**AFTERWORD**  
  
I meant to end this book by discussing the blockchain’s impact on physical violence, on crimes of violence. I can’t. I don’t think there is an impact. I don’t know how the blockchain can prevent back-alley rapes, for example. I could talk about putting sex work on an open ledger, but that would be weak tea, and it would feel like an evasion. This is a book of original theory, which explores what has never been said before about cryptocurrency. I don’t always know where the ideas are taking me. But the impact on physical violence isn’t one of those destinations.  
  
And, so, I am writing the afterword to my book, instead.  
  
My journey through cryptocurrency began in a kitchen in Chile. I was the featured speaker at a conference that also presented a panel of three experts on Bitcoin. My husband and I decided to rent a house through airbnb because we wanted to extend the couple of days into two weeks of bouncing around the country, which was magical. The house we ended up in, however, was outfitted for weddings. Translation: There were no fewer than thirty beds crammed into about twenty rooms that were linked by floors that consisted of cracked plywood below which there was a two-story drop. It wasn’t a house; it was an adventure, with one working bathroom. I prefer to consider it quaint.  
  
The conference housed the speakers and attendants on a remote compound, which quickly filled up. The organizers asked us to put up the Bitcoin experts. We gladly agreed. They were pleasant, presentable fellows—albeit men who spoke of matters that made no sense to me. Fortunately, my husband develops hardware and software for embedded systems, so I am used to not always understanding things.  
  
And, then, there was the morning after they arrived. One fellow slept in. One insisted on cooking breakfast; I do not mean to cast aspersions upon him, because he was very pleasant and trying to be a good guest. But people do not cook around me. I cook; you eat; we get along fine. He cooked.  
  
So I was in a cranky mood when I stared across the breakfast table into the coal- black eyes of Michael Goldstein, whom I later learned **is** the Satoshi Institute. A remarkable young man. Michael is nicknamed Bitstein by those who have affection for him…and, really, all you have to do is meet him for that to happen. When I looked into his eyes, I had an oh-so-familiar feeling because I do have mirrors in my own bathroom. “This is a fanatic,” I concluded. I happen to like fanatics, depending on the topic under discussion, of course. And I had nothing against the topic of Bitcoin, which had started to interest me because so many people I admired took it so darned seriously.  
  
With an unwavering stare, Bitstein told me the blockchain was an open ledger that delivered anarchy. Okay. I immediately understood the power of crypto to bypass the central banking system…*if* it was widely adopted; *if* it was not outlawed, *if*… But anarchy?  
  
All my reservations were political and entirely different than those of my husband, who joined us after about fifteen minutes. Brad waited until Michael took a breath, and then he said one word: “scalability.” It was the first time Michael stumbled. He said, “we’re working on that.” I saw Brad lose some interest.  
  
I didn’t. I didn’t know what scalability meant in this context, except in the definitional sense. But I didn’t care because the word “anarchy” had been uttered, and *that* I knew about. Michael seemed more than happy to leave behind scalability for politics, and I pursued why he thought the dawn of freedom had arrived like the cavalry on an algorithm.  
  
Michael answered, and he did not convince me, but he did prompt me to read. As did my old friend Jeff Tucker. As did the incredible Stephan Kinsella. Other people tried to raise my awareness, as well. Mihai Alisie, of Bitcoin Magazine, asked me to write for him on anarchism, for example. I don’t think I adequately thanked the man for having such confidence in me. And, at that point, his confidence was probably ill-founded. I submitted one article to *Bitcoin Magazine*, which was far from my best work. It drew a better response than I deserved: they were willing to “work with me.” I thanked the editor, and backed away with the absolutely genuine excuse that I did not know if I had anything original to contribute to the discussion. I had nothing new to say. I had not yet grasped the hard, cold edges of  
  
crypto theory, and I did not understand its power. Which meant I had not yet staked out the one area where I could and can contribute something original: the integration of crypto-anarchism with the rich history of anarchist-libertarian theory that has spanned centuries.  
  
As I read further, I became ashamed of myself. Crypto-anarchism: the most important political development in my lifetime had occurred without my noticing it happening, which is inexcusable. I had spent my time on “official” libertarianism— donation-driven and donation-defined institutes, tax-funded universities, academic journals. When did freedom ever come packaged in tax dollars, awards, and honors delivered at rubber-chicken dinners? Freedom is a street fight. Crypto- anarchism took over the streets without my noticing. I notice now.  
  
Enter Roger Ver. Our first contact was an email that he sent out of the blue. Roger’s email “had” me at hello, because he used the word “voluntaryism.” In 1982, I was one of three people who created the modern Voluntaryist movement during a bull-session in a two-bedroom rent-controlled apartment in Hollywood, California. I remember my fingertips literally buzzing from the excitement of the ideas and plans we were forging back then: Carl Watner, George H. Smith, and me. But, mostly, Carl. It was and is almost unbelievable to me that, decades and decades later, a voluntaryist visionary named Roger would be knocking on my door (so to speak). He asked me to write for his site.  
  
Roger had good timing. In science-fiction language, I had finally *grokked* bitcoin; I tip my hat to Robert A Heinlein for that word, BTW. I also tip my hat to Roger and the entire bitcoin.com crew for never—and I mean not once, in any manner whatsoever—trying to influence the ideas as I spun them out in my sometimes clumsy attempt to integrate crypto-anarchism into the broader traditions of classical liberalism, Austrian economics, and individualist anarchism.  
  
Assembling the book turned into a massive rewrite followed by a period of fierce editing. The book before you now is based on the columns I serialized at bitcoin.com, but at least half of the material is new—the section on justice especially.  
  
Before closing, I must address another aspect of crypto-anarchism. I did not expect this side benefit, but there you have it; life is often unexpected. Crypto has made me young again.  
  
I had the immense good fortune to befriend and to spend many years with people who helped to found the modern libertarian movement. Murray Rothbard used to joke at conferences in the 1980s that libertarianism could be eliminated by one well-placed bomb. He was correct. Now it is immense.  
  
There is a downside to my great good fortune, however. The people with whom I grew into intellectual adulthood now make me feel old, mostly because so many of them are dead; I was usually the youngest one in the room. Feeling old is feeling tired, with nothing in sight that makes your eyes sparkle.  
  
I remember Murray, and his passion—I remember it so vividly. But, over years, something went wrong with his passion. It came from anger, I think, and it was expressed by attacking other people. I remember an after-conference dinner at which a fellow diner had the misfortune to say something positive about Keynes. And, then—God help us all!—he elaborated. Murray finally exploded into a rant in his Brooklyneque-squawk of a voice, and the fellow started to back down. I think he would have backed his chair out of the restaurant, if that had been a possibility. He conceded that Keynes may have been wrong on “this” issue, and on “that” one, and Keynes was probably weak on historical context. Murray slammed his open hand down on the table and declared, “And Hitler was ‘weak’ on the Jews!” Everyone laughed, but it was an attack, nevertheless, and a harbinger.  
  
Crypto sparkles like a spinning thing in the sun, and the sparkle is clean, because it does not come from anger or from demeaning someone or something else. The passion is positive. A door has been flung open, and I don’t know where the path outside of it will lead me because I could never have predicted the path up to this point. Let it evolve.  
  
One thing I know. I am in good company; the bitcoin.com crew has been nothing but decent and grinning toward this woman who plopped down into their midst. This means the world to me. I don’t know where I will end up next, but I do know that technology—not merely crypto—is going to give us all a wild ride for the rest of our lives. I will have my hands on the keyboard, trying to put the dizzy changes into historical perspective, even as they happen.  
  
I have a chance of doing so…because I am young again. I am hopeful. And nothing, nothing is impossible. That’s what this book has meant to me. I pause in this journey to thank you for being part of it.