hummmmm”