

# The Visceral Society

Essays on Human Rights in Modernity

Dann Stayskal



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For Ben Agger

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## **Preface**

This book began its life as a series of essays I wrote for a Social Theory capstone at the University of Texas at Arlington. There was a great deal of ground to cover in a single semester, from sociology and economics to psychology, cognitive science, and philosophy. These disciplines are integrated here to address questions of human rights and responsibilities in the modern era with specific treatment to constructions of statehood and society.

## **Be True**

It should be assumed that most rational beings possess some internal definition of truth, whether physical, spiritual, mental, or by some combination thereof. Without these innate understandings, no bearing could be had on fundamental social constructs that form and are formed by language, cognition, and interaction between people. I can't construct this description to encompass all people in all places at all times; in fact I doubt that such an objective summation of the "truth of truth" can be known.

My description will doubtlessly focus on the environment in which I live, the lower-middle class of an English speaking capitalist western-style democracy, gainfully employed in the sciences, thankfully able to study the arts at University. I'll examine the issue of truth through as many theories as I have available to me, in order to form the most complete representation thereof. This is an effort to document my current understanding of "truth", to provide a baseline against which to compare my later writings.

## **Why describe truth?**

In frequent discussions with friends and colleagues, I'm brought to the proposition that I only assume to know one thing: I am. From this, I can only define three properties: true, false, and undefined. Everything else is derived. By the former I state that I exist, which requires a definition of existence to be discussed later in this chapter. By the latter, I state that some measure of truth exists, and by derivation also falsehood. I don't believe these to be mutually exclusive or inclusive, by which I mean a property can be true (one), false (zero), both true and false (which means you've asked the wrong question or need a different perspective), or undefined (i.e. a null set). From this I derive that in all things I can have an effective understanding, or an ineffective one.

Most frequently, these definitions arise during qualitative discussions. In my social groups, discussions typically involve topics that divide opinions along a binary axis, whose qualifiers typically involve the concepts of "right" and "wrong." Derived from my belief only in self and truth, however, it can be stated that I don't automatically ascribe truth or falsehood to the objective, prescriptive notion of "right" versus "wrong" - only in descriptive "effective" and "ineffective." I'll discuss this notion of effectiveness also later in this chapter.

Development of a concept of truth carries important

derivatives, not the least of which are ethics (subjective, prescriptive notions of “right” versus “wrong”), epistemology (the study of that which can be known to be true), and hope (the expectation of things to come to be true). Incidentally, Immanuel Kant maintains these three questions as being central human concerns. Without a working definition of truth, it stands to reason that one can't know oneself, or begin to understand her or his position in an integrated society of selves.

### **Language, Cognition, Society, and Culture**

Language isn't right or wrong - it's only communicates effectively or ineffectively. I use the term “effective” here in the context of causality, as differentiated from mere correlation. Based on the understanding that language is fundamentally independent from the medium by which it's communicated (text, speech, sign language, body language, etc.) the speech act itself is the communication of meaning. This meaning, however, is fundamentally social.

In any communicative community, no one-to-one correspondences exist at any empirical level between the thoughts and underlying linguistic meanings (semantics) of any two thinkers or speakers. Even between two individuals who may have grown up in the same home, had the same group of friends, attended the same churches and schools, speaking the same

language, no two thoughts or words can be understood to have identical meanings, because “meaning” is fundamentally social, based on one's cognitive domain. Mathematically, Leibniz traditionally defines equivalence such that Two objects can be considered to be equivalent if every property of each applies also to the other.

Cognitive domains are inherently biased by qualia of perception, social interaction, and biology. No two perceptions of an object or action can be identical, so no two thoughts or words regarding those perceptions can be considered objectively equivalent. Arriving at effective equivalences in terminology can often-times be trivial, but for these reasons “objective meaning” can only be approached and approximated, never reached and defined.

By this understanding, language that doesn't communicate is inherently ineffective, and a language that can't communicate (generally by lack of an effective speech community), the language is considered dead. Text only communicates effectively if read by a member of a functional language community.

The question of hermeneutics addresses the interpretation of such texts from an ostensibly objective perspective. When applied to classical texts (those written in a dead language), there is an inherent question of definition of meaning. If documentation of the society and speech community using said language survive along with the text, a translation can be

effective. Consequently, the relationship is inverse between knowledge of a dead language's society to ambiguities inescapably introduced into a translation. In this context, and by derivative that of corpus analysis, the same proposition given earlier holds: effective understanding of the meaning of an expression increases directly with knowledge of the assumptions and prejudices of the society effectively communicating in a language.

In this evaluation, three types of knowledge emerge as effective application of truth to actions: perceptions, communications, and deductions. Perceptions include any truth learned or acquired by means of personal sensation or interaction with one's environment. Communications include any truth learned by social means, and deductions any truth discovered by causal analysis. Assumptions can then be understood to include any truth developed or accepted outside of a body of knowledge, typically claimed to be self-evident. In this theory, all knowledge comes from the assumption of self-being, as not to devalue the inherited property thereof.

Language, cognition, and culture are fundamentally social, and integrate to form a basis for observation, evaluation, and action based on concepts of truth and knowledge.



## **Observe, Evaluate, Act**

Perception requires observation, which is rooted in the question of ontology: the metaphysics of the nature of being. Objective ontologists aim to decontextualize, abstract, and remove all prejudices and assumptions from perceptions and interactions. In the context of definition of truth, this is useful, but not possible. According to Heisenberg, no object can be observed without the observer affecting that object. Relative ontologists maintain, however, that interpretation is always relative, based on prejudices and assumptions. Their goal is awareness, not empiricism. In the development of a reasoned definition of truth, this is possible, but not very useful. I don't hold these two perspectives to be mutually exclusive, however. By discussing the question from two perspectives, they identify border cases of the same (traditionally linear) model. In order for a truth to be effective, it must identify and attempt to effectively mitigate prejudices and assumptions, rather than eliminate them.

According to Heidegger, interpretation is existence, and existence interpretation. In this perspective, prejudice is a necessary precondition for interpretation, and therefore effective existence. No outside viewpoint exists. This is by nature a recursive definition, because we can't objectively construct a perspective of "our environment" or "our cognitive domain" assuming only the proposition of oneself (the Kant scandal). By

avoiding this cycle, however, the very concept of understanding (the effective perception of an intended meaning) is misunderstood. In order to shed light on this paradox (a question with simultaneous, mutually exclusive answers), a social perspective is needed.

A necessary and sufficient condition to action is thought, by means of language. Objects don't necessarily exist, only our perception of those objects and their properties. These properties can't be effectively acted upon (known), however, without some form of psycholinguistic qualia. The Sapir-Worf hypothesis claims a deterministic relationship between thoughts and language, which partially hold true in this case. Language is by nature, however, both creative and spontaneous - that is if a speaker lacks a word for something, or wants to communicate an utterance, that word doesn't have to pre-exist, and they don't have to have heard the utterance before. Even if representing an observed property or action solely to oneself, the externally social aspect of language is extended to internal representations of observations.

In short, to know oneself is an inherently social, cognitive, and linguistic activity that bridges Heidegger's paradox between interpretation and existence. By this I can now assume my environment can represent truth if I can effectively communicate the meanings (cognitive significance) I associate with the

properties of objects and actions within my cognitive domain.

### **Social applications**

Two of Kant's truth-derived questions remain, however: ethics, and hope. I expressed earlier in this chapter a non-belief in the objective notions of “right” and “wrong”. By all means, however, ethics are expressed in the subjectivity of effective and ineffective personal and observed actions in contexts. Morality can be understood, then, as social ethics.

Traditionally, ethics have been defined in the context of the “golden rule” and the Aristotelian “categorical imperative.” The former is frequently expressed as “do unto others as you'd have them do unto you,” the latter as “what would happen to society if everyone did as you do?” The intrinsic weaknesses in these propositions, however, come from lack of social diversity. Every individual has a unique perspective, which will yield unique actions. These actions tend to be constructive, however, as society and cognition are only effective through a combination of competition and cooperation (between selves or ideas). Both of these notions require effective interaction, which in turn require construction (through knowledge - perception, communication, deduction, or assumption) of commonalities between various individuals.

In order for society to function, it must be constructive;

language and cognition must therefore also be constructive. This lends itself to the Jungian notion of the collective subconscious, a system of moral dispositions present in his observation of human behavior: don't rob, don't kill, don't forsake your tribe / state / nation / country. I account for this as an evolutionary trait. Members of a society who can't control their urges to steal, kill, or desert their people simply don't pass on their genes as well as those who interact effectively and constructively with a society. The romanticized interpretation of this notion lends itself to an observed "universal morality," though I maintain (and I think modern criminal justice systems would agree) that individuals don't always possess such observable traits.

By describing the actions of myself and others, and gauging whether they've effectively communicated meaning or helped construct my social community, I can begin to prescribe actions for myself to these ends. Furthermore, I can communicate those prescriptions (ethics) to members of my social communities to form a collective morality of that community.

For what can I hope, then? I understand hope to be the expectation of things to become "true." In this framework, my only hope is in humanity, and in their effective communication and construction of society. This construction, by the code of ethics I've developed through observation and evaluation, and the subsequent morality I understand from my social communities

includes both cooperation and competition when either is necessary to further the existence of those societies.

Truth, then, is an expression in thought or language that effectively communicates my understanding of the properties or actions of an internal representation of or external perception of an object with myself or others in my cognitive domain, and by derivative also my social communities. This architecture of arriving at truth is versatile enough to also apply to personal applications (internal communication, thoughts,) and socially emergent behaviors (international relations).

To be sure, these aren't answers. This is simply part of my framework for effectively condensing knowledge and arriving at truth from the vapor of perception, deduction, communication, and one assumption: I am.

## **Human Intelligence**

Fundamental to the notion of an effective social theory is the construction of an understanding of social understanding. In this chapter, I outline cognitive theory from the standpoint of biological emergence, and its subsequent applications to social behavior

### **The Triune Brain**

The triune brain is MacLean's model of the brain in three parts: neomammalian, paleomammalian, and reptilian. The reptilian area corresponds to the cerebellum and brain stem, controlling survival-oriented and autonomic behaviors. The paleomammalian cortex represents the limbic system and olfactory region (previously known as the “rhinocortex” due to its tight coupling with the sense of smell). This area is overwhelmingly responsible for emotion and instinct. The third, and phylogenetically youngest area, is the neomammalian cortex, consisting of the cerebral cortex, is responsible for thinking, reasoning, social functions, and speech. The gestalt and essence of cognitive function, however, doesn't come from any single region in isolation: it comes from the connections between and

within the regions themselves.

Cognitive Science, loosely understood as the study of intelligence, thought, and mind, is enriched by this model through these studies of connection. In previous schools of thought, rational behavior was held to be the most important to humanity, more-so than emotional or survival-oriented behavior. While the latter is certainly more characteristic of and prevalent in humanity, any study of a whole is incomplete that doesn't account for the existence of the parts constructing it. Antonio Damasio makes the case that socially rational behavior is inexorably linked to the behaviors emergent from the cortices not typically linked to rationality - that is, a deficiency in emotional perception and expression leads to a deficiency in social rationality. In order to understand understanding, it benefits the study of cognition to examine not only the “understanding” (prefrontal) cortex, but also its links to the others, through the anterior cingulate, orbital prefrontal, and dorsolateral cortices. The study of the brain in three parts allows this to happen.

### **Thrownness**

Thrownness is Heidegger's philosophical concept of being thrown into a situation; that existence is interpretation, and interpretation existence. He argues that rationality, if taken in absence of other forms of thought, is socially counterproductive.

This counter-productivity leads to a non-existence of self, through his definition of definition. If a perceived object has no thought other than those influences it can have on an actor, or an actor on it, a non-actor becomes a non-self. His understanding of action, though, is broadened to include thought, language, as well as traditionally understood causative behaviors. If one can't act because of rationality - at the hand of exhaustive cost-benefit analyses between possible actions, that itself is an action, and that action lends itself to social counter-productivity. When thought is understood fundamentally to be social, the only rationality that exists is that which is paired with emotion, instinct, and survival-oriented behaviors. Heidegger maintains that this is the basic state of life, being thrown into situations in which the definition of existence is axiomatically action.

Cognitive science benefits from this notion in the same manner discussed above: no understanding of understanding will ever be effective if each section of the brain, and its commensurate drives are examined in isolation from each other. The whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts only when examining those parts as an cognitive "society of mind". When Heidegger's understanding of understanding is applied to each cortex of its own right, our understandings of rational, emotional, and survival oriented behaviors are necessarily broadened by the



notion that none of these three can be fundamentally defined until they initiate an action involving another of the sections. Furthermore, none of their constituent parts contain such definition without these same traits. Consequently, it can be understood that no model of the behavior of the mind can be complete without an overwhelming emphasis on the connections between neurons, regions, and systems being held in equal regard as the studies of those components themselves. The question isn't can a connectivist model reflect behavior, the question is which connectivist model does?

### **Emotional cognition**

Between the three main divisions of cognitive drives, rational, emotional, and survival-oriented, a hierarchical relationship emerges between the three. When presented with an array of choices survival and emotion drives act as filters of options presented to rational decision making processes.

Any human choice scenario presents an infinite array of possible actions. Even a choice as simple and common as where to go for lunch on a given day can be met with conventional choices such as a Chinese restaurant with which I'm familiar, a local taco chain, or returning home to cook and eat there. Alternatively, however, are the less-considered options of not eating lunch at all, standing on a street corner reciting Ginsberg's

Howl until sunset, or moving to Tibet to teach balalaika to yak farmers. The choice-options not typically presented to “higher” rational processes are left out because they either lack emotional charge, or operate counter-productively to personal or social survival.

These underlying motivations then operate as weighted tuning curves to condense a manageable array of actions from the infinite array of possible actions. These curves operate along Gaussian curves constructed by the outcomes and somatic markers associated with previous actions. With no previous experience to draw from, those possible actions we seldom consider are those with which we either have no experience, no emotional drive, nor any expectations for a socially fruitful future.

Survival-oriented drives are among the least rationally considered. If I'm experiencing hunger, I don't rationally decide to eat food - that's an underlying, reptilian drive. Middle-order drives, however, emerging from the limbic system, are taken on the assumption that the survival-order drives will be sated. When deciding where to eat lunch, I don't consider moving to Bratislava to take up a life of voluntary simplicity among a commune of multilingual academics, because that wouldn't sate my immediate drive: hunger. My emotional drives are then, “of those places which can assuage my hunger, these are the most emotionally charged: I had peanut butter for lunch and a can of

peas for dinner yesterday, so let's look at the handful of Chinese and Thai places in the area at which places I can afford to eat.”

By the time the decision options reach the rational decision making areas of the prefrontal cortex, two separate drives emerge: which lunch option makes the most sense, and “I don't know, where do you want to go?” The former identifies personal-preservative functions, the latter social-preservative ones. If I'm allergic to legumes, I'm probably not going to go to the Thai restaurant specializing in peanut chicken. If my lunch

partner ate at a certain place yesterday and wants some diversity, we need to consider that as well.

These delineations aren't finite, however. A peanut allergy can have emotional drives as well as rational ones: if knowingly eating peanuts made a person sick on previous occasions, those tuning curve will be constructed to not only exclude the knowing ingestion of peanuts in the future, but possibly also to make that person feel nauseous at the mere smell of peanuts in the future. The fact that all of these drives are expressed simultaneously or near-simultaneously, though, makes the consideration of “drives” pale in comparison to “drive matrices” or vectors.

This connection works the same way in reverse, however. When choosing which car to buy to replace an older, broken one, those who haven't fully developed rational behaviors will behave in a reptilian fashion. Large Sport Utility Vehicles such as Hummers play to this orientation by selling to the

phylogenetically oldest, lowest drives. A large car with lots of cup holders, room for family, and perceived protection from the outside world will win against the rational knowledge that the vehicle not only destroys the environment on which our species is inexorably based, but is many times more likely to roll over, catch fire, and summarily dispose of that consumer's branch of the species.

Marketers have known this for decades: selling to reptilian drives such as the perception of safety, sex, or socialization will win every time in the absence of more rational data. Without phylogenetically older (survival and emotional) drives, rational behavior would be impossible. A person can't decide what to eat for lunch if that person is thrown (in a Heideggerian sense) into a cost-benefit analysis of moving to Bratislava or Tibet instead of eating. Non-productive options need to be filtered so not to drown in freedom. Without phylogenetically higher functions, however, patterns which lead to personal and social survival and emotional well-being can't be identified and somatically marked for the benefit of future decisions and generations.

In this sense pure rationality and pure objectivity can't exist: they will always inexorably be tied to emotion for perpetuation of the species.

## **Artificial Intelligence**

Machines may be able to provide human-cooperative and human-competitive behaviors, but no machine can be capable of understanding on a part-for-part equivalence with humans, except for the specific type of machine we call humans.

For the same reason no complete one-to-one correspondence exists between languages or even idiolects, no one-to-one correspondence will ever exist between two understandings, because of separation of cognitive domains. When constructing models of artificial intelligence, however, first-generation systems such as ELIZA mimic surface behaviors, whereas second-generation systems mimic the behaviors of certain brain areas. Modern computational linguistics systems can use Liapunov or Markov models to effectively condense words from phonemes in a manner similar to the function of Broca's and Wernicke's areas, but in absence of communication with other models, these second-generation models will never exceed the sum of their parts in functionality.

Third-generation models will be built as a collection of second-generation models, integrating them to achieve more human-equivalent behaviors such as conversation or categorization, but while human-compatible, these will never be human-equivalent without biological conditions such as survival

drive, emotion, or the capability for regeneration (through birth or autopoiesis). In absence of these drives, an eliminative materialist construction of mind would suffice for an artificially intelligent system. Human behavior, however, is far too intractably squishy to emulate in this top-down fashion. With an understanding of human understanding as emergent from connections between areas consisting of smaller connections between smaller areas, themselves bundles of yet smaller connections between yet smaller areas, we can generalize traits of similar behaviors which benefit mitochondria, neurons, brain regions, organs, humans, and societies. It's turtles all the way down.

With an understanding of understanding as “human-equivalent”, then no human-equivalent intelligent system will ever be considered “artificially” intelligent. Ever thriving on ethnocentricity, the only definition of intelligence we could generate could be called “human”. This begs a redefinition of intelligence, outside the shell of the human condition. As discussed previously, this escape is impossible, due to the restrictions of cognitive domains - whether it's a human or a machine performing that cognition.

The measure of intelligence, then, for humans, comes from human compatibility. We see this in the anthropomorphism in treatment of house pets as well as the base fear of the unknown exhibited through the imposter syndrome pervasive in academia.

When a dog or cat performs a trick, we call them “intelligent” because they've managed to faithfully mimic a “human” action: learning from the environment, and adapting a behavior to fit. This happens in otters as much as humans or honeybees, though, so can't be considered indigenous to our species. When a dog learns a trick, it is “smart”, and when it doesn't, “not so smart”.

Likewise, the treatment of artificially intelligent systems suffers from the same treatment as that of academics, in that humans fear that which they don't understand. If a human (or honeybee or monkey) encounters an object in its cognitive domain, the overwhelming otherness (and overwhelming freedom) of it causes fear due to the lack of previous sight, speech, sound, breath, or meaning attached to it. This causes the construction of gods in societies as well as the vilification of research in the field of artificial intelligence. There are things which are unknowable, and accounting for these is the basis of truth.

Consequently, the understanding of understanding must necessarily be restricted to that which is human-indistinguishable in interaction. Until a machine intelligence is constructed in a compatible manner as a human (through evolution), using genetic algorithms, no intelligence will be human compatible. This necessarily excludes top-down constructions of intelligence, so called “weak” AI. The fundamental problem with “strong” AI, however, is that genetics are intractably squiggly, whether the

base pairs are A, G, C, and T, or 1, 0, both, and neither. Genetically constructed software is typically opaque when examined form for function. Likewise, when sensation, perception, autonomy, autopoiesis, sex, hunger, anger, fear, and ultimately understanding are modeled genetically, the resulting neural net will be as opaque and impenetrable as the human brain itself. Understanding of form and understanding of function, then, are divergent expressions of the same underlying form - personal truth.

Ultimately, if a machine ever reproduces a human capacity for understanding, we won't know why without significant parallel advances in neuroscience to aid the AI researcher in condensing meaning from connectivist patterns. The proof will be in the behavior, *ceteris paribus*.



## **The Promises and Pains of Modernity**

Anyone who's lived in a western-style industrialized environment is familiar with the ubiquitous promises of the modern age. Basic expectations include success through cultivated talent, innate intelligence, and careful planning. More lofty goals include years of exciting travel, financial windfalls, “the great American novel”, raising two and a half unnaturally well-behaved children, getting a record contract, or retiring at age 62 to a farm with plenty of horses and chickens. Modernity promises extraordinary returns from ordinary investments. Reality stands in stark contrast. This rampant idealism stops one step short of promising all-out immortality. Modernity is a religion, which I examine in this chapter.

As noted in the previous chapter, I'm not going to assume a higher power exists in order to discuss one. Spirituality is a socially and psychologically emergent behavior - not a rational one. Tversky and Kahneman (1979, 1982) have shown the flaws in assuming humans are fundamentally rational, through the use of gambling tests. They maintain that a person's choices between risk-seeking and risk-averse behavior are biased non-linearly - that is there's a much larger perceptive difference between 19% (a

little of something) and 20% (a little more of something) than there is between 99% (the possibility of nothing) and 100% (the guarantee of something). Pure rationalism would suppose this not to be the case, however. Rather than rational decision-making, I maintain that humans behave overwhelmingly along evolutionary biological drives.

### **Emergence and convergence**

Emergent behaviors are those that are observed through patterns - not the behaviors themselves. If weather were a behavior, climate would be the emergent behavior. Likewise, if spirituality is the observed human behavior, religion is the emergent societal behavior. Many societal behaviors can be seen as emergent human behaviors, which in hand can be seen as emergent from underlying biological behaviors. Overwhelmingly, biological organisms (cells, creatures, and societies of creatures) display two aspects: seeking pleasure and avoiding pain. Most, if not all behaviors of organisms can effectively be modeled as emergence from these two, which are themselves emergent behaviors from the lower (evolutionary) drives towards self and species-preservation.

More often than not, however, rational decision making at the creature-level comes about as a convergent behavior. When making difficult decisions, an organism has to weigh inputs from

generally divergent memories and perceptions, and come up with a convergent action to ameliorate the cognitive dissonance. In humans, this may happen in the basal ganglia, a section of the brain predominantly associated with motor control, emotion, and learning. This convergent behavior forms the building blocks of “intelligent” cognitive function in a creature, those associated with pattern recognition, abstraction, and application.

### **Causes of Spirituality and Religion**

Spirituality and religion (and thus ethics and morality) are emergent behaviors from the evolutionary drive towards self, tribe, and species preservation, and by our predilection to seek pleasure and avoid pain. They are not assumptions.

My understanding of the distinction between spirituality and religion is purely an environmental one. In a previous chapter, I posited an internal dialogue as a solution to Kant's scandalous question of Heidegger's ontology. Spirituality is the practice of constructing and practicing a world-view around the intrinsic need for an overwhelming otherness, while religion is the formation of social constructs from those practices. This division is purely internal versus external, prejudice versus practice.

Religion is ubiquitous enough that it's considered a cultural universal. We want to believe in an overwhelming otherness because it assuages our fear of death (of self, tribe, and

species), and because it simplifies decision-making (social organization - another cultural universal). I see every day people who would rather outsource important decisions than make them themselves. We do this typically through democratic processes, but not exclusively. Every time we make a transaction or interaction with another being, we're handing over decision authority to that person or group. Altars to television gods have replaced books and conversation in the modern household, and social interaction with the illusion thereof. Modernity has promised to us unavoidable progress, but in taking it up we're losing our soul as a people. It's too convenient to delete an email, turn off an instant messaging application, or not pick up or return phone calls. These activities allow interaction, but at our convenience, fooling our brains into thinking we're participating in meaningful social discourse. As recently as two centuries ago, if you wanted to talk with someone, you had to travel to meet with them in person. This includes all the trappings of normal interaction - touch, taste, sight, scent, and hearing - audible, visible interaction. Digital interaction can trick our minds into seeming genuine, especially with the emergence of immersive online environments such as Second Life and World of Warcraft. These fulfill certain aspects of our human need for interaction, but without near as many benefits of failure.

### **Analog of biological emergence**

Sir David Ferrier performed neurophysiological research (“The Triune Brain in Evolution - Role in Paleocerebral Functions”, Paul D. MacLean, pp. 19-24) in the United Kingdom early last century in frog cerebral functionality, the analogous section of human brains which is considerably more advanced than in earlier mammals. The Cerebral cortex is that which is traditionally understood to process memory, learning, language, perception (though not necessarily sensation), reasoning, and decision-making. A large part of his studies consisted of “decerebration” of vertebrates such as fish and frogs. In this process, he would surgically remove the cerebral cortex from animals, and observe the subsequent changes in their behavior.

Earlier experiments with decerebrated fish showed a lack of social interest: they wouldn't school. Ferrier later noticed in frogs, however, that without the section of the brain which allows most “high functions” (the cerebral cortex), they exhibited some peculiar behavior:

Deprived of its cerebral hemispheres, the frog will maintain its normal attitude, and resist all attempts to displace its equilibrium. If laid on its back, it will immediately turn on its face, and regain its station on its

feet. ... If its foot be pinched, it will hop away. If it is thrown into the water, it will swim until it reaches the side of the vessel, and then clamber up, and sit perfectly quiet. If its back be stroked gently, it will utter loud croaks. ... Indeed, in many respects, it would be difficult to say that the removal of the hemispheres had caused any alteration in the usual behaviour of the animal.

But yet, a very remarkable difference is perceptible. The brainless frog, unless disturbed ... will sit forever quiet in the same spot, and become converted into a mummy. All spontaneous action is annihilated. Its past experience has been blotted out, and it exhibits no fear in circumstances which otherwise would cause it to retire or flee from danger. ... Surrounded by plenty, it will die of starvation; but unlike Tantalus, it has no physical suffering, no desire, and no will to supply its physical wants. (MacLean, pp 21-22, emphasis mine)

Ferrier's later studies with higher vertebrates identified the same patterns: When an animal is deprived of its higher processing facilities, it can still function as that animal, but without a shred of "directed, spontaneous behaviour." I maintain that humans, when similarly removed of their higher facilities through modernity, the Prussian schooling system, fundamental religious beliefs, or digital interaction, exhibit many of these same qualities.

## **The Prussian Schooling System**

The modernization of the school system is evidenced by the predominantly Prussian-style compulsory systems implemented in most western-style industrialized democracies (including all English speaking nations that I know of.) In stark contrast to the voluntary home or church-based education systems that existed previously, Prussian systems industrialize the practice of education through standardization, division of labor, application of technology, and diverse applications of the economies of scale. This system emerges from the same avoiding-pain behavior of organisms in that it outsources what-to-teach decisions which were typically reserved to families, but has the same effect - homogenization of thought and behavior, and the subsequent social hegemony of popular views over unpopular ones. This form of education is well adapted to producing workers, but less so for producing citizens capable of independent critical reasoning. When parents aren't forced to make difficult decisions, children are predilected to do the same.

This form of education, enacted under the auspices of providing literacy (another promise of modernity) and broad introductions to the wealth of human knowledge, has had the effect of forcing opinions upon the world's young people.

Likewise, it produces generations of workers who can do basic math and regurgitate the names of a dozen species of dinosaur, but are fundamentally incapable of performing their civic duties of making rational decisions which apply to other citizens of their state. In many ways, students in primary and secondary education systems starve when surrounded by plenty. The system fails at its goal of universal education, but succeeds magnificently at producing citizens robbed of their abilities to make intelligent decisions.

The solution to this problem is to make a decision: if a government is going to subsidize public schools, attendance should be voluntary, and the subsidy of that child's education should apply equally to any other person or institution of a society who wants to train that child to be a productive member of that society. If a government is not going to subsidize education, it should maintain no say in how education in that nation takes place. I would prefer to see the former take place.

### **Religious Fundamentalism**

It also benefits to mention the parallels between the behavior of Ferrier's decerebrated frogs, and the teachings of fundamentalist views on many popular religions. A full treatment of the nature of fundamental religious philosophy is beyond the scope of this chapter, and will likely be addressed in my later writings. In



short, however, fundamental religions in my observation has typically taught its followers to seek answers through a religious text, rather than through critical analysis or autognosis. These behaviors, along the same lines of the Prussian school system, have inflicted a form of “religious hegemony” on its followers, with analogous effects on religious thought as our education systems produces for other branches of human knowledge.

In my experiences with western-style Christendom, even with the most liberal of protestant interpretations of their hold texts, answers are still viewed as emerging only through analysis of a text. This removes the pains of cognitive dissonance inherent with deciding ones own ethical codes, but is wholly unnecessary for the functioning of a society. Contrary to popular religious understanding, humans (or the deities perceived by humans) didn't invent moral codes - evolution did. Monkeys didn't have a burning bush, the wisdom of Hammurabi, or even complex language - but they do display personal and societal ethics. I addressed the generation of ethics and morality in my post last week. They have the same pains of decision making, and typically rely on the alpha male of their society to determine the best courses of action. Humans do the same thing, as a species. Religious humans simply outsource these decisions to their gods, which can often be remarkably effective, but can be dangerous in their

removal of responsibility. This is one characteristic of humans which other intelligent vertebrates appear to lack: we can feel guilt, and we can blush. The emergence of religion removes these dissonances by introducing others, traditionally doing so by also offering amelioration to the fear-of-death / self-preservation-drive through reincarnation, eternal life, or some form of understanding of that which fundamentally can't be observed or known (Pascal's wager.)

### **The emergent pains of modernity**

Modernity promises social progress through industrialization, division of decision- and manual-labor, universal education, and religious tolerance (the subject of my next chapter.) To gain this world, however, a citizen must forfeit the soul of their culture in subjugation to the opinions, prejudices, and behaviors of the larger society in which they are a part. This is a religion I choose largely to do without. I certainly own a computer and more than my fair share of books, but you'll not find a television or radio in my possession. When I want to know what's going on in my world, I read news sources from around the world (in multiple languages) and integrate my own opinion. Possessions not needed for mental, physical, and social growth are nothing more than the anesthetic trappings of a soulless lifestyle. Like Ferrier's

decerebrated frogs, we starve of social, mental, and physical interaction while surrounded by plenty.

Lemert maintains (“Social Theory - The multicultural and classical readings”, Charles Lemert, pp. 21-27) that modernity is an oedipal divorce between desire and possibility, a position with which I largely agree. The promises of modern life can be met, but with a cost no reasonable culture would buy if offered as a package. Slowly and cyclically, it has overtaken the lives of citizens of western-style industrialized democracies - this happened as much in Rome and Mongolia as it does in America, Australia, and Britain, though without the “blessings of industrialization.” Likewise, it removes them of their capacity to make critical decisions, through cultural submission. This has formed populations either unaware of the abuses of their governments, or unwilling to fight for change.

In effect, modernity is a religion, one which I largely choose to do without. In most suburban living rooms, televisions have replaced people as the social and religious altars; elected officials, celebrities, sports figures, and television personalities have taken the place of gods; promises of anyone being able to do anything have proven to be completely untenable; and beliefs which, for the most part, come from religious teachings rather than rational thinking have tried to remove us from our abilities to think critically. Everything citizens of a society can do to remove themselves from this modern social flow only serves to

greater illuminate the causes and effects of human and social behavior. We seek pleasure and avoid pain, like all other biological organisms, but we have an intelligent function: critical decision making. In threatening this function, we isolate one of the facets axiomatic to humanity. I fail to see the usefulness in a school of thought which requires the absence of thought.

## **Social Class and Human Rights**

In western-style democratic societies, class is a difficult topic to discuss. Most will recognize the labels and categories, but few can outline a formula to make these classifications. This chapter investigates the social construction of class, and the effects of those class systems on a person's standard of living.

Social status is a convergent observation of multiple emergent and observed behaviors and traits, including:

- Race,
- Employment and Income,
- Education and training,
- Fluency in your culture's language,
- Sexual orientation and gender identity,
- Quality of food and shelter,
- Access to health and dental care,
- Wealth accumulated or controlled,
- Size and lineage of family,
- Transportation and mobility, and
- Standing within a church or other social group.

Some aspects of this stratification are rooted in the outsourcing of the dissonant process of decision making (discussed last

week), some are inherited from family, but most come from income, education, and the combination of language, culture, and creed. This perspective, though, is not without its necessary integration:

Some would argue that any conception of class based on power models is too narrow, since so much of quality of life cannot be expressed in terms of dollars or acres owned . A retired teacher living on a small, but adequate, stipend or a “struggling” artist living a life of bohemianism and voluntary poverty may actually enjoy a great deal more freedom, health, and social respect than an overworked executive making a six figure income at a discredited corporation.(source: Wikipedia, Social Class)

### **Social Fluidity and Categorization**

One of the most striking difficulties in discussing social class is the segmentation of the population. Social class, much like any other biologically emergent trait such as sexuality, gender, or skin color, is inherently fluid. This isn't to say it's easy (or even possible in some cases) to change a person's social class - it's not easy to change other biological traits, such as a person's sexual orientation or skin color either. “Fluid,” in this sense establishes populations between binary cases.

Binary systems are useful for understanding border cases

in a model, but are deceptively over-simple when analyzing populations who dominantly gravitate towards one case or the other. Examples of these populations are seen in political opinions on divisive issues such as abortion, gun control, isolationist foreign policy, and gay marriage. Equally biologically polarizing are the categorization of sexuality, race, gender, eye color, and Meyers-Briggs personality type. Humans are driven to taxonomically categorize complex systems in order to more easily understand them, but an understanding is myopic which doesn't account for the existence of the categories created.

Many binary systems we daily take for law such as time, sexuality, and race are abstracts of social contracts to which we must agree in order to function in a society. These social contracts can be as simple as “we divide time into weeks, and these are the names we give to the days,” or as complex as the Jim Crow laws, which codified continuation of racial segregation after emancipation in the United States.

Categories in social class can be constructed, and through these constructions we can come to a greater understanding of human nature as expressed through a set of social, political, economic, biological, historical and linguistic perspectives. This understanding will always be colored by the perspectives with which we're able to view a subject, and should construct a gestalt of class analysis - something that makes the population more than the sum of its categories.

## **Social progress and the existence of class**

Progress is by nature derived from risk. Overcoming the neurophysiological and social inhibition presented in our aversion-to-pain (including “social pains,” such as fear-of-rejection) property allows grater accuracy in risk-seeking behavior. Those who aren't afraid to fail or look foolish are those who have greater chances of effectively learning a new language or starting a new company. From this fluidity between risk behaviors, a greater integration of perceptions is gathered: a person's successes and (more often) failures further show them the viewpoints of others on their own actions (as a self of selves and as a group). From these growths in personal understandings, parallels emerge with behaviors in capitalist economies.

Class is socially constructed and socially transmitted. Overwhelmingly, a parent's social class will become the child's social class because the parents generally exercise effective control over the social environments and cognitive domains in which a child is allowed to participate. This parallels the social transmission of language, and the educational and religious transmission of philosophy. This class, however, is socially constructed by biological emergence from the relationships between pain-averse and pleasure-seeking behaviors:

No one rejects, dislikes or avoids pleasure itself, because it is pleasure, but because those who do not know how to



pursue pleasure rationally encounter consequences that are extremely painful. Nor again is there anyone who loves or pursues or desires to obtain pain of itself, because it is pain, but because occasionally circumstances occur in which toil and pain can procure him some great pleasure. To take a trivial example, which of us ever undertakes laborious physical exercise, except to obtain some advantage from it? But who has any right to find fault with a man who chooses to enjoy a pleasure that has no annoying consequences, or one who avoids a pain that produces no resultant pleasure? On the other hand, we denounce with righteous indignation and dislike men who are so beguiled and demoralized by the charms of the pleasure of the moment, so blinded by desire, that they cannot foresee the pain and trouble that are bound to ensue; and equal blame belongs to those who fail in their duty through weakness of will, which is the same as saying through shrinking from toil and pain.

~~ Cicero, *De Finibus Bonorum et Malorum*,  
book 1, chapter 10

Class has to exist in a society because of the inherent variance in and fluidity of biologically emergent risk-seeking and risk-averse behavior, more specifically in its emergence in the application and earning of power (income, education, or physical

prowess) over those who see fit to allow an individual to make decisions on their behalf. Whether a society chooses to acknowledge (or even codify) that class (e.g. Vaisya / Hindu Castes), or whether a society chooses actively to work against that class structure towards normalization of standards-of-living for a society's members (Political avant-garde-ism / bohemianism,) that class structure still exists because the society itself exists.

This understanding of social progress is then extended to include “forgoing pleasures for the purpose of getting greater pleasures, and enduring pains for the sake of escaping greater pains.” (Cicero)

### **Distribution of wealth in class systems**

Numerous political and economic systems have been conceived to manage the distribution of wealth versus inherent scarcity of resources. By far, the two most prominent are free-market capitalism, and various forms of communism. For this discussion, I'm going to assume laissez-faire-style libertarian anarcho- capitalism, and Soviet-style communism.

Fundamentally, the former is based on self-service, the latter on social service. Neither drive is exclusively the case, however, biologically. Capitalism aims to reward a person for their output based on the intersection of market supply and demand, whereas

socialism aims to distribute a person's output to those who need it. The former creates social class economically by trying to eliminate it politically, whereas the latter creates it politically by trying to eliminate it economically. Those nations (such as those in Central Europe and Scandinavia) which blend capitalist and socialist political-economic theory, however, tend to have the lowest Gini indexes (correlating to more-equal income distribution.) This correlates in these parts of the world with higher life expectancy, relatively low unemployment, and more universal enjoyment of basic human rights.

Václav Havel said of the dissolution of the USSR, "Communism wasn't defeated by military force, but by life, by the human spirit, by conscience, by the resistance of Being and man to manipulation. It was defeated by a revolt of color, authenticity, history in all its variety and human individuality against imprisonment within a uniform ideology." (from "Social Theory" by Lemert, p 573) One of the fundamental failures of purely politically-driven class systems is the exchange of mental human rights (such as opinion, expression, choice) of a society to benefit the physical human rights (such as rest, healthcare, and life) of that society. Purely economically-driven class systems, however, exchange the physical rights for the fulfillment of the mental.

**The well-behaved class system**

The functional class system, then, allows all members of a society the social, economic, and political liberties necessary to afford themselves fulfillment of all human rights. These human rights are derived from observed cultural universals such as language, recreation, spirituality, and politics. Any society of humans should allow its members to enjoy the traits of that society emergent from human nature, inasmuch as that enjoyment doesn't infringe on the equal right of any other member of that society to do the same.

## **Religionomics**

In a previous chapter, I drew the conclusion that the separation of church and state is “not just a nice saying, it's grounded in centuries of war and conflict between two different ontological approaches to truth and knowledge.” For a political system to be most effective, it must encourage debate and a free market of ideas - that is, it must be integrative. Theocracies tend to discourage this, however, by either building upon religious hegemony, or imposing it on its citizens. In this view, democracies are founded on science, and autocracies on religion. In this chapter, I examine the distinguishing characteristics between the practices of science and of religion, and the effective practice of each.

### **Risk, Faith, and Proof**

Risk is the convergent factor between faith and proof. In analog to free-market economics, the risk of a belief can be seen as the price between the supply of proof and the demand of faith. This is to say that in order for the risk underlying a certain belief to hold steady with increasing proof, less faith is needed; and for the same to happen with decreasing proof, an increase in faith is

needed. All propositions carry some amount of risk, in that all propositions require some amount of faith. Beliefs are held to be scientific which maximize proof by minimizing faith, and religious which minimize proof by maximizing faith. As can be deduced from this statement, no pure form of either exists, nor can they exist.

The major distinction to draw between these two ontological approaches to knowledge is this: scientific knowledge is proof-perpetuating in that through its requirements for testability and falsifiability, it bases proof only on other proof, or mathematical axioms. Testability and falsifiability refer to two fundamental properties of scientific knowledge: any theory, to be considered scientific, must be able to be tested, and that test must be able to prove the theory wrong. Religious knowledge, however, comes from divine inspiration, hermeneutics, and apologetics, typically without the requirement (or even ability) to base knowledge on anything but faith. This faith-perpetuation is typically grounded in a form of creed or doctrine statement, holy text, and divine inspiration. See The Nicene Creed for a Christian example of the former. In the Christian faith, the writer of Hebrews goes so far as to claim “Now faith is assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen.” (The Bible, American Standard Version, Hebrews 1:11) Ñ further drawing the distinction that faith is the very embodiment of knowledge that doesn't draw on empirical

proof. For a belief to exist, this lack of proof defines faith, and the lack of faith defines proof.

The eternal struggle between science and religion can then be effectively modeled by a Nash Equilibrium. When these two conflicting risk assessments make disjunctive claims about the nature of an observation, neither side has the impetus to change their opinion without cooperation from the other. This, in American politics, can be seen in debates on abortion, evolution, and gay rights.

In a religious sense, the risk of being wrong is commonly modeled in Pascal's wager, whereas in a scientific sense, the risk of being wrong is modeled by limbic bias, as described by Paul MacLean in *The Triune Brain, Emotion, and Scientific Bias*, page 336:

Although seldom commented on, it is equally bewildering that the world order of science is able to live comfortably for years, and sometimes centuries, with beliefs that a new generation discovers to be false. How is it possible that we are able to build higher and higher on the foundations of such beliefs without fear of their sudden collapse? In addition, there is the paradox that the emotional investment of some scientists is such that they remain convinced of the truth of a theory long after it has been proved to be false. As E. G. Boring (1964)

emphasized, in paraphrasing a comment of Max Plank:  
 “Important theories, marked for death by the discovery  
 of contradictory evidence, seldom die before their  
 authors.”

When both religion and science have these self- and social-interest vested in self- and social-perpetuation, while maintaining mutually divergent views on issues related to human rights, a solution to the equilibrium must be found. This solution comes through integration.

### **Reason and the Construction of Science**

No objectively pure science can exist which is modeled mathematically, however, because of the existence of axioms. Axioms are fundamental, self-evident assumptions which are accepted as fact in order to generate proofs. Depending on the branch of science or mathematics being addressed, any number of axioms can be required (see Propositional Logic, Zermel-Fraenkel Set Theory). It's important to note that all science is built on math, and math never claims to be correct Ñ it only claims to be internally consistent, when based on these common assumptions.

Upon these assumptions (axioms), however, is built the entirety of science through the application of methodical empiricism in testability and falsifiability of hypotheses. When a



hypothesis has been tested sufficiently, it is accepted by the scientific community as a theory. This testing, however, is empirical, lying in the agreed congruence of observations between multiple cognitive, linguistic, and social domains. Science, which aims to be completely objective (which I mentioned in an earlier chapter is an impossible goal), can only approach that objectivity through integration of theory - observing the properties of an entity from as many perspectives as possible, and determining on which aspects of that object those perspectives agree, and on which they disagree.

Non-integrated science is then irresponsible, and integrative method the highest form of science. Any sufficiently unexamined science (such as numerology or astrology), is a religion; and by necessity any sufficiently examined religion can be considered a science. The distinction is then made, then, that no religion can sufficiently be examined by scientific methods which relies on the assumption of a being other than the observer.

### **Apologetics and the Deconstruction of Faith**

No objectively pure religion can exist, either, because of human rationality. I can espouse belief in a celestial teapot, an invisible pink unicorn, or a flying spaghetti monster, each requiring no proof (and in some cases, denying the possibility of empirical

proof). These notions are taken to be rationally preposterous, however, in that they're not supported by any perception, deduction or assumption - only social communication. Any religion, in order to be accepted by a rational individual, requires some measure of proof. This can be done through archaeological excavation, studies of prophecies, or analysis of congruence between holy texts, among other formalized methods.

In The Christian Bible, the apostle Paul goes so far as to say “critically examine everything,” (The Bible, 1 Thess. 5:21, translation mine) using the same verb which would also be used in a trial-by-jury setting. In his words, the Christian life is never meant to be unexamined. The apostle Peter agrees, saying “...but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord: being ready always to give answer to every man that asketh you a reason concerning the hope that is in you, yet with meekness and fear;” (ASV, 1 Peter 3:15, emphasis mine). Many Christian groups have, through the centuries, put these into practice, doing their best to give material support to rationalize their beliefs. This has an adverse effect, though, in that any construction of proof intrinsically involves the destruction of faith: If you believe something because you've examined it and found it to be true, it's a scientific belief Ñ not a religious one. If you believe something without having examined it, it's necessarily a religious view, and not a scientific one. Most beliefs are somewhere between these two poles, however.

Socrates famously states that “the unexamined life not

worth living” (Apology 38a). With this distinction, then, that the unexamined life is fundamentally religious, it follows that the fundamentally religious life is not worth living: unexamined observations beget unexamined actions. If (through a marketplace of religious ideas - a temple,) these observations become doctrine, they evolve into dogma. Unexamined dogma - a universal practice not based in the integration of other perspectives, becomes the ultimate form of danger, and the cause of substantial bloodshed over the course of human history. This isn't to say that scientific beliefs haven't caused wars - they have. The fundamental causes of the conflicts in Vietnam and Korea were but reflections of the underlying conflicts between well-examined sociopolitical beliefs. Science can become religion if an individual or society doesn't integrate that belief with other perspectives.

Consequently, the basic distinction between these two ontologies is one both of assumption and of process, which can be mutually derived. In a scientific ontology, only oneself is assumed, and all knowledge is constructed from that assumption by process of observation and logical testing. In a religious ontology, oneself and the external existence is assumed, and knowledge is gained through application of those observations to the external existence.

## **The Examined Life**

Durkheim's notions of the “religion of society” and *Espirit de Corps* (religion of work), only hold when they're left unexamined: Work is only a religion if you don't know why you're doing it, while church participation is also only a religion if you don't know why you believe it. This is how I characterize a fundamentalist religious interpretation from an independent one: the preconditions for the former are knowing whom and what you believe, when the preconditions for the latter are knowing why you believe something (for non-assumption reasons). Consequently, within a church or a physics lab, both scientific and religious beliefs can coexist, so long as they're socially productive, and effective at ameliorating cognitive dissonances. Effective integration of perspective comes, then, from knowing why you hold any given observation, and knowing how likely it is that it could be non-descriptive of that same observation in another's cognitive domain.

Religion (the supply of faith, the basis of creativity), is then a necessary precondition for science (the demand of proof, and the application of empiricism.) Any science, then, can be modeled as the necessary end of a corresponding religion. T.H. Huxley famously stated “every new truth begins as heresy.” This isn't to say that every heresy approaches an objective notion of truth, but that for science to be effective, it can't be confined in

thought to the worldviews of its predecessors.

## Post-Industrial Economics

*We, who seven years ago  
Talked of honour and of truth,  
Shriek with pleasure if we show  
The weasel's twist, the weasel's tooth.*

--- William Butler Yeats,

*from Nineteen Hundred and Nineteen*

Capitalism requires poverty because of its dependence on scarcity. For something to have price (and subsequently value), not everyone can have it, price being the convergence of demand and supply. Value of an object, person, or opinion comes from the application of that opinion towards the amelioration of need in that value then emerges from price as the convergence between that economic scarcity and the availability of that object, person, or opinion as technology to ameliorate need. Supply-side problems in life-sustaining necessities have ceased for the most part in the most industrialized capitalist states, and the economies hopelessly tied thereto. Capitalism has served us

well, but it's time to move to a new global socioeconomic and political model.

### **Global Supply and Demand**

The United States has historically addressed the problem of poverty by exporting it. In Smith's economic model of the Wealth of Nations, "all boats rise" towards egalitarianism with the rise in the wealth of that society. Scarcity is a (relative) constant, however, and will become more glaringly so in direct proportion to the rise of the Earth's population. When one nation's wealth increases, by necessity the wealth of another decreases relatively. Smith fully endorses the notion that economic trade is purposefully disadvantageous to one trading partner in discrediting the notions of trade restraints presented by duties and tariffs.

In a global sense, this disparity is apparent by second and third-world "boats falling" while first-world "boats rise." Restricting globalization to the fluid export of goods keeps this imbalance in place. Fluidizing the market for labor (such as through NAFTA and the WTO), however, causes the water under first-world boats to flow to second and third-world countries, however, in that the means of a nation's production are no longer controlled by that nation. The Wealth of Nations becomes the Wealth of the Global Nation. This globalization has three stages, each roughly corresponding to a Gaussian curve.

## **Global Transportation and Communication**

The first stage of globalization started with the fluidity of the market for physical goods beginning early in the 15th century, but gaining critical mass with the advent of globalized transportation. This enabled societies to buy and sell things with other societies not geographically bordering their own. The transformative aspect of this process has peaked, though, through industrialization, and will continue until all nations are industrialized.

With the advent of global transportation, labor markets began to become more fluid. This began with the labor markets emergent from global trade of human slaves as property, but came to a peak with the advent of globalized communication. Building on global trade, labor markets became inherently more fluid. This process is peaking with global trade-unionization which permits the export of labor (and therefore also poverty), oftentimes without regulating the process, such as NAFTA, WTO, the EU, and the CIS. This is happening primarily as a reaction against the first stage, in that nations can become more economically profitable on the short-term by exporting industrialization (not just goods) to developing nations, along with massive debt managed by the World Bank. This stage will continue until all industrialized nations are capable of global labor trade.



This process of outsourcing began with production of commodities from natural and trade resources, but becomes weighted in favor of nations with more fundamentally scarce natural resources, namely oil. At the outset of industrialization, it would have been laughable to propose that the Petronas Corporation would build the largest skyscrapers in the world in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. During the formative years of industrialization (the middle of stage one and beginning of stage two), the Middle East and Pacific Rim were at the disadvantageous end of trade inequalities. During industrialization of the extraction and refining producing of oil, however, gross profits have come to those in control of the means of its production, often at great expense to those not in control of the means of production.

### **Petrosociety or Information Society?**

In oil-producing nations, gross national wealth is being built through industrialization, with the recipient of the trade inequality becoming those who lack the natural resource upon which industrialization itself is built: crude oil. Shale and bitumen can be processed to fuel traditional oil-based technologies, but not at a cost which benefits its extraction and production in trade. This produces a shift in social, political, and economic power from those to benefit those who control the

flow of oil. Wars are, obviously, still being fought over this, and will continue to be fought until another commodity emerges in competition - whether that be a physical commodity (a viable alternative energy source) or a social one.

With industrialization of technology, however, comes the industrialization of communications. Recent decades have seen the monetization of information in the same manner as the monetization of oil. Oil isn't intrinsically capital any more than information is, because you can't use it as a means of production until you process it. Information economies have emerged around intellectual "property," and the political systems that manage those economies have realized that by controlling the flow of information (frequently at the expense of personal social liberty), they can not only profit by its trade, but obtain political stability through enforcement of internal cultural hegemony. China arguably leads the world in this form of information control (though the case could be made to put North Korea in the lead) through tight governmental control of news sources, education, and communication. Australia and America have been following China's lead in this economy, however, with the government censorship of information (in the case of the former,) and the DMCA, COPA, and MAPA (in the case of the latter.)

The pattern of outsourcing of industrialized aspects of economies continues from that of the generation of technology to the outsourcing of the generation of information. When the

factories go to developing nations, the managers, designers and engineers soon follow. This happens because tight controls over the flow of information tend to foster fiat education systems. When an educational system is financially threatened for teaching unpopular subjects, it can no longer offer a complete education to its students. This happened at Columbia University just two weeks ago. This happens in American primary schools every day. This trend, taken alone, leads to totalitarianism. Taken as a part of the behavior of industrialized societies, however, this trend is also self-defeating. People will communicate and socially preserve their ideas in their social marketplace thereof, even if unpopular.

### **Emergence of the Global Society**

With the pervasiveness of global communications, however, the third stage of market globalization is beginning to occur, that of the globalized society. This is happening as a reaction against the second phase, in that the poverty exported by first-world nations in the form of industrialized labor markets is coming full-circle, forming a global equilibrium of inequality. Recognizing that these inequalities cause grave deficits in human rights worldwide, new conflicts are erupting between isolationist and globalist perspectives on trade. Given that a purely isolationist perspective is fundamentally intractable with the notions of

global transportation and communication, this phase of globalization will continue until all industrialized, fluid-labor nations are capable of guaranteeing basic human rights to all of its citizens - those traits common to human societies of all eras and populations, or anthropological universals.

### **The economics of attention**

Information economics approach a global model, but the atomic monetary unit of a social economy (including the global one) isn't information or financial instruments - it's attention. Attention, however, consists of at least two components: trust, and self control.

Trust, as a verb, I would argue is fundamentally ditransitive - that is it has no grammatical interpretation without both a direct object and an indirect object. This operates along the same lines as the verb "give" Ñ you can give someone something, but you can't "give someone" without some fundamental notion of the recipient of the action. Trust is typically given to an entity in a cognitive domain, but always given as something. I trust my computer to store my data - simply "trusting my computer" is ill-defined and ungrammatical. In order for attention to be defined, sensation and perception must be trusted to be accurate, and in order for those sensations and perceptions to be considered accurate, they must be able to

generate a cognitive linguistic form compatible in discourse with a language community. To this end, attention requires society (and not simply being) in order to exist - even if that society is a mentally internal dialog.

The common recipient of “trust,” is another person. I can trust a person to be a faithful romantic partner, entrepreneurial business leader, or social friend, but I can never fundamentally assume trust of a person's trust. This leads to the second part of the definition: “trust,” as a noun, is not fundamentally transitive. I can trust a person to produce for me a non-poisonous taco when presented with some monetized unit in exchange for the goods and services rendered, but not necessarily need to trust that person's trust in other people to perform any given service.

The dissemination of this understanding of trust leads to the notion of social capital, that form of economic capital which can be used for causal productivity. A person's social capital can be understood to consist of the trusts that person has invested in aspects of members of their societies, and by derivation the trusts their societies have made in aspects of other societies. These trusts overwhelmingly emerge from congruencies in observed behavioral patterns, and affect the amount of attention a person is willing to “pay” to another person or society.

Attention is economically atomic in that it's the fundamental functional unit of a person's cognitive domain. Time is an abstract, qualia can be relative, and property is an illusion

(because objective control is intractable.) Attention is the fundamental property of cognition that allows value to be given to observations. It is these values that form the basis for language, cognition, and the emergence of society on any scale. Tversky and Kahmeman's Prospect Theory models the applications of these attentions to the definition of social judgments, which in turn assist in defining social capital and social contracts.

The emergent prominence of social capital in a post industrial economic model comes from the next stage in cultural evolution: we have global transportation and global communication. This communication, however, is in the process of forming a global society. In order to economically process social transactions on a global scale, however, societal attention emerges from individual attention, with the former bringing the latter into prominence.

### **Sowing seeds of dissatisfaction**

As supplies of goods and labor increase proportionate with industrialization, whether by discoveries of new production techniques, or by exporting our market for cheap labor, we are forced to create demand for new products by advertising - creating dissatisfaction. Analogous with Smith's creation of disadvantageous trade relations, advertising is self-defeating.

People have a finite capability for need, governed by their personal ability to be socially productive in a capitalist economy, and governed by their society's ability to produce for a person in a socialist one.

In order to create this dissatisfaction, however, advertising is traditionally used. This typically exists voluntarily (i.e. through a social contract,) in that a person will willingly subject herself or himself to advertisement in exchange for lower financial cost for a good or service rendered. Attention is a finite resource, however, arguably the only finite resource over which a person has direct control. In the economy of attention, then, giving attention to an element of a cognitive domain is analogous to transfer of a monetary instrument. By this understanding, involuntary advertising is theft.

This form of theft is already being addressed politically, in the form of no-call lists and spam legislation, which carry in some jurisdictions heavy fines and imprisonment. This definition, though, should be extended to include any form of advertising extant within a cognitive domain, but outside a social contract. When I read an article on a website that's subsidized by advertising, I voluntarily subject myself to that website's advertising in exchange for not having to transfer other financial instruments to that website in exchange for the viewing of their content. When I'm driving in a city and see the names of stores emblazoned high above the freeway, this is also voluntary, in that

my cognitive domain is intersecting with the cognitive domains of others who are transacting business in the locations by which I'm driving. If I choose to listen to a radio program or watch a television show which advertising interrupts, the same voluntary notion applies.

Junk mail, billboards, spam, telemarketing, fliers. on telephone poles, and any other form of involuntary advertising, however, constitute attention theft. This model of revenue generation, as mentioned previously, is self-defeating through the organization of global societies.

### **Medieval Icelandic Anarcho-Capitalism**

Medieval Iceland had what was arguably the best example of pure market capitalism. Before the introduction of Christianity, or its conquering by the Norwegian crown, Medieval Iceland has a political/economic system based on what were called temples. These temples controlled all aspects of dispute arbitration and governance, but it was completely at-will. If you wanted the protection of a temple, you sought membership and gave tribute. If you weren't in a temple, you were considered an outlaw. All crimes, therefore, were served by a fine - including rape and murder. When disputes arose between two people or groups, the heads of their temples would decide who pays what to whom - and if they didn't like the decision, they could find a new temple



to take their membership (and dispute), or they could become an outlaw. As an outlaw, however, anyone could kill them without penalty. Consequently, these systems of temples flourished, even meeting periodically at Thingvellir to recite the “laws of the land.” Any law they couldn't recite didn't apply.

In this (almost) pure market minarchocapitalism, the purely voluntary existence of the state caused two traits to emerge: church became the state, and unions (sharing some functional analog with temples) became the church. In its purest known form, Capitalism proved unable to provide for three fundamental human aspects: national defense, baseline welfare of its governed (through egalitarian distribution of wealth), and separation of church and state. When the politicization of society

fails to account for the well being of its most impoverished, they become slaves (in an almost literal sense) to the society which does take care of their welfare: a church. Separation of church and state, however, is fundamentally important to modern societies. It's not just a nice saying, it's grounded in centuries of war and conflict between two different ontological approaches to truth and knowledge. This form of government of a society also fails to account for forceful (if necessary) preservation of itself, due to almost complete decentralization.

## **Current Successful Systems**

More politically centralized forms of Capitalism (such as the government of America) address these shortcomings through legislation and the existence of a centralized military force. This is one of the reasons the main weaknesses in the Articles of Confederation which was fixed in the Constitution and Bill of Rights - centralizing of revenue and establishing the necessity for a “well-armed militia” (which eventually became the voluntary military system as we know it.) Even dominantly centralized forms of capitalism have institutional problems, though - price fixing, monopolies, market flooding and cornering, recessions and depressions. Many of these secondary problems can functionally be addressed by a well-behaved executive and federal reserve, but two problems remain. Maintaining a well-behaved government requires a well- educated population, and social institutions aren't easily modeled in a capitalist-style political system emerging from a non- heteronormative society.

We saw isolationist communism also fail with the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, under the weight of its military inflation against the west (specifically America). The two most powerful remaining governments in the world to date, then, are a heavily socialized capitalist system (America), and a heavily capitalized communist (socialist) system (China). Those systems that balance the two border cases effectively, then, are the most

egalitarian - EU nations in Scandinavia and central Europe. It becomes clear that an integration of these two perspectives is key to the amelioration of infringements on human rights, because this integration leads to political and economic power when approached from socialism, and the egalitarian distribution of wealth when approached from capitalism.

### **Skill and emergent labor mobility**

Central to this process of post-industrial social-political-economic emergence is the broad re-skilling of the workforce through professional mobility. During the post-Fordian era of traditionally recognized industrialization, the behavior was common in America to get some form of education (whether professional or trade,) get a job with a corporation, and remain with that same corporation through retirement and pension. Recently, however, that pattern has begun to shift to post-industrial professional behavior: the dynamic (predominantly on-the-job) acquisition of professional skills commensurate with the rapid change in professions. Fifty years ago, to see “25 years at the same company” on a resume was seen as a sign of stability and dedication. Recently, however, it's being seen as a symbol of stagnation tantamount to unemployability.

This fundamental shift in behaviors has a convergence-point, however, which we haven't yet reached as a society - the

unity of the workers of the world through trade unionization and collective bargaining and action. Post-industrial professional behaviors involve a broad shift in the patterns within productive environments, not in the environments themselves. Factories will still exist, but employment by them will be at-will, driven by unions. Furthermore, this high professional mobility can be considered a product of the modern attention market - the overwhelming attention deficit of western societies. When attention is modeled as a monetary instrument, it emerges that the wise investment of attention (through education and productive social integration) yields further availability of attention.

This is the process of the Prussian-style schooling system hitting its critical mass - that system which breeds humans into workers (rather than thinkers, thanks to the Rockefeller-Wilson administration for selling our children to the factories in 1919) through the industrialization of education will collapse under its own weight. When breeding children to be bored, and only to pay attention to faster, flashier perceptual qualia, they in adulthood have high vocational turnover, and the subsequent re- skilling during life that they didn't attain during their formative years. This has bred medium-scale dissatisfaction with remaining in a single place (mentally, socially, or physically) for too long, with ends that defeat its beginnings.

This process of moving from a Industrialized / Prussian-

style schooling system back to a socially-oriented one begins with the formation of skill-competitive trade unions commensurate with the remonetization of skills (in addition to traditional education) as a bargaining asset during negotiation for a job. In America, the university degree which used to separate working class from middle class has overwhelmingly become little more than a “middle class bragging right.” This is a product of the de-skilling of our society commensurate with the establishment of fiat degrees (those college degrees whose only intrinsic worth is the name of the institution on the degree itself). This process involves a fundamental shift of education from non-productive institutions to the emergent global societies from which they came.

With the re-emergence of these skill-oriented trade unions (whether that be a software engineering union or a auto mechanic union), by necessity emerges governmental controls on the behavior of that union, so not to form lobbies for policies which place a disproportionate burden on the societies in which they exist and interact.

### **Agile Developments**

This humanization process is already apparent in the global technical sector, and is presently spreading to others. The emergence of agile methodologies fundamentally shifts the

process of software design and development towards more human-compatible patterns of attention investments. In traditional development methodologies such as the waterfall model, a big-design-up-front (BDUF) is required - that is a customer has to completely and unambiguously know and be able to communicate what they want in order to get it on time and under budget. This methodology typically devolves into “rock management,” however - a phrase coming from a story of bringing a customer a rock, and the customer expressing dissatisfaction with that rock and asking for another rock.

Agile methodologies account for this fundamental disconnect in human function by eliminating the BDUF, however, in exchange for “user stories.” These methodologies more tightly bind customers to their products through close communication (daily stand-up meetings) close supervision (on-site customer,) and functional flexibility, rather than traditionally matrix or pyramid-organized roles. In an agile method, a person can function as a designer, tester, programmer, and documenter on each different day of the week, operating typically in pairs. This on-the-job training is part of the inherently competitive re-skilling we're seeing in the professional world.

Partially a product of these agile approaches, however, is the phenomenon of “Web 2.0.” Nobody (including O'Reilly, the folks who coined the term) can define “Web 2.0,” but descriptions of the phenomenon abound. Two major components

of Web 2.0 are harnessing the collective intelligence, and leveraging the long-tail. Some of the most successful Web 2.0 companies are web-based social networks such as Myspace, Facebook, and LinkedIn, (leveraging the long tail,) but the collaborative intelligence is probably best seen in Wikipedia.

If the first phase of the internet as a communications technology was about the central control of information, the second phase (Web 2.0) is overwhelmingly about social control of information. This gets into ethical discussions such as that of Google's behavior in the Chinese market, and privacy concerns as evidences by the recent NSA wiretapping scandals, but overwhelmingly the second generation of web technologies center around social intelligence. This can be seen by the abundance of weblogs, the popularity of community-written works (such as the myriad of wikis online), and the subsequent re-emergence of online socialized education. If I want to know the electronegative properties of Molybdenum, that information is available to me immediately (1.8 on the Pauling scale, by the way - thank you Wikipedia.) If I want an integrative analysis of a behavior (rather than sterilized data), many web2.0 sites exist for that as well, such as MetaFilter, everything2, and kuro5hin. If I want socially-driven news, the likes of Slashdot, Reddit, Digg, Del.icio.us, and furl are readily available to me, each with a different attenuation to signal versus noise. Furthermore, if I don't like any of these implementations, it's becoming borderline

trivial to implement my own, through rapid web-based application development frameworks such as Ruby on Rails and Drupal.

When technology becomes pervasive, by necessity the skills are commoditized which drive those technologies - that is, when everyone can write a web application, social normative functions converge towards meritocracy, or a “marketplace of ideas” rather than the industrialized oligarchy of Prussian-style education.

### **Solution to Attention Theft**

With the advent of this social form of education comes the breaking point for involuntary advertising. When a band can get more economic utility by posting their concert dates on last.fm or upcoming.yahoo.com, the process of polluting flagpoles with their advertisements will cease under economic burden (or, more likely government intervention). When retailers begin to realize that the reviews of their products on Amazon, Newegg, and other online retailers carry more weight than the fliers they stuff into our mailboxes each week, this process should likewise cease under economic burden (or, again more likely, government intervention.) If I realize I need a new pair of shoes, there are any number of retailers I can visit online to show me the relative merits of various types of shoes, many with brick-and-mortar



stores I can visit locally to try on and buy shoes. When the availability of communications technology becomes pervasive, I won't need the weight of involuntary advertising in my physical mailbox each week. Instead, more functional will be the voluntary advertising in which I participate while viewing shoes online - this is how I should find out about shoe sales, not through junk mail.

In the post-industrial economy, then, advertising exists in two places: through online opt-in communities such as mailing lists or websites (“tell me which stores in my area are having shoe sales this week”), and through voluntary participation (as discussed previously, the notion of voluntary intersection of a buyer's cognitive domain with the seller's.) In the same manner by which slavery was eliminated in the United States, when a societal behavior begins to collapse under its own economic weight, it's traditionally made illegal before the effects of its collapse cause economic conditions that overwhelmingly endanger the human rights of those who participate in that socioeconomy. Early last century, we proudly witnessed the liberation of physical human slavery. Early this century, we should proudly witness the liberation of attention slavery.

### **Education reform**

More than half of the college graduates I know in America can't

carry on a ten-minute conversation in their area of study. I know “economists” who don't know the definition of *laissez-faire*, English teachers who don't know that English is of Germanic roots, Geologists with no perspective on the peak oil phenomenon, and “computer scientists” who couldn't define “Turing machine”. These people all have American fiat degrees. During the course of their education, it didn't matter if they actually learned the material, so long as they could pass the tests.

Examples of such gross educational incompetence are equally legion in primary and secondary schools in this country. Our schools produce children who can name dozens of film stars or species of dinosaur, but lack basic abilities in literacy, composition, and mathematical reasoning. This is also a function of the No Child Left Behind act that emphasizes the importance of standardized testing (now more tightly tied to finance) over the education itself. This addresses the symptom (low metrics) of industrialized education, rather than the problem of industrialized education itself. The children raised in this system can arguably get a better education online and through their extracurricular societies than they receive in American primary schools. Thankfully, this is the direction in which Education is headed - globally and locally social education.

This education reform isn't without a price, however. Our pattern of fiat degrees has caused a massive shift in intellectual power from America to other nations more serious about

comprehensive education than we are. Our mid-level jobs are being exported not only to third-world countries through the monetization of skill, but also to first-world countries through out-competition. As our population ages, this trend will continue until it hits the dinner plate of the average CEO. The poverty we exported at the outset of industrialization is coming back uninvited, and we have to be ready to deal with it, or substantially lower our expected standard of living commensurate with the devaluation of our currency. This, again, is already happening as a component of our thin-spread military activities in the Middle East, and through waning foreign confidence in American fiduciary instruments.

This reform begins with the encouragement of equally subsidized social education (home schooling). If the state is going to give money to an industrialized (Prussian-style) education system to raise our children, that state should be equally prepared to give equal subsidy on a per-capita basis to those who wish to take part in other educational systems. If the children learn, they'll be able to pass the tests. If not, those institutions will fall under their own weight as well. This form of educational natural selection won't be without its shortcomings, but those will be boundary cases (and still in smaller population than those extant) until the industrialized education system tailors itself to the needs of the society. When a child has completed their primary education (required to be "compulsory"

by the UN Declaration of Universal Human Rights), that child should be given the option to attend comprehensive higher education (high school and college) or specialized technical education (trade school.) Incidentally, this already happens in many parts of Central Europe, whose basic literacy and reasoning abilities outperform America's time and again.

### **Prejudice and Practice**

Social systems aren't easy to implement in a non-heteronormative environment, however. Unity comes from diversity, in the convergence of behavior from the divergence of opinion. This divergence in opinion is rooted in the application of practice to prejudice, and these prejudices are culturally transmitted through the inherent difficulty in simply explaining cultural differences to children: it's easier to call all Arabs "terrorists" or all Frenchmen "snobs" than to explain the intricacies of the history of Moslem cultures and the subsequent emergence of Islamic extremism, or to explain the base inflection differences between French and English that send the wrong signals to those native speakers of French who aren't yet native-level fluent in English.

In French, it's common to end statements with a rising vocal inflection, whereas this is the signal of a question in English. Consequently, when French speakers are learning

English, but don't have the inflection patterns mastered yet, every statement they say in English can come across with questioning inflection, which is typically assumed to be condescending behavior to a native English speaker. This behavior isn't intended, but is perceived, which contributes to the perpetuation of prejudice against Frenchmen in English-speaking nations.

The other basic difficulty in minimizing prejudice (recall, please that prejudice can't be objectively eliminated - only functionally minimized), is a parent's fundamental control of a child's cognitive domain by bridging their access to sociolinguistic communities during the ages in which the effects of neural plasticity play the largest role in cerebral cortical brain development. If a child hasn't been exposed to a foreign language before the end of puberty, that child's chances of ever attaining native-level fluency in any second language diminish in comparison to the population of those who had this exposure. The same principle applies to sociological communities, in that prejudice in a child can only effectively be minimized by immersing that child in a foreign culture at a young age. In Europe, this is far simpler than it is in America - the average citizen of Europe is geographically much closer to "foreign cultures" than the average citizen of America. This gap is bridged, however, with the prevalence of global communications.

Multiple societal perspectives can be effectively integrated

through online communication with members of different societies, cultures, and social classes. This form of perspective integration attains prejudicial minimization while avoiding hegemony - forced cultural heteronormativity. By giving a human face to those outside of your culture, the social vilification of “us versus them” is also minimized.

### **Intellectual Property and Pareto**

Finally, the last-mile problem (the application of the Pareto principle to socio-geographic problems) is addressed by social media control, rather than corporate. The RIAA and MPAA in America have already begun to see the decay of their business model through the advent of online communications, and soon after their final bankruptcy, we'll see the major multinational media conglomerates follow the same path through the advent of online media... media delivery services such as YouTube, Joost, and Videocasting; in combination with social news services such as Digg, Slashdot, and Reddit form the socialization of the modern world media. Much like the atomic bomb, the only secret to YouTube is that it could be created. Their business model is spreading, and major media conglomerates will have to adapt, or fail under their fundamental incongruence with social weight.

The socialization of media is beginning to become incongruent with the culturally heteronormative (Hegemony)

drives of state-controlled or sponsored news agencies such as Xinhua (in China) and Fox (in America). They can make every attempt to sue or silence social media, but it won't be any more effective than the RIAA and MPAA suing their own fans for infringement of intellectual "property" rights. Recall the previous discussion of the illusory definition of property due to the lack of the fundamental ability for control. When discussing intellectual "property," this divergence is yet more prominent. The RIAA can't control the social dissemination of their works any more than the Anglo-Norman aristocracy could control the language spoken by the agricultural population of England in the 9th century AD. The latter brought us Middle English. The former brings us the free flow of knowledge through the global society and the final realization of the marketplace of ideas as the marketplace of application of ideas. The attitude is becoming more prevalent in modern business that managers don't care what you know, they care what you can do. This moves the value previously given to information to the value of the flow of (and derivative application of) that information.

This form of global communication won't be fully pervasive until the advent of fluently-effective machine translation, but that's on the horizon as well.

### **The unbearable lightness of attention**

As with any system, how it breaks is equally important as how it works. In the United States (as in Medieval Iceland), those with tighter control of monetized instruments overwhelmingly dictate the behavior of the society on the whole. This build the United States of Corporate America, for the Stockholders, by the Stockholders. We're ostensibly allowed to vote with our dollars (from whom we purchase products) and feet (for whom we choose to work), but that only further individualizes and politicizes corporate entities. This begins with the political recognition of business as "individuals" with human-convergent rights but a few steps away from being able to vote. This forgoes rational decision making in favor of tyranny of the minority, and is one of the many steps towards a fascist state, and the serfdom of the population on the whole.

We're already seeing this in the creation of the coming recession - when people are afraid of losing their jobs, they willfully subjugate themselves to their corporate and government leaders, exchanging personal liberties time and time again to attain temporary security. This can be seen in the PATRIOT act in America (of which Orwell himself would have been pressed to more appropriately name), and the BSA(OS) in Australia. By de-skilling the American workforce through industrialization of economics and education, by the administration of John D.



Rockefeller / Woodrow Wilson selling our children's future into the interests of industrialization, modern society has made every attempt to remove from its population its most basic source of power: free attention. With the coming transition of industrialization to a global scale, however, this grievance is slowly being redressed.

Overwhelmingly, there exists the misconception that the American political construction resembles a democracy. When corporations and lobbyists exercise more influence over congressional and executive decision than do voters, both politicians and constituencies are alienated by the cognitive dissonance deciding which society to serve - those who paid (exchanged fiat-monetized instruments) to give them their position, or those who voted (exchanged social capitalized instruments) to do so. This problem stems from the traditional exorbitant expense required to run a political campaign. This involves taking money from corporations and lobbyists and paying giant multinational media conglomerates for airtime to spread their candidacy. The effect we're seeing on this process now, with the socialization of media, is that intellectual freedom-of-expression is becoming financial freedom-of-expression. Politicians can access MySpace, YouTube, and Facebook as easily as you or I can, and connect directly to their constituency without the substantial capital outlay required traditionally by media conglomerates. This results in the normalization of class

participation in governmental structures as well as the previously described egalitarian distribution of wealth of the global society.

In the post-industrial socioeconomy, the problem of the flow of currency is addressed by realizing we haven't been monetizing all salient instruments of power. The ultimate form of scarcity in any society of selves is attention, which contributes to information. Information isn't power, though - the application of knowledge as a skill is power. Power is the exertion of influence over another person or society: the intentional, causal exchange of capital (whether that be attention capital, monetary capital, social capital, or some other form such as biological/psycho-economic capital) for personal or social gain. In the attention economy, this trade in attention is modeled in social capital, and monetized in skill.

The exertion of power becomes unethical, however, when it alienates a person or society from their fundamental human rights. Unethical behavior in humans (as well as other evolved primates) eventually collapses under its own sociological weight (in that it traditionally works against the constructive ends of a society), and we're seeing this happen in American politics as well:

When politicians can run a campaign on a layman's salary (through social media and online communication), they can express the values they stand for, rather than the values for which they're being offered large sums of money. The behavior of

lobbying and corporate participation in political models should be made illegal, but along with other institutions of disproportionately high social costs to low productive social returns, it will eventually collapse on its own. This started to happen in the 2004 American Presidency elections with the candidacy of Howard Dean, and is gaining momentum in the 2008 American Presidency elections with the candidacies of Obama, Clinton, Paul, and Giuliani. Next month, a multinational media conglomerate (CNN) will be sponsoring presidential debates on a socialized media platform - YouTube. In future elections, this process should allow greater prevalence of third parties in this country, crucial to the integration and expression of perspective in a non-heteronormative state such as America.

### **The Function of the State**

Fully public (i.e. state) ownership of means of production and fully private (i.e. individual) ownership of the same are both fundamentally intractable because of their inhibitions of social progress. Public ownership lacks the capability for uninhibited social progress because the cost of innovation (research, development, and rework) is more often spent equalizing income levels for the population at large. Fully private ownership lacks the same capability in that a single person can't typically research, develop, and rework the means of production, without

submitting themselves as a wage-slave to an employer for unreasonable durations of time, alienating them from natural societies by creating inbred social systems involving the loss of natural human behavior into the framework of a capitalist-style productive business society.

The fundamental disconnect between the socialist and capitalist notions of control of means of production (capital) doesn't stem from social binary systems of "individual" or "group" control (an illusion at any rate) - the disconnect comes from an incomplete definition of capital. Social capital and attention trade are the forces by which economies are constructed and normalized - physical capital grows through the normative effects of social capital. Technology (the application of attention to an object to solve a human problem), and by derivative physical capital grows much more rapidly through a society than it does through an individual.

In the post-industrial economy, the purpose of the state remains the protection all basic human rights of its constituency. In a large-scale (emergent global) society, however, preservation of all human rights is fundamentally intractable, because rights, on some level have to be sacrificed to participate in any society. A person's extant rights decrease proportionally with that person's memberships in a society: Thoreau was mentally free but physically and socially imprisoned, whereas citizens of many western-style democracies are physically free, but mentally and

socially imprisoned.

Post-Industrial socioeconomics will bring greater freedom to all three personal aspects (mental, social, and physical function), through the formation of a global society based on communications technologies. The process of industrialization inevitably leads to these ends. Human societies, when allowed to congregate, communicate, and trade, will overwhelmingly pursue pleasure (in a socioeconomic model, this correlates to capital gain) in ethical balance with the avoidance of pain (the amelioration of infringements on basic human rights.) In America, this emergence comes about entirely within the framework laid out in the Constitution. This behavior is biologically emergent from that of any human (or other primate), which is in itself emergent from the behavior of any neuron. The same laws and models that apply to the tiniest of cells apply equally to the largest and most integrated of global cultures.

## **Mental Pollution, Social Pollution**

The problem of environmental pollution is part of a greater pattern of socioeconomic externalities. Modern industrialized capitalism also produces crime, gangs, pollution, black markets, losses from insider trading, and many other forms of pollution. These social problems converge, however, when viewing their collective traits, causes, and forms of address. In this chapter, I expand on these relationships, addressing the problems of mental and social pollution through comparison with environmental, physical pollution.

### **Ecology through simple living**

Pollution is by and large a byproduct of industrialization. This is another aspect in which industrialization self-perpetuates. Industrialization thrives on the relationship between play and work - specifically the growth of the former by minimizing the latter. This is easily seen by looking at the relationship between a nation's industrial progress and its citizen's available time for vacation in any given year. Citizens of the United States, arguably one of the most industrialized nations on the Earth typically receive two to three weeks of vacation time per year. In

Germany, a more socially-oriented nation, the average is twice to three times that value.

In a fully capitalist economy, the aversion to vacation time is easily explained: when a person is playing, they're not physically or financially producing or consuming at rates which would sustain the economy on the whole. In a Marxist-socialist economy, however, work is play, and all jobs which aren't enjoyable to someone are automated through technology. Neither model is, again, fully sustainable when taken separately. In a social-capitalist society, as discussed in the chapter on post-industrial economics, however, work and play are commingled, but not fully equated. When all disciplines are unionized (such as in Germany, for example), I believe we'll see a more workable balance and flow between work-time and play-time. Pollution in its many forms, though, work towards the ideals of capitalism: when workers don't want to play, they consume and produce.

Industrialization produces more than just physical pollution, though. As also previously discussed, industrialization of economy produces industrialization of education. The same tradeoff between work and play exists in schools as it does in the workplace, then: children are given home-work to indoctrinate them into the practices useful for participation in an industrial economy. Most of the "highly productive" members of companies I've worked for here have been hopelessly addicted to the trappings of their corporate environments. If they're not

checking their company email accounts every two hours, they're checking their blackberries every thirty minutes. When "the boss" calls on a weekend, or if they still have work to do, they'll be found at the office, tirelessly pounding away at their keyboards, their families reduced to pictures on a wall. When work becomes play, play becomes work.

This mental pollution we're given socially from a very young age, then emerges as social pollution. I define Social pollution, then, as morals and practices which aren't productive to the ends of the society or societies in which a person places the greatest value. Mental pollution, then, is the sum of prejudices that lead to these deficits. As with physical pollution, mental and social pollution are also productive towards industrialization, and counterproductive to the free exercise of human rights.

Those who choose to live a life of voluntary simplicity, avoiding as many of the trappings of modernity as possible, then minimize these forms of pollution, and their detrimental effects on well-being. By home-schooling children, taking family vacations, and learning multiple languages, a modern person can minimize mental pollution. By ridding themselves of mass-media, organizing unions, and refusing to transact business with companies that restrict their social capital, a modern person can minimize social pollution. Likewise, by switching to a vegan diet, riding a bike instead of driving, and recycling, a modern



person can minimize physical pollution. This isn't to say, however, that a single behavior can't have both beneficial and polluting effects simultaneously, however. These observations depend on the perspectives of the society on whose effects they're being viewed.

### **The epitaph of the RIAA**

The decline of the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) presents a case study in the effects of social pollution. Rivers of ink have been spilled over the decaying business plan of the RIAA, and the effects are obvious: when an entity relies on lawsuits or other form of warfare for its continued existence, its end is near. This happened with SCO just as it did with the Romans and the USSR. In short, the business models of the companies constituting the RIAA are based on the gross profits on the sale of physical recordings of music, in order to compensate for losses in other areas such as advertising and recording.

The basic problem with this model is one of social capital. Twenty years ago, if I heard a song on the radio and wanted to share it with a friend, physical ownership of that record was social gold. I could take it to their house, show them the album artwork and liner notes, and enjoy the music with them. This gains me an amount of social capital commensurate with how

much my friend likes the music, but required physical possession of the media. With the advent of music-on-demand, however, I don't have to physically own the media - I can just tell my friends about the bands, and they can listen to them on their own time, gaining me the same amount of social capital for significantly less financial capital investment.

Now, file sharing is certainly one type of music-on-demand service, but peer-to-peer file sharing isn't the failure of their model: the ability to time-shift the media was. This came with the advent of the cassette tape and radio bootlegs, and continues through file-sharing. Since these forms of social capital gains require almost no investment on my part (aside from the cost of the physical media itself), the capital trade relationship between the record labels and me then becomes disadvantageous in the other direction. With the founding of the iTunes music store, however, this relationship comes closer to being in balance, assuming the lack of DRM. Apple has realized that this is a deal-killer for most enthusiasts - those on whose social capital they rely in order to socially spread word about artists. Consequently, they've started offering music without DRM. If there is a future for the record labels, it's in this business model: be constructive to the societies on which you're based.

This devaluation is evident at any local rock concert. Fans are more willing to spend \$20 on a band's t-shirt than they are to spend \$10 on a CD. This is because CDs have lost their social

utility - the only thing a fan does with their CDs nowadays is copy them to their iPod and toss the CD on a shelf. If they want to show their friend the music, they use their iPod instead. T-shirts, however, still have an immense social utility - they allow fans to socially capitalize on their music taste without needing to carry around a CD, tape, record, guitar, or even carry on a conversation. Concerts operate on the same lines, in that they by their very nature offer social utility.

### **Social pollution**

CDs become, then physical and social pollution, while DRM becomes social pollution. DRM only constitutes physical pollution when integrated into a physical media such as Sony's rootkit-infected CDs. Both devalue the social currency available to those who participate in music-oriented societies. When a business model is built on a social currency that's inherently disadvantageous - just like it was when fans had to physically own records, tapes, and CDs, that business model inevitably fails. DRM, when left unchecked, will destroy the same business models as physical, recorded media. Moreover, these technologies work against the consumer because they work against the societies in which consumers participate.

More and more, artists are beginning to realize this. Recently, Prince gave away countless copies of his new CD in the

United Kingdom. By traditional economic models, this would've been a foolish move - if intellectual property is to be likened to physical property, the currency of Prince's music is vastly devalued in a direct relationship to its increased supply. The opposite, however, occurred: Prince, over the next two months held twenty one (21) shows in London, and sold out every last one of them.

Radiohead is similarly offering their latest album, *In Rainbows*, for the price of whatever a listener wants to pay, though are still charging for and distributing a boxed set of the music. The cost for the digital download can be \$0, or it can be \$100, depending solely on the preference of the listener. Trent Reznor is even following suit with his next release, as did Bruce Hornsby on his last tour. I actually got a chance to see Hornsby when he came through Fort Worth this summer, and was rewarded with a free box set containing four CDs of his best music. Everyone who bought tickets (mine cost \$40) was given one of these box sets. When I got home from the concert, I checked on the eBay, and these box sets were selling for \$50. Non-social economics are breaking along with the business models it helped build: social capital and social pollution are very real, and more powerful than money in industries that base their profits on social behavior. I contend that all industries are so based.

In this example, the business conglomerate would have to

know the social drives of its customers in order to reform their behaviors. In this case, though, they were told, but didn't listen.

### **Attention codependence**

Attention is best invested when it maximizes social capital generation in both partners. In this way, the behavior of social capital is analog to that of physical or monetized capital. This is a tricky proposition, though, in that it requires some knowledge of the drives and mental prejudices of another person. This issue of solipsism, the contemplation of what minds exist other than one's own, has been a heated philosophical debate for centuries.

In some cases, involuntary advertising can be socially productive. If, while driving down the interstate, I see a billboard for a product or service which I believe will be more constructive than destructive to one of my societies, I wouldn't call that billboard "attention theft." Attention theft can also only occur when a mental state pre-exists which would incur an opportunity cost when offset.

The gray area comes from those affects on my social values which are undefined or undefinable (in that you can't objectively predict a person's societies or reactions). This was the reason I clarified voluntary advertising as that which is present in the voluntary intersection of cognitive domains (perceptive vantage-points). Through this voluntarily integration of a buyer's

cognitive domain with a seller's (specifically when the medium between them is non-free, such as print, online, radio, or television), the cost of that medium should be understood to be offset by advertising revenue. The attention-seller's compensation then becomes access to the content the attention-buyer provides.

This also requires ads to be relevant, otherwise the advertiser's profits aren't maximized, and the attention therefore isn't optimally invested. Ultimately, that's the decision of the product-seller / attention-buyer, though, and not the product-buyer / attention-seller. The attention transaction is only optimized if both buyer and seller maximize their respective capital gains - socially, physically, and/or financially.

When this codependency isn't optimized, mental pollution occurs. I defined mental pollution earlier as the sum of prejudices that lead to deficits in socially productive behavior. These prejudices can be as complex as racism and bigotry, or as simple as prejudice towards a particular type of toothpaste which, while not yielding optimal results, is produced by a company that could afford to advertise on a billboard between your house and the local market. The decision-point, then, between theft-advertising and beneficial advertising, is the convergence-point between maximum socioeconomic gain of both buyer and seller. When trade relationships are inherently disadvantageous, polarized markets emerge, and the law necessary to regulate

those markets (such as sin taxes and green taxes.)

### **Earth-friendly behavior**

Mental and social pollution are, then, at least as important as physical pollution, in that all three can equally impact the construction of well-functioning societies. Moreover, each of these three partially form and are formed by both of the others. In studying the patterns of social and mental behavior in a person or society, the same patterns emerge as those involved in environmental pollution. These forms of social problems overwhelmingly stem from disadvantageous trade between the three constituent forms of capital: social (relationships, attention, power, and influence), mental (knowledge, money, and information), and physical (food, water, and shelter). Self-interest is social-interest viewed through a different perspective. Once this integrated perspective is realized, pollution, in all its forms, can effectively be minimized.

## **The War on Terra**

The current U.S. war on terror is a strategically architected plan to secure power structures friendly to U.S. interests in foreign oil markets to temporarily stay the effects of its scarcity on the American people. By fighting terrorism, however, the US Government perpetuates terrorism through economic competition and disadvantageous trade, and unethical international business practices. This chapter discusses war as a necessary condition of human life, the evolution of war to include terrorist practices through the process of industrialization, the causes and effects of both major American- Iraqi conflicts, and the effects of American foreign policy on the human condition.

## **The Roots of Terrorism**

The United states is currently at war against terrorism. The war against terror, however, has little directly to do with terrorism itself. The roots of terrorist behavior are in economic self-interests and social control, and its seeds are the perpetuation of terrorism. History shows us countless examples of violence begetting further violence. Terrorism is generally characterized



as forced removal of human rights by a highly organized group towards a civilian population through the use of violence and intimidation. This is a product of industrialization in that it requires cultural influence over long distances, economic inequality, global transport, and access to the civilian population of a rival political entity. Some restrict this definition to include only upwardly asymmetric applications of violence and intimidation (i.e. from an economically disadvantaged class against a higher class), but in this paper I equate both asymmetrical applications as terrorism. When governments are seen as societies of individuals, which themselves are societies of selves, terrorism is terrorism regardless of which person or group is applying or receiving the action.

If the targets are military in nature (such as in more traditional warfare), *ceteris paribus*, this would be called guerilla warfare, rather than terrorist activity. This isn't a modern invention - it has existed in every society that imposes their values upon another. International terrorism, however, is a reaction against industrialization. This is seen in the attacks on the world trade center in New York, public transportation bombings in Spain, Japan, and England, and countless attacks within Iraq, Chechnya, and the former Yugoslavic states.

Two necessary products of industrialization are economic inequality, while the initially economically disadvantaged parties normalize the global standard of living during the course of their

own industrialization, and the perpetuation of higher-speed pathways of capital in all its forms between historically geographically distant nations. In order for terrorism to be effective, however, warring parties need physical access to each others' civilian populations - not just military targets. David Black, in his article *The Geometry of Terrorism*, "Terrorism arises only when a grievance has a social geometry distant enough and a physical geometry close enough for mass violence against civilians." (p.21) Before the globalization of transport and communications, this manner of access wasn't easy to come by, if even possible for a given society.

The American war on terror started with an attack by Al Qaeda on three targets in the United States: one civilian (the world trade centers), one military (the pentagon), and one unknown. By this understanding, one of the attacks was that of terrorism, one was that of guerilla warfare, but none was a traditionally understood act of war. In the same manner by which the basis of international law had to be re-examined during the Nuremberg trials, the basis of war was redefined after these attacks. Consequently, an attack by Al Qaeda was redefined as an attack by terrorism in general. Certainly, many nations have suffered at the hands of those who would inflict terror to meet their political goals, but no nation takes this fight as seriously (or haphazardly, depending on perspective) as the USA.

### **American assault on terror**

The lengths to which the American executive and military will go to fight terrorism worldwide have been well documented. This began as a coalition of those willing to oppose terrorist elements in various middle eastern nations and North Korea, and continues to this day, albeit with a far weaker coalition. The American executive instructed the military to pursue the Al Qaeda network, but only for so long as it remained convenient for American power interests. As soon as Enron (who owned a profitable stake in the oil refineries controlled by Indian Oil) filed for bankruptcy, however than the attention of the American military was turned towards Iraq. In league with the long and tortured history of that area of the world, American political interest in Afghani stability dwindled when the American energy sector no longer needed them as a trade route. If American energy sector interests can't move crude oil from fields in the Caspian basin (such as in Baku, Azerbaijan) to refineries in Western India which profited Enron subsidiaries such as the one in Dabhol, they have no need to instill the American democratic process in Afghanistan.

In March of 2003, however, the attention of the American media turned to Iraq, and its declared relationship with Al Qaeda. The American CIA made numerous claims of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) in Iraq and nurturing the prospect that

Saddam Hussein was a supporter of terrorism, spread the conflict to Iraqi soil. In the course of this war, the second major invasion of Iraq by American forces, thousands have died, and more than 100,000 have been wounded. The claims of Iraqi WMD have since been cast aside, through reports that they either never existed, or were spirited away to Syria before the American invasion and occupation. (ref “Why We Fight” from NPR's “This American Life”) Likewise, the claims of a connection between Al Qaeda and the September 11th attacks have been rejected. Since then, the United States has maintained a list of nations known or suspected of supporting terrorist activity against American interest, containing currently Cuba, Iran, North Korea, Sudan, and Syria. In the US-led war on terror, these are the obvious next battle grounds.

### **America and international terror**

Not only has the U.S. government had opportunities to eliminate terrorism at home and abroad upon which it didn't act, it has actively supported terrorist states, when it serves American political and economic interests.

From the American military support of the Taliban and corresponding Mujahideen during the Soviet war in Afghanistan, their earlier support of Pakistani revolutionaries during their war with India in 1971, to the infamous Iran-Contra affair, the United

States' executive has actively supported the institutionalized practice of terror in the middle east and elsewhere for more than thirty years.

Terrorism didn't attack America on September 11th, Al Qaeda did. When they did, America enjoyed a grand outpouring of support and offers of help from the international community, including those on the list of terror-supporting states. Iranian officials even went so far as to disclose to the US the locations of Al Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, but were turned a deaf ear. Seemingly nescient of Britain's problems in that region one century earlier, America ran into the same tribal warfare and skeleton government. In the months and years to follow, the American executive proceeded to squander the good will of most of their would-be allies through poor planning and coordination of the battles to come.

### **America and national terror**

Many nations employ the forced removal of human rights through violence and intimidation, including America and those in America's support. Israel, Turkey, China, Saudi Arabia all have records of human rights violations through violence and intimidation that would equal terrorism by any other name, but the U.S. maintains positive relations with them.

Israel, funded by the United States through through

lobbying by the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), has committed countless atrocities against their neighboring lands, while enjoying the protection of the U.S. government. The United States has used its veto power in the United Nations against every resolution critical of Israel (through the Negroponte doctrine), despite a well-documented history of Israel's terrorist actions against its neighbors (as recently as last month), and its Palestinian-identifying citizens. The United States also enjoys good relations with China and Saudi Arabia (among numerous others) which employ terrorism by forcibly removing citizens from their human rights through violence and intimidation.

These policies aren't exclusive to other nations, though. Throughout modernity, America has sanctioned terrorism (the forced removal of human rights through violence and intimidation) against its own citizens. The American Counter Intelligence Program (COINTELPRO) employed terror-driven practices against domestic organizations using terror-driven practices against America such as the Weather Underground and the Black Panthers, but overwhelmingly otherwise. The vast majority of COINTELPRO activities were also employed to “expose, disrupt, misdirect, discredit, or otherwise neutralize” non-violent civil rights groups in the United States such as the Socialist Workers Party, the American Indian Movement, and Martin Luther King Jr.'s Southern Christian Leadership

Conference. These practices continue to date in the form of impediments to free speech at both democrat and republican national conventions, the latter of which involving serious, sanctioned abuse of power by police forces. These abuses continue through the American NSA's warrantless wiretapping scandal, the abolition of habeus corpus, and the seemingly perpetual scandals surrounding American torture of prisoners (reference Abu Gharib and Guantánamo Bay).

### **A Brief History of the End of Oil**

By recognizing that violence begets violence, yet still fighting terrorism by employing terrorism, paradoxes emerge which we must evaluate from another perspective. By acknowledging that all people and societies act in their own self-interest, and the the perpetuation of industrialized economy depends inexorably on oil, America is at war in order to rearrange the global structure of power in its own interests. The economics of scarcity and recent evidence for the coming shortage of fossil fuels will require innovations in energy production and storage, and a fundamental shift in the consumption patterns of modern society.

Industrialized society cannot sustain current patterns of extraction and consumption. Contrary to popular nomenclature, oil is never produced, only extracted and refined. This follows a left-shifted Gaussian curve, beginning with the Drake oil well in

Pennsylvania, cresting (“peaking”) early this century, and rapidly dwindling until the extraction and refining of crude oil no longer offers economic return on investment. Many have said over the past few years that oil has already peaked. We may not know when the peak will happen or has happened until many years after the fact - but we know it will. Oil is a finite, scarce resource, and those industrialized nations who control its flow, control the heartbeat of the modern global economy.

Oil is the life-blood of industrialization. Transportation, medicine, energy, and food all require immense amounts of oil to be perpetuate the modern human condition. In a situation of high demand and low supply, behaviours must change to adjust for shortages. Industrialized nations, in order to preserve their sovereignty, must either use less oil or control more oil as it becomes more scarce.

### **Extinguishing the Tainted Spark**

In order to counteract these effects, modern industries must develop revolutionary new technologies to supplant inexpensive fossil fuels as an energy source. Production of energy must shift to renewable alternatives such as solar, wind, water, and hydrogen power. None of these technologies are yet cost-competitive with oil or nuclear power (the other major finite power source), but they are becoming more so every year.



Transportation of energy (currently done through petrol / gasoline) must also shift to renewable alternatives, using hydrogen fuel cells, or batteries charged from renewable sources. Biomass resources such as municipal waste and agricultural by-products can also be refined into transportable biofuels, so long as their impact on the greater environment can be minimized.

The necessary changes in behavior will be ineffective, however, if citizens of the modern world don't lead industry and government by example, economic choice, and by voting. Individuals need to dramatically reduce their dependence on energy and oil-based products such as conventional plastics, synthetic fabrics, and fuels. This can start as simply as replacing incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent equivalents, committing to and practicing reduction, reuse, and recycling of limited resources, and can be as involved as planting sustainable gardens, practicing a holistically simplified life, stocking emergency preparedness kits, and discussing these issues with their friends, families, and other social networks. In previous generations, ecologically sensitive practices were more common sense (through the Kantian doctrine of duty). In the disposable culture, however, when social, mental, and physical pollution go unchecked, the Earth's ecosystem ceases to be fit for human life.

The peak oil phenomenon is the perhaps greatest challenge yet to face industrialized culture. Supply of oil follows a left-shifted Gaussian curve - after half of it is gone, the other half is

increasingly more expensive to get to. Demand, however, is a product of population, advertising, and consumption patterns. As time goes on and more uses are found for oil, the demand for oil increases parabolically. Consequently, when oil becomes expensive to extract and refine, the prices of oil-based goods will also rise. If an oil-driven economy doesn't transition to an economy based on an alternative energy source with equivalent energy conversion, the Association for the Study of Peak Oil predicts that the conventional agriculture that would follow could only feed 20 to 40% of the human population. When oil becomes prohibitively expensive, industrial societies without a viable alternative will cease to be industrial, and cease to be societies.

### **Blood for Oil**

In order for America to sustain its current economic output (or at least its recent pattern of stagnation), it must secure sources of oil domestically and internationally. The largest remaining deposits of recoverable conventional oil lie in the Middle East and the Caspian basin. Canada has vast deposits of shale and bitumen, but both of these are cost-prohibitive to refine into portable energy sources. Ideally, this economic sustenance would come through international oil trade agreements to aid in the transition to alternative energy. In reality, however, this sustenance is coming through war.

The Caucasus mountain region, which separates the southern tip of the Russian Federation from Georgia and Azerbaijan and neighbors the Caspian basin, is estimated to contain substantial quantities of conventional crude oil, but transportation of that oil to a region friendly to America political interests is a formidable task. Recognizing that many of these trade routes must progress through territory unfriendly to American interests (including Iran, and to some extent Turkey), for America to fully capitalize on these two large remaining sources of oil, regimes must change.

One possible route is to bring a pipeline through Turkmenistan, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to the oil refineries in northwest India (then, partially controlled by Enron). This was the first focus, but was quickly abandoned when the collapse of Enron's profit and influence in India caused the route to become economically disadvantageous to the United States - despite the factors that a pipeline of that length through those territories would be near-impossible to secure. As previously mentioned, our attention turned towards a more fruitful route.

The second path is straight south, through the Kurdish areas of Turkey and Iraq, to Kuwait and the Persian Gulf. This effort began in March of 2003, but wasn't fully capitalized upon due to overwhelming internal instability and insecurity after a forced regime change (and subsequent genocide) in Iraq. Likewise, If the task of building through mountain ranges and

permafrost were technologically surmountable, and an agreement with Russia on the capitalization of that pipeline possible, perhaps a route to the North or Baltic Seas could be considered, but no such technology is currently viable, and no such relations exist between America and Russia.

The last route is to build a pipeline through Azerbaijan and Georgia to the southern shore of Turkey. Azerbaijan and Georgia, former USSR states, have been hotbeds of political unrest since the dissolution of the USSR in 1991, and Turkey is vying for membership in the European Union against allegations of human rights violations. This causes this route to be unstable at best for American interests, but ideal for the economic and political interests of members of the European Union. Sure enough, in May of 2005, The Baku-Tblisi-Ceyhan pipeline started pumping oil over this very route, much to the dismay of Russian economic interests, with economic backing from a diverse coalition, dominantly European.

Knowing the Persian Gulf region contains the vast majority of estimated ultimately recoverable oil, the American executive chose to maximize their short term profits (with major interests in oil companies themselves) through the inherent induction of instability with invasion and forced regime change. America's current sources of oil are at the tail end of their production cycles and won't outpace demand in the coming years. If America is going to have a supply of oil capable of

sustaining their economy through the conversion to alternative energy sources, the last two options are to implement a domestic policy of reduction of oil use (which is disadvantageous to the American executive), or to attempt control of the political climate in the Middle East. The American executive has chosen the latter.

### **Roots of Middle Eastern Instability**

The Middle east has historically been a politically unstable region. According to Judeo-Christian history, fighting between Canaanites and Arabs has ensued since Abraham has Ishmael by Hagar, then had Isaac by Sarah. Infighting in the family then led Hagar and Ishmael to flee. The tribes of Israel came from Isaac, and the Arab nations came from Ishmael. This is reflected in the two conflicting accounts of the Abrahamic sacrifice: Jews and Christians claim Abraham offered Isaac as a sacrifice to Jehovah, whereas Moslems believe Abraham offered Ishmael. Fighting between Jews and Arabs has existed for as long as both nations have themselves existed. Furthermore, strife within the Arab world has ensued since the split between the Sunni and Shiite communities over who was the rightful successor to their prophet Mohammed.

The prophet Zoroaster was later born in the Kandahar region of Afghanistan, and interaction between his followers and

the Canaanites during the exile to Babylon is cited as an explanation for the emergence of dualism in Christianity (the concept of heaven and hell, and of Satan as a god, alongside Jehovah), in contrast to the absence of these traits in Judaism. Later, The Baha'u'llah was born in Tehran, teaching unification through ecumenical practice before being exiled and imprisoned until death. The region on the whole had been home to the most conquered and occupied peoples in the history of history, with continuation to date. In locked step with the Greeks, Canaanites, numerous Caliphates, Chinese, the Mongolian Empire, the Sassanid Empire, the Parthian Empire, various Egyptian Pharaohs, the Persian Empire, and the Durrani Empire, Britain vied for control of trade routes to India in the late 1800s, involving the occupation of Afghanistan. American interest in regional stability during this time was to keep the USSR from controlling the trade routes to the Indian Ocean, in to prevent them from enjoying trade unfettered by the twice-yearly ice-locked northern sea.

Not all conflict in this region is due to religious history or economic trade routes, though. In a deen such as Islam, the boundary between church and state is blurred almost to the point of non-existence, but political struggles can still be characterized by military action. From 1980 to 1988, the U.S. armed and funded Islamic militants in Iran in their war against Iraq in exchange for influence in releasing American hostages in

Lebanon. After the first gulf war, America's endorsement of trade restrictions in Iraq caused grave economic disparity throughout the Middle East. This, combined with America's unwavering support of Israel, a state with a history of military and terrorist attacks against its neighbors and citizens, fosters anti-Americanism and resentment of western culture in the Middle East.

These economic challenges produced inherent instability, which the United States used to their advantage in securing oil interests.

### **The Reemergence of Islamic Fundamentalism**

The major flaw in western views of Wahhabism (the Islamic sect claimed by Osama Bin Laden) is that of militarism. As explained by Karen Armstrong in her article, "The Label of Catholic Terror was Never Used about the IRA",

Like the Bible, the Qur'an has its share of aggressive texts, but like all the great religions, its main thrust is towards kindness and compassion. Islamic law outlaws war against any country in which Muslims are allowed to practice their religion freely, and forbids the use of fire, the destruction of buildings and the killing of innocent civilians in a military campaign. So although Muslims, like Christians or Jews, have all too often failed to live

up to their ideals, it is not because of the religion per se.

We rarely, if ever, called the IRA bombings “Catholic” terrorism because we knew enough to realise that this was not essentially a religious campaign. Indeed, like the Irish republican movement, many fundamentalist movements worldwide are simply new forms of nationalism in a highly unorthodox religious guise. This is obviously the case with Zionist fundamentalism in Israel and the fervently patriotic Christian right in the US.

... Bin Laden was not inspired by Wahhabism but by the writings of the Egyptian ideologue Sayyid Qutb, who was executed by President Nasser in 1966. Almost every fundamentalist movement in Sunni Islam has been strongly influenced by Qutb, so there is a good case for calling the violence that some of his followers commit “Qutbian terrorism.” Qutb urged his followers to withdraw from the moral and spiritual barbarism of modern society and fight it to the death.

Following these teachings, Osama bin Laden launched an unparalleled terrorist strike against America on September 11, 2001. After ignoring multiple warnings, the United States did precious little to prevent the attack, and the net rise in security



has been minimal at best. This attack gave America an opportunity to not only rearrange social security in the interest of the American executive, but also to step in and rearrange regional power structures in their own interest.

The Ba'ath party in Iraq had a history of using biological weapons against their own people, but no evidence was found that they were creating more or that they hadn't destroyed what they had under U.N. Sanctions and the inspections. The Ba'ath government in Iraq furthermore had no use for nuclear weapons. In a totalitarian secularist state, the primary government interest is internal stability, and nuclear weapons are typically an international concern. Hussein enforced a cult of personality much like Mao, of the type that works against any foreign influence on domestic affairs, and which punishes severely any domestic influence in foreign affairs. Claims of ties between Al Qaeda and the Ba'ath party violate these focuses on internal stability.

### **Privacy and Isolationism**

This occupation and regime change was precipitated by other applications of the neoconservative doctrines of power, imperialism, and hegemony. The current U.S. neoconservative administration has repeatedly regarded its own authority as superior to that of any other sovereign nation or group thereof.

On July 17, 1998, The U.S. voted against creating the International Criminal Court, the international tribunal where war crimes, genocide, and crimes against humanity are tried. Despite the clause guaranteeing its power to be “complimentary to national criminal jurisdiction”, the United States adopted an isolationist stance. The signature of the United States is also one of the determining factors of how the Kyoto Protocol, a measure to reduce global greenhouse gas output, will go into effect. This would establish an external measure of control on U.S. businesses, so it's being fought fiercely by industry and has been stagnant for years waiting to be signed by the President. These practices, combined with American involvement in Middle Eastern politics, form the same “isolationist imperialism” stance employed by the USSR in the construction of the eastern bloc nations. This is necessary if America is to succeed in the post-oil world economy without investing in alternative energy research.

This rampant imperialism, however, lead to a number of privacy concerns. Not all information can be free. Whether that information is a person's credit card number or shoe size, or whether it's highly classified national security information, or gross national product data, every piece of information has skill potential. Information isn't capital, intrinsically, and contains no value outside of its possible use. With dual-use information such as how to employ nuclear physics, the question of control of that information becomes highly salient.

Privacy concerning an individual, in a socially emergent sense, is identical to protection of national security information, in that both offer protection from use of data adversely by a competitor. Daniel Solove, in his chapter *"I've got nothing to hide" and other misunderstandings of privacy*, continues:

... the value of protecting the individual is a social one. Society involves a great deal of friction, and we are constantly clashing with each other. Part of what makes a society a good place in which to live is the extent to which it allows people freedom from the intrusiveness of others.

In a society that values the perpetuation of itself over the human rights of its constituents, privacy interests will lose to security interests ten times out of ten. In this sense, the isolationist imperialism which comes from the unabashed application of pure capitalism to social problems (or pure socialism to capital problems) intrinsically leads to infringements on rights to personal privacy. This is reflected in the ever-expanding American civil forfeiture laws, and the aforementioned NSA wiretapping scandals, and withdrawal of habeas corpus rights. Frequently, the explanation is given that "If you're not doing anything wrong, nothing bad is going to happen to you." Major societal issues emerge, however, when ostensibly objective

notions of “right” and “wrong” are applied to a non-heteronormative population.

Privacy exists to protect. American citizens can't and shouldn't know everything that goes on in the American government. Such would cause inherent instability in negotiations, security, and most forms of planning. The same, however, holds true in reverse: the American government can't and shouldn't know everything that goes on between American citizens. This causes uneven and heavy-handed application of every war the American government has waged upon its own citizens: the war on drugs, the war on terror, the war on gay marriage, the war against women's rights, and the war against civil rights.

### **Project for a New American Century**

The seeds of imperialism are being grown by the neoconservatives at work in the American government. The Project for a New American Century was founded in 1997 by a number of high-ranking individuals currently in the President's direct service, and the DoD. Jeb Bush, Dick Cheney, Dan Quayle, Donald Rumsfeld, and Paul Wolfowitz are the most easily recognizable members. In their 2000 publication “Rebuilding America's Defenses”, they establish 4 core missions for the U.S. Military:

- Defend the American Homeland
- Fight and win multiple, simultaneous multiple theatre wars
- Perform the 'constabulatory' duties associated with shaping the security environment in critical regions
- Transform U.S. forces to exploit the 'revolution in military affairs'

To achieve these ends, they recommend rebuilding our military past the levels they were at during the cold war. This will enable enough control of the flow of oil through the Middle East to supply U.S. and their interests abroad with the energy necessary to bring about change in energy policy, assuming the American executive intends on capitalizing on this opportunity. The Republican party consists of precisely those individuals needed to understand the problem at hand and focus on a solution - former executives of Oil companies. The Project for a New American Century has known since 1998 the problems Middle Eastern instability pose to American and Global stability, and have been publishing and working towards solutions. Again, in the absence of a sensible alternative energy research policy, this manner of foreign control is the only way for America to fare the transition into an alternative energy-based economy. This success, however, isn't without its costs.

### **Equal Opportunity Social Control**

Created through these processes, we are brought to consider a leader of a sovereign nation with little regard for the welfare or basic human rights of its citizens, who rigs elections, invades other sovereign nations, employs torture for political ends, has a national news network to spread propaganda, invades the personal privacy in the interest of state security, suppresses free speech, operates courts without oversight, evades due process, enforces an unmitigated police state, tightly controls the flow of information, promotes extreme nationalism (unquestioned patriotism), blurs the lines between church and state and between state and company, identifies enemies as a cause for national unity, fights trade unionization, suppresses science and the arts by funding socio-religiously-ordained façades thereof, and maintains a cult of personality around an isolationist state. To whom would we be referring?

Unsurprisingly, this list applies equally to the governments of most societies whose wants and needs have outpaced their own ability to produce domestically to meet the majority of those needs. This traits are variously present in the governments of Joseph Stalin, Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, various American executives, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, and Chairman Mao, and overwhelmingly forms an analog to the indictments of King George III in the American Declaration of

Independence. In fact, in less modern terms, these traits also reflect the various governments of Rome, and any other historical power intent on self-preservation beyond its means to do so purely domestically. This isn't to say that fascism emerges from power perpetuating power for power's sake - far from it. Fascism emerges from unsustainable societies on any scale, the perpetuation of power is simply a means to that end.

When the rampant idealism of modernity and second-stage industrialism runs into the wall of the scarcity of a resource (in America's case, oil) necessary for its preservation, we have another Nash equilibrium, in which the terminal conditions are global American hegemony, or the descent of American society back to an agrarian-based subsistence.

### **Just because you should do something...**

*...doesn't mean that you can.*

As mentioned in previous chapters, the most effective way to develop socially constructive thoughts and actions is to surround yourself with smart people who disagree with you. Bush does this in at least one way I can tell (i.e. Condoleezza Rice), but overwhelmingly otherwise.

The issue with Iran is a deeper one, though, rooted in the same issue. It doesn't matter with whom he surrounds himself: his steps were laid out by PNAC, AIPAC, and a handful of other corporations and lobbyists decades ago. This is why one of my

base contentions has for a long time been that social progress will not be made in this country until three things happen:

First, we need comprehensive campaign finance and lobbying reform. Bush's actions represent the result of a cognitive dissonance between acting on behalf of those who exchanged social capital (voted) for him to be there, and those who exchanged physical capital (money) for the same. No man can serve two masters. When he has multiple allegiances, we know at least one thing to be true: at least some part of his motivation isn't driven by voter's choice. When a person can run a campaign based off of zero-expenditure of physical capital, the inherently disadvantageous trade relationship between politicians, lobbyists, and constituency will crumble under its own economic weight (much as slavery did in America). This is, however, the natural evolution of a globally connected society.

Second, we need viable third parties. This operates on a social level analogous to surrounding yourself with people who disagree with you (or even those who agree, but from different perspectives). This forces a constituency to a higher integration of beliefs with those of others, a necessary condition for universal social progress. Non-integrative (partisan) politics, such as we've seen emerge in America, are closer to an oligarchy, autocracy, or even theocracy. Both parties in America are as guilty of this as the other, though, in that they have no real competition. With inbred biological systems, those with no



competition, it's not necessarily the most fit traits that emerge. In fact, the opposite is typically the case. The same happens with inbred social, political, and economic systems as well.

Finally, we need to re-introduce ethics to business by de-personifying corporations. When corporations are forced to take actions that increase the material wealth of their stockholders, the society at large will always lose. Likewise, when corporations are allowed to donate to political campaigns, the interest of the greater whole will be ignored or marginalized.

With these understandings, President Bush is doing everything he should be doing to preserve himself, his authority, and the societies in which he places the greatest value (his closest social ties).

### **The Process of Middle-Eastern Peace**

What has emerged from these policies is a “Mexican standoff” between every major player (industrialized economy) on the international scene, over the control of the flows of oil and of information. When one player misbehaves, others threaten (or enact) economic sanctions, though these seldom have the intended effect on the heads of state. Playing on aversion-to-pain (as a psychobiological pattern) only functions as a deterrent when you can effect complete physical control of a cognitive domain. In international relations, this doesn't work, because Iran

and Syria can run to Russia, North Korea to China, or anyone else to anyone else who has an economic justification. With the globalization of societies living beyond their means, this trend perpetuates terrorism, and its axiomatic relationship with fascism.

This isn't to say that war is never justified. In the words of Kurt Vonnegut (from *Slaughterhouse Five*), writing an anti-war book is as effective as “writing an anti-glacier book”. Wars exist because of both commodity scarcity (economically) and varying individual fitness to capitalize on that scarcity (socially). By examining the thought of war as a purely biologically emergent phenomenon, it's paralleled by cell death (through malfunction of mitochondria) and by rational choice (internal dialogue and emotional-rational competition between divergent actions). When a cell can't get rid of its waste, we get cancer. When a person can't get rid of socially-destructive thoughts, we get criminals. When a society can't get rid of those entities (internal or external) who infringe upon the basic human rights of other people or societies, we have terrorism, the trend towards fascism, and war. War is a necessary by-product of life.

Invading Iraq was therefore justified (by American executive logic), as was invading Afghanistan. By these same rationales, however, we should have troops in half of the nations of Africa. The reason we don't is twofold: they don't have oil, and the other two superpowers (Russia and China) profit too greatly

from arms trade with those in central and eastern Africa for us to be OK with tipping the balance of power in the nuclear power landscape.

Invading Iran, however, is a different chapter of the same story. They have wide-spread cultural hegemony in place, and gays, lesbians, and women have to fight for every right guaranteed to heterosexual men. They've shown evidence, however, that their current administration is a shrewd player in the international politics, overwhelmingly motivated by self-preservation, and more ethical than most, according to their own teachings. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad never said, in correction of many sources, that "Israel should be wiped off the map". No such expression exists in Persian. The more accurate translation is "Israel needs regime change" - that is the government in Israel is currently doing to the Palestinians what Saddam did to the Kurds, what China did to the people of Tibet, and what America did to Native Americans.

We may never know what the motivations of the Iranian government. I have to trust that they're acting in their own self-interest (which involves cooperation or competition, as best fit for the situation. These follow Nash Equilibria to their natural conclusions, whatever those might be. I'm, of course, not Iranian, so I have no way to know. I, however, can't bring myself to vilify people - even those who hold religious beliefs incompatible with my own.

Religions come from the social emergence of ethical universals. No society, on the whole, is going to kill for the sake of killing, or go back on a promise only for the sake of going back on it. Certainly, the Q'uran admonishes followers of the Islamic deen to “turn or burn” those who disagree with them. So, however, do the Tanakh and Bible. That isn't to say that Christians or Jews do this any more than Moslems do (or, at least, haven't for a few hundred years.) The distinctions Christians make between literal and liberal interpretations of holy scriptures are the same distinctions Moslems do: when something's socially productive, it's encouraged. When it's counter-productive, it's either brushed over, read as “symbolism,” or ignored.

The fundamental disconnect with the current American executive (led by the Christian fundamentalist right), however, is their view that Armageddon is an exit strategy. This blurs the “us” versus “them” distinction necessary to perpetuate social control: how can America criticize Islamic fundamentalism, when America embraces Christian fundamentalism, both being as severely destructive as the other? How can either side vilify terrorism or fascism when both have been employing both for most of modernity? History will remember the American wars with Iraq as religiously-motivated genocide, not liberation. If we invade Iran, I'll join those foretelling the third world war, except the American victory (if any) will be Pyrrhic, and American

history further scarred.

### **The International Mexican Standoff**

Power begets power, but the drive to yield power to others only begets the same drive. Mindful power produces mindful authority, while mindless protest produces mindless revolutionaries. In the landscape of socio-political hierarchies, grand projects for the betterment of the world invariably fail when they see human life as expendable for the greater good, regardless of the source of these projects. Terrorism is an action, not an intrinsic trait of a person or society (hence the importance of habeus corpus and due process for those accused of terrorism). It's a reaction against the forces of industrialization and economic inequality emergent from industrialization itself.

As mentioned in the outset of this chapter, however, the war on terror isn't about terror. Its aim is to control the lifeblood of Industrial behavior. With this understanding, the power lies in those people and societies who can diversify their energy sources. This disarms the international standoff: simple living well within personal and societal means, as a person, as a community, and as a nation. Revolutionary violence is replaced by revolutionary thought, through an examined life.

When one person or society believes it has a moral high ground or an objective truth, or is fundamentally better than

another person or society, the path to terrorism begins. When these beliefs become dogma, specifically when that dogma isn't examined, it becomes dangerous. This lends itself to the pinnacle of irresponsible theory: the belief that the world would be best if led by someone like you. Plato wanted a world led by philosophers, whereas Comte wanted a world run by Sociologists. Stalin wanted a world run by Marxists, and Hitler wanted a world run by Nazis. This manner of narcissistic dogma is universally self- and socially-destructive. Social unity comes from diversity, not uniformity.

Consequently, the actions of the American government are a mixed blessing to the nation through the sacrifice of liberty for economic sustenance and the illusion of safety, but inherently destructive to the earth and to global stability.

## Back in the USSA

*Well, while I'm here I'll do the work- and what's the work? to ease the pain of living. Everything else, drunken dumbshow.*

*-- Allen Ginsberg, from "Memory Gardens"*

As of the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, the two most influential states left on the map are China, the most heavily capitalized socialist state, and the USA, the most heavily socialized capitalist state. As described in the previous chapter, the reason for this is the zero- sum relationship between pure cooperation (socialism) and pure competition (capitalism).

Both systems have merits and drawbacks, but the optimally influential state relies on both for success. In the United States, however, there is a flawed cultural assumption that every aspect of society is governed at some fundamental level by democratic capitalism. This chapter concentrates on the USA, and those aspects of its social, economic, political, and cultural climates that belie the assumption that free markets can handle everything.

## **Capitalism is not Democracy**

One of the most prevalent misconceptions I encounter when interacting with Americans is that “capitalism” is equated with “democracy”, as if the two were indissoluble. Capitalism is an economic system, and Democracy a political one. The combination of the two served America well for the first few decades of its history, but as soon as the flaws in Smith's theories became apparent, methods were put in place to control the shortcomings of the capitalist state. The misconception that capitalism is democracy, at least in America, comes from an observational bias. Americans are raised to believe that America is both capitalist and democratic, so many of the prussian-schooled generations use the terms interchangeably.

Capitalism is an economic theory based on the assumption that free market competition will always produce a better product than state-controlled markets. This implication is overwhelmingly true: those states which rely on free-market capitalism, in my observation produce higher-grade products than those who don't. This theory functions well to build infrastructure, technology, leadership, medicine, and virtually every other buttress of the modern state, but at grave expense. Insider trading, depressions and recessions, unemployment, insecurity, and vast infringements on human rights are all direct functions of a capitalist state. The major flaws of capitalism have



a common root: there is no direct free market function to protect a common good.

Democracy is a political theory based on the assumption that any governed population will at all times know its own best interest and wish its government to operate towards those interests. The obvious strong point of Democracy is that if a state is acting in a manner inconsistent with the wishes of the majority of the population, that population has a means to effect a change in the state. The downside, however, is the tyranny of the majority, and the flawed assumption that individuals know, ten times out of ten, the actions which are best for their society.

### **Socialism is not Oligarchy**

Another prevalent misconception is that socialism is the same thing as totalitarianism or oligarchy. Part of this is rooted in the common assumption that socialism is communism, or that totalitarianism is dictatorship. It appears much of this misconception is based in observations of Soviet and Chinese-style communisms. This is the same observation bias that leads Americans to believe that capitalism is democracy, with all of these equalities being patently false.

Socialism is an economic theory based on the assumption that private control of a population's means of production is the best way to provide an egalitarian distribution of goods and

services. This system of state-enforced cooperation serves these goals well, concentrating on the good of the gestalt over the good of the individuals. These systems, though, can squander the genius of its scientists, the creativity of its artists, and the general aptitudes of its population through centralized planning and control of production without market-driven feedback to the production process, and stifling of innovation through concentration on the status quo.

Oligarchy is a political theory based on the assumption that a governed population will never know its own best interest, and that a government should operate on the planned and controlled interests emergent from the cultures and mores of its governed. The obvious strong point of oligarchies is the ability to account for the well-being of all constituent populations in a whole - the minority, the majority, and the individual. The major downside, though, is the history of oligarchies to ignore their purpose, and perpetuate government by the government for the government.

## **The Currencies of Understanding**

Light can't exist without darkness, neither can freedom without slavery or property without theft. Without the existence of each of these for a baseline of comparison, the other lacks fundamental definition. In fact, human understanding is

fundamentally based on division. In a field of vision, a chair against a wall would be considered a chairwall (or some other word all-together) if not for the contours and borders between the forms in our field of vision. It is this nature of separation, along with effectual interaction with objects in our cognitive domain that give definition to sensation, and draw the lines between definition and description.

George Orwell famously described a society in his book 1984 embodying the ideals that “war is peace, freedom is slavery, and ignorance is strength.” This is a form of another word he coined, “doublespeak,” in which two cognitively dissonant meanings are held to be true. In fact, Proudhon famously stated “property is theft,” in just such an essay - cognitively dissonant, and self-contradictory by nature. These attributes of life are simultaneously mutually defining, and mutually exclusive. The analogy can be made that each pair represents “two sides of the same coin.” Just as you can't know theft without knowing property, nor freedom without slavery, you can't know socialism without knowing capitalism. Competition and cooperation are two basic behaviors of overwhelmingly sexually dimorphic species - including humans. Each is needed for survival, but no society can accept simply half of the coin.

Indeed, social institutions are tantamount to slavery - but also are the lack thereof. For every measure of freedom enjoyed, a return measure of slavery is suffered. Humans are, by their very

birth, free unto their world and slaves unto themselves. We can minimize our personal slavery by sharing it with the world to maximize personal freedom. This is the meaning of compassion; literally “com”, Latin for “with”, and “patior”, Latin for “suffering.” Compassion is suffering with someone else, sharing slaveries to share freedoms. We can also share our freedoms with the world to maximize personal slavery - giving all you have to the poor. Neither can be fully embraced nor escaped, however - both are woven into the fiber of our species. It is for these reasons that the amelioration of human need should be the aim of all well-functioning states.

### **The Structure of American Socialism**

With very few exceptions, most functions of the American state are socialist institutions. We don't call them by this name, however, due to cold war-era prejudices. In many ways, too, this disconnect (employing socialism without calling it by name) is a product of our still living in the shadows of World War II. Some fundamentally socialist American systems are architected to protect the people from free market capitalism:

- traffic law,
- primary and secondary education,
- welfare,
- minimum wage,

- social security,
- national defense,
- police protection,
- baseline medical care,
- emergency management,
- centralized currency, and
- fire protection.

Furthermore, various other fundamentally socialist institutions exist to protect free markets from themselves:

- anti-trust legislation,
- securities and exchange control,
- the federal reserve system, and
- corporate espionage law.

Capitalist economies are among the best ways to optimize supply, price, and demand. Indeed, “all boats rise” within a capitalist economy through optimized use of inherently scarce resources. Some systems work better than others, though, commensurate with the sum of human understanding of the operation of those systems, and the skill of those in oversight. Socialist systems are needed to make sure the market's invisible hand doesn't push passengers off the rising (or falling) boats. Taking Adam Smith's metaphor to its global conclusion, however, we see there is only one boat, on which we're all passengers. Social institutions protect the common good. These

exist in areas of societies which, if left to the free market, would lead to the regard of human life or livelihood as a currency. It's time to move away from the cold war fear of socialism and identify the traits we already have. We're already the United (Socialist) States of America.

### **Training the Invisible Hand**

A handful of European cities have begun to model their traffic law after patterns observed in China - they've completely done away with street signs. Traffic control is, however, non-obvious in its effects. Through concentration on personal responsibility over militant ignorance of one's surroundings, these experiments in removal of traffic control are showing “the number of accidents has declined dramatically” through concentration on social respect and consideration. What was intended originally to protect the public from itself ends up costing states the lives of their inhabitants. In the natural market for traffic, supply is the means, demand is the will, and over-regulation costs lives. When left to minimal social convention, described rather than prescribed by the state, loss of life and livelihood are minimized. The zero-sum games of traffic are the only areas which, in this theory, merit state description: on which side of the road to drive, to which side to yield, and where it is permitted to park.

In addition to mobility, human rights include food, water,

shelter, relaxation and education, among others. These systems, in America, are variously socialized through welfare, Social Security, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Free markets are ruthless in their efficiency of allocating ideal prices between supplies and demands, but again, when the currency of that market is life itself, minimum state intervention is merited. While there are markets for the social exchange of food, water, shelter, relaxation and education, none of them guarantee a baseline personal existence. When the state chooses not to intervene, or chooses to intervene poorly (as we saw with Hurricane Katrina in 2005,) the life-currency of the market extinguishes, and the governed mourn their loss. When the state chooses to overcompensate for these markets, as we see in the traffic example, the same outcome occurs: loss of human life and livelihood. State intervention is consequently required for and should be restricted to the solution of zero-sum games with a social currency: those in which one person's enjoyment of a human right irreducibly restricts another person's enjoyment of the same.

Perhaps the most striking example of American socialism is national defense, and local police and fire protection. Again, these are social markets with life and livelihood as currencies. In fact, the USA couldn't even be formed without the former: the Articles of Confederation overwhelmingly failed for lack of substantive support for the common defense. The United States'

Constitution addressed this, and was eventually adopted, forming the American union of states as we know it today. Without state intervention to provide for social or common defense, personal defense would be left to lifemarkets: we'd have thousands of Blackwaters and no Marines. We'd have an industry of soldiers with rogue allegiances only to those who give them coin. No union of any appreciable complexity can exist in these conditions. We'd have subsidized mob warfare - a war of most against most - in place of internal security and external defense.

Similarly, if only those citizens of a state who could pay for it out of pocket could enjoy fire protection, the social good of edifice (as shelter) would be sacrificed to the hand of the market. This externality (specifically, the freeloader problem) would sacrifice the human rights-associated common good to the invisible hand of the market. For good or for ill, this lends itself inherently to instability of amelioration of basic human need, and should be (and typically is) protected by various levels of the state. In Rome, fire protection was left only to those who could pay for it out of their own purses. We can't allow ourselves to fiddle over money, though, while our cities burn.

### **Who watches the watchers?**

Many aspects of capitalist economics are self-correcting, while some are self-destructive. Most, but not all of the latter circulate



through the trade of information as a monetized personal, non-social instrument. These effects include illegal forms of insider trading, securities and exchange abuse (such as self-dealing practices or accounting fraud), and corporate espionage. When physical capital is the means of production, these sorts of behaviors are difficult, if not undefined. When information capital is the means, however, the ends of production are encouraged in a capitalist economy to be creatively controlled and traded. When this trade becomes intentionally disadvantageous to the body of the corporation not directly involved in the trade, however, it's typically (and rightfully) regulated.

Likewise, centralized control of a state's currency and interest rates protects the greater market from the effects of the constituent and emergent or gestalt markets, respectively. Without these forms of state control, volatility would emerge in the same form as that which would come from lack of national defense. The difference here is that the mobs would be the banks, rather than private security firms. Banks and private security firms are pushed to mob-like action in a capitalist democracy, and socialist intervention is needed (and frequently provided) to protect the free market's common good - financial currency - from the free market itself.

## **Non-profit monopolies**

Monopolies, the control of a category of commodity by a single entity, are the natural equilibrium state of both pure capitalism and pure socialism, however. Many view monopolies as a problem of capitalist economies - maximizing profit through exclusive control of a commodity, if left to the free market, leads to maximization of price and decreased availability of that commodity to the end consumer. The root cause of this dilemma, however, isn't in the monopoly itself - it's in the construction of corporations which must, by law, maximize and conserve profit within the entity itself. Capitalist markets encourage monopolies through the economies of scale (it's typically cheaper per unit to make more of something than it is to make less), whereas socialist systems enforce them through centralized control of the means of production. If the personified for-profit corporation is done away with, however, monopolies cease to be an economic externality.

Corporate profit is exploitation. Every dollar that enters the pocket of a corporate entity is a dollar that wasn't required for cost of production, human, physical, and intellectual capital investment, or a dollar that came from the end consumer through the market-driven difference between price and cost. This profit ultimately comes from two sources: the laborer and the consumer, and ultimately ends up in the same places: the pockets

of the micro-states who control the means of production with no goals other than the further increase in their profits and economic control. Consequently, three things must take place to bring the exploitation of profit into balance with the needs and rights of the worker and market:

End corporate personhood, including taxation, maximization of profit, and politico-economic representation (lobbying). When all corporations are non-profit, tax-free agencies, the exploitation of the worker and consumer is minimized, and the growing gulf will shift towards closure between the (often arbitrarily) inordinately wealthy and those in abject poverty.

Enforce transparency and democracy within corporations. Corporations should be measured by the same standards used for state societies: transparency, personal freedom, and human rights. This isn't to say that corporations shouldn't be able to protect against the dissemination of trade secrets - they should - but the pay and benefits which flow to the worker don't qualify as "corporate security data," in my mind. As soon as the entire corporation is a single union with an internally democratic structure, the micro-oligarchies of American industry will cease to operate against the interests of the constituent population. All democracies are simply oligarchies of those who vote, just like all anarchies are simply meritocracies of those who act. These democracies will promote closure of the social, political, and

economic structures which cause the most visible of the pains of life. When workers set each others pay, approve each others promotion, and cooperate to meet mutually agreed-upon goals, ideal products are made with ideal distribution of recompense to the constituent workers. This effect is clearly seen in the workings of the General Electric plant in Durham, North Carolina.

End corporate anti-trust law, encouraging centralization of control over the means of production. This is kept in balance by both the aforementioned lack of profit-goals through personification, and by transparency through the democratic process into accounts, costs, overheads, and all forms of capital investments and returns.

### **So, how many types of toothpaste?**

I was asked a few months back the question “how many types of toothpaste should there be?”. The pure laissez-faire opinion is, of course, “as many brands and types as people will buy.” This opinion, however, leads to waste of human, intellectually, and physically capitalized resources through redundant research and development efforts, redundant factories and overheads, and neglect of the economics of scale through maintenance of multiple corporate brands. My approach is that there should be one brand, selling as many types of toothpaste as address

identified human needs: two perhaps, maybe three. Both ends of the economic spectrum end here. We're long overdue to start embracing it.

## **Progress to Progress**

In the previous chapter, I described a system of governance which carries various traits of both capitalism and socialism. Following that was a proposed standard to apply to determine the approaches to concentrate on in a given environment. A central question remains, however: after democratizing the means of production, de-personifying corporations and the subsequent legislation against monopoly, and guaranteeing social institutions which are directly tied to human rights and need amelioration; how does progress exist?

### **Stalinism in the USSR**

Many of us, upon seeing a system like this, immediately think Soviet, and rightfully so. The word “Soviet” itself means worker's council, which was a type of representative voice given to the lower class during the period leading up to and including the USSR. The fundamental difference, however, is the illusion of Soviet democracy versus the history of Soviet oligarchy. Political parties as an embodiment of the market of ideas don't directly affect human rights (though they certainly affect them indirectly), with an end-equilibrium-state of plurality over

monopoly. In the USSR, however, the control of the CPSU could only be described as total and hegemonic. Those who didn't toe the party line in any real or imagined sense were killed, sent to work camps, or fled the country.

This total control of political debate, combined with the devastation of Russian industry and population through the Russian civil war and subsequent world conflicts plunged the region into poverty. These Bolshevik practices of intimidation, forced relocation, and genocide weren't lifted in any meaningful way until after the fall of their effective dictator, Stalin. Russia, under the guidance of its various post-Stalinist leaders, is escaping the shadow of this loss in a meaningful way. This is to say that the Soviet Union didn't fall because of socialism or communism, it fell in spite of them. The downfall of the USSR can be traced to two main causes: the bolshevik use of terrorism as a means of social control under the Stalin and pre-Stalin regimes, and the economic disparity caused by industrial and agricultural devastation in the periods following the Russian civil war:

The industrial production value descended to one seventh of the value of 1913, and agriculture to one third. According to Pravda, "The workers of the towns and some of the villages choke in the throes of hunger. The railways barely crawl. The houses are crumbling. The towns are full of refuse. Epidemics spread and death strikes industry is ruined." (Wikipedia,

“Russian Civil War”)

During post-Stalinist USSR and Russian periods, however, the nation rebuilt itself to a player on the world stage, achieving a number of milestones in the space race, and moving gradually towards democratization through Gorbachev's glasnost and perestroika programs (meaning “openness” and “reconstruction,” respectively.) It wasn't until after the collapse of the USSR that the democratization efforts went into full play under Yeltsin. Still, however, through the vision of Gorbachev and practice of Yeltsin and Putin, efforts to democratize the socialist states continued, and have met industrial and agricultural successes, but with a tradeoff of human rights through capitalization of fundamentally social markets (those in which human life or livelihood is the currency.)

### **Social Democratic Progress**

So, how does progress exist without profit? Progress, understood to be effective social construction, mental representation, and linguistic communication is maximized in free markets through the universal conversion of human social liberty into human economic liberty. This system must be met with balance, however. As previously described, pure markets can't account for human rights or the protection of any common good (such as safety, public property, traffic control, fire and police, etc.) and



this conversion between economic and social freedoms needs to be met with socialized institutions to guarantee that humanity isn't enslaved either fully to themselves or to their society. Under pure capitalism, progress is maximized. Under pure communism, progress is typically at a stand-still. Under such a combination of the two, however, progress is optimized towards the amelioration of human need, without sacrificing the part entirely for the whole, or the whole entirely for the parts.

With free markets come inherent instability. Trade naturally incurs profits and losses due to the relationship between risk-seeking and risk-averse behaviors (recall, this is the same structure that creates social class). When the means of production are democratized and the monopolies state-sanctioned and guided without central planning, however, profits and losses still belong to those who control the means of production: the industrial constituency. This is the ultimate form of the dictatorship of the proletariat as described by Marx, but without the necessary evolution to a Communist state. As previously described, classless societies aren't a natural equilibrium-state, due to this same relationship between risk behaviors. Given that social hierarchy is an anthropological universal, and thus should be guaranteed as a human right, the state has no business imposing classlessness on a people.

Likewise, entrepreneurial force through trade is no different than unionized labor force through negotiations over the

control of means of production, or political force through the democratic vote. These are all initiations of force, in libertarian terms, which must be checked and balanced by a market-external force, again, to prevent annihilation of self for state or state for self.

### **Why does the baker bake?**

The question of impetus to produce (which leads to, if not embodies progress) in a socialized state is a pressing one. In the USSR, what reason did the baker have to make bread? In the USA, what's the analog? In the case of the former, the only impetus was social-service, and in the case of the latter, self-service. No capitalist state would encourage a private company to be philanthropic without tax breaks (economic impetus) to do so. In this description of market socialism, however, impetus to produce comes as a combination of the two drives - the concentration on self-service without social harm.

Simply, when control of wages in a corporation is democratized, those entities who need bakers will vote to set the pay rate offered for the services of baking. This implies that all pay rates are transparent to all members of the corporation. This keeps the voter in control of the market (again, the dictatorship of the proletariat), and maintains supply-side economic policies. The world can't run on bakers alone, however - there are jobs that need to be done which pay very little, and jobs which don't need

to be done which currently pay vast sums. In this construction, the wage and workload of all workers will be set by the vote of those workers. Again, this form of class consciousness lessens the gap between the upper and lower classes within baseline standards of living for both while still providing supply-and-demand impetus for self-betterment and industry progress.

When left unchecked, the pattern of pure capitalist enterprise in a profitable industry tends to the sigmoidal. In the beginning phases of the industry, growth appears to be exponential, until it grows to consume all resources, finally leveling off commensurate with resource scarcity, then falling again if tied exclusively to that resource. We see this in currency fluctuations, oil use, the housing market, and any other resource that must be commoditized, capitalized, and traded. When these markets are socialized, however, the growth is necessarily more moderate and sustainable, long-term.

Well-functioning democracies don't need revolutionary violence; they need revolutionary thought. The cold war was never a battle between capitalism and socialism - it was a battle between democracy and despotism. The path of dictatorship in the USSR led itself to a top-down democracy, but those are inherently unstable. It failed under Gorbachev in the USSR, and it's failing in Iraq and Afghanistan. Democracy has to come from people, through education and understanding. The fundamental driving forces of capitalism and socialism, selfishness and

altruism, respectively, are one and the same. They are a pair of mutually creative and destructive concepts, along the same lines as property and theft or freedom and slavery. To progress to this form of sustainable progress, we'll need the education reform described in the post-industrial economics chapter, the industrial and political reforms also previously laid out. This path centrally guides humanity to a balance between social, industrial, political, and technological progress without threatening the aspects that build the societies building these advancements in the first place.

## **Anomie of the State**

Durkheim uses the term *Anomie* to describe the social isolation emerging from breakdown of cultural heteronormativity. Recall that social institutions require some measure of heteronormativity in order to function. Without full regard for the humanity of your fellow citizens, it's unlikely that one will fully support his exercise of human rights, regardless of whether they infringe on your own right to do the same. This chapter describes the relationship between anomie and the various constructions of state, and how the former moves the latter towards the construction of human rights-centered social, political, and economic institutions.

Anomie, according to Durkheim, comes from the breakdown of social norms. This is to say that when societies go through transitional periods, the categories which a language and society must create to differentiate between concepts and ideas are necessarily fluid. This fluidity lends itself to uncertainty until language re-creates culture towards more effective production in the new environment. Of necessity, that process of re-creation involves re-stratification of those populations who can ideally

capitalize on the new environment, which entails re-identification and reconnection with societies valued by any given member.

### **The Society of Selves**

As Robert Putnam aptly described in this book *Bowling Alone*, American society is moving towards this type of isolation. Modernity is at the end of its cycle, and people don't know where to do next. Advertising and multinational media conglomerates regularly feed people fiction and call it news. Organized religious practices regularly influence people to follow the same socially constructive and destructive practices today as they did dozens, hundreds, and thousands of years ago. Political theorists put forth revolutionary ideas, and hipshot academics even regularly discover fundamentals of life incongruent with unexamined realities of those within their communities. When these sorts of social disruptions occur, anomie is a necessary reaction to the change.

During industrialization, anomie took on a deeper meaning, however - that of peer isolation. Through the advent of globalized communication and transportation, people can now live the vast majority of their adult lives with almost no human contact whatsoever. More frequently, though, the societies in which a person participates is now almost purely at their own

volition. Main streets are empty of pedestrians and clogged with cars, and pews bend low every weekend with people surrounding themselves with only those who agree with them. This complacency generates both anomie and anger.

When a view is unexamined, it's a prejudice - regardless of its social constructivity, linguistic communication, or cognitive representation. If a person doesn't know why they believe something, yet still publicly professes its truth, an inherent instability develops: fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is the profession of any unexamined observation as "true," regardless of whether that observation came from a holy book, parent, or politician.

When fundamentalisms of any type collide, however, anomie and anger emerge. Again, these are mutually defined and mutually destructive.

### **Industrialized Isolation**

Labor doesn't take on a life of its own - labor takes the life of the laborers. When labor becomes the driving force of an economic system, at cost to society, Anomie and anger are the natural equilibrium. When this happens, the only social systems allowed to develop are those within a corporation, inbred and dysfunctional. Modernity is, then, characterized by the practice of money worship.

Specifically in the area of socioeconomic theory, most Americans with whom I discuss economics don't know why they endorse a given political system. They know that they've been taught that capitalism is better than socialism, and all they had to do to pass their high school economics exam was be able to remember how to spell the words properly. Some know the basic principles of supply, demand, scarcity, price, cost, and profit, but those are the rare ones. As discussed in the chapter on post-industrial economics, this format of industrialized education and fiat university degrees has produced an entire generation with an inability to think critically. It's little wonder that industrialized education has produced isolation: in the absence of challenge or meaningful, purposeful interaction, the only natural equilibria are stagnation, isolation, and cultural death.

Thankfully, there is at least one subset of American society who still concentrate on critical thought - the hacker culture. Initially, "hacker" meant "someone who is skilled at understanding computer systems." In the absence of meaningful interaction with the culture itself, the media substituted the culture's definition with that of "computer criminal." Recently, however, the hacker culture has branched out from the study of computer science to include most known disciplines. There are now network hackers, music hackers, food hackers, language hackers, math hackers, and a growing group of "lifehackers." Hacking is now a concentration on the primitives, interactions,



and gestalts of any system, in any discipline.

### **The Entitlement Society**

In Aldous Huxley's book, *Brave New World*, he described a society based on engineered deficiencies in members of the population. Named alphas, betas, gammas, deltas, and epsilons, each biologically engineered class had its own jobs, communities, and belief systems with little mobility between the layers. One of the common beliefs, though, is that everyone believes they're fundamentally "better" than the class members below them. This ideology, a type of false consciousness, preserved social order by prohibiting class mobility. This idea is prevalent in American society as well, though not necessarily through bioengineering.

For the past many decades in education, a prevalent theory has been universal self-worth and self-esteem. Fifty years ago, these terms weren't even in the vernacular. Now, any American English speaker will not only know what they mean, but know that they've been told they should have them. This inherently devalues action: children (who are now becoming adults) are and were taught that they're special and worthy of respect axiomatic with their very existence. Those of us who didn't toe that line insisted that our personal value of self should come from something we've done, not something we've been. For that, we

were chastised, and pushed further into the ideology that everyone's a winner, and anybody can do anything. Anyone raised in a Christian church will recognize this as an echo of "of course you should be proud of yourself - you're a child of the most high God!"

The U.N. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, on the other hand, declares "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." This makes no mention of being equal in abilities, skills, class, or ideology. To say that all human beings are born equal in dignity and rights does not say that all human beings can be anything or do anything they want to do. Life is painful and difficult, and teaching our children that they are to expect rewards for their very essence is to both devalue humanity and to set them up for gross disappointment later in life. These children have grown up to create an entire society around entitlement - the baseless belief that the world owes them something. Why should they believe differently? This is what we've all been taught from day one.

This form of ideology has a cyclical relationship. This false consciousness closes the door to radical social change, but opens the door for inter-class mobility. When people can move between classes, though, class consciousness develops. Siddhārtha Gautama arguably wouldn't have achieved the great

enlightenment (the formation of Buddhism) without the great departure (crossing from the royal class into the lower class). This vision of class is the beginning of radical social change.

In American society, however, this cycle is stuck because of consumer credit and commercialization. These too, though, are finite demands, governed by a person's ability to repay a debt within the span of their natural lives.

### **The Economics of the Shadows of War**

In supply-side economics, transfer functions are typically gaussian, such as the extraction and refinery of oil. In demand-side economics, however, this trend tends towards the sigmoidal, such as with consumer credit, or any derivative market such as that for housing. The beginnings of sigmoidal curves appear exponential, until the marginal utility that exists (or can be created) levels out as a function of the Pareto principle. Eventually, these sigmoidal curves level off at a maximum saturation point, and either reaches an equilibrium, as with sustainable demand, or crashes, as with unsustainable demand.

This false consciousness will be amended in American culture when those whose labor is being exploited by industrial (oligarchical, non-democratized) capitalism realize that debt cycles are unsustainable. This realization will come when the markets which run off of consumer credit either crash or

deteriorate enough that the majority of the middle class is without some fundamental need: food, water, shelter, or socialization. The latter of these needs is already not being adequately addressed. Of the other three, wait until the housing market crashes. Wars can only fuel the economy for so long - eventually, they devalue fiat currencies by devaluing the social capital invested from foreign markets into domestic ones.

Again, this is a function of America's life in the shadow of World War II. We have a powerful military, and we choose to use it to indirectly further internal social control. This pattern, based on scarce, geopolitically dodgy resources, is the very definition of unsustainable investment. When it proves as much, so too will the false consciousness of the American lower and middle classes.