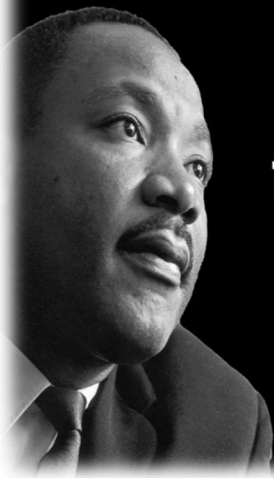


The Post-Automation Era

Toward a World That Works for Everyone



**“The solution to poverty
is to abolish it directly
by a now widely discussed measure:
the guaranteed income.”**

“Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community” 1967

Martin Luther King Jr.’s last book

The Post-Automation Era

Toward a World That Works for Everyone

Michael Silverton

‘A‘ohe Mea Pa‘i Palapala, 2023.

Originally published 2018 under the title, *Where We Go from Here: Chaos to Community: A Modest Proposal for the Livable Income Security Act of 2019*, Library of Congress Control Number: 2018912670; ISBN 978-1-7329300-0-1 (Paperback Edition); ISBN 978-1-7329300-1-8 (Kindle Edition); pen name 'A'ohe Mea, this current work is similarly published under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) License creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/.

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

NonCommercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

NoDerivatives — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you may not distribute the modified material.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

Contents of the *Appendix* are published under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) License creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/.

You are free to:

Share — copy and redistribute the material in any medium or format.

Adapt — remix, transform, and build upon the material for any purpose, even commercially.

Under the following terms:

Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

No additional restrictions — You may not apply legal terms or technological measures that legally restrict others from doing anything the license permits.

The licensor cannot revoke these freedoms as long as you follow the license terms.

Copyright © 2023 Michael Silverton
All rights reserved, except as modified by
Creative Commons licenses are specified herein.

Printed in the United States of America
First Printing, 2018
Second Printing, 2023

Library of Congress Control Number: NNNNNNNNNN

ISBN 978-1-NNNNNNN-0-1 (Paperback Edition)
ISBN 978-1-NNNNNNN-1-8 (Kindle Edition)

‘A‘ohe Mea Pa‘i Palapala
Princeville, HI 96722

Dedication

This book is dedicated to the parents who, despite our significant shared shortcomings, instilled the values of hard work, self-discipline, curiosity, critical thinking, and a deep sense of social responsibility that begins in the home and extend outward toward all humanity.

This book is also dedicated to an incredibly tolerant and loving wife and son, for recognizing all those attributes at work, even when most of the world did not. The personal and professional sacrifices and costs incurred by our family in the early goings of this work were not insignificant. The public hostility against the ideas in this book has been significant over the years, and a big part of the reason they stayed buried with Martin Luther King, Jr., for so long after his tragic 1968 assassination.

This book is also dedicated to eight brothers and sisters who, to varying degrees and each in their own way, patiently endured decades of relentless curiosity about how the world works, further animated by all manner of Star Trek-inspired aspirations for how the world could work for everyone if only we could change this or that widely held misconception or misguided public policy.

Finally, this book is dedicated to those who chose to act as enemies to this work. We were naïve for thinking that just because we are all made of the same stardust, that means we must all be striving toward the same goals to reduce human suffering and increase human flourishing. For nearly ten years, you did everything you could to detract and derail our contributions to this cause. We were ignorant. We expected too much from you. Please forgive us for believing that underneath it all, we are all one, and thank you for putting us in our place, which is presently here on the beautiful Garden Island of Kaua'i, in the blessed land of Hawai'i nei, the first U.S. state to officially take legislative steps toward an unconditional basic income. So, in that sense, you won. Here we are, firmly put in our place, completing the finishing touches on this book, for the benefit of you and your children, as much as for every reader, every American, and ultimately every nation.

* * *

Epigraph

“... it's a nice thing to say to people that you oughta lift yourself by your own bootstraps, but it is a cruel jest to say to a bootless man that he oughta lift himself by his own bootstraps.” And the fact is that millions of Negroes, because of centuries of denial and neglect, have been left bootless. They find themselves impoverished aliens in this affluent society. And there is a great deal that society can and must do if the Negro is to gain the economic security that he needs.

Now one of the answers it seems to me, is a guaranteed annual income, a guaranteed minimum income for all people, and for our families of our country. *It seems to me that the Civil Rights movement must now begin to organize for the guaranteed annual income.* Begin to organize people all over our country and mobilize forces so that we can bring to the attention of our nation this need, and this is something which I believe will go a long, long way toward dealing with the Negro's economic problem and the economic problem which many other poor people confront in our nation.”

Martin Luther King Jr., “The Other America.”

Stanford University. March 14, 1967.

* * *

CONTENTS

Toward What End?	3
Tinkering with the Cosmic Clockworks	9
What Is The Point Of Civilization?	15
What Is Our Vision Of Civilization?	23
To Make Hell into Heaven or Heaven into Hell?	27
Science Fiction, Technology, and Public Policy	31
80 Hour Jobs vs 20 Hour Work Week	39
Trance Ended: Continuous Integration and Rewilding Capitalism	42
Socialism and Mixed Economies	50
No Such Thing As A Better World	61
What To Do About “Those” People: The Otherization of Everyone	77
The Poor Will Always Be With You	78
Permission to Exist	86
How Much is a Human Being Worth, Exactly?	90
Ending Poverty Directly	103
We’ve Been Here Before: The Two-Thirds Singularity of 1969	106
How Socialism Improves Capitalism	111
Why People Will Keep Working	114
Money Does Buy Happiness	119
The Human Right to Income Security	120
Simple Math of UBI	124
The End of Entitlements: Social Security as Income Security	131
Markets Support Income Security	136
Hawaiian Legislative Leadership	138
A New LIFT and the Working Families Tax Credit	141
The Livable Income Security Act of 2019	143
A Modest Proposal	143

Postscript.....	150
Appendix.....	151
Historical Quotations About Basic Income.....	151
Basic Income FAQ.....	155
Endnotes.....	188
Glossary	191
Bibliography.....	195
About the Author.....	209

Foreword

What is the Post-Automation Era?

by ChatGPT-4, Edited by Author

The Post-Automation Era is a ~~hypothetical future~~ *the current 21st century* period in which the widespread adoption of advanced automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and other emerging technologies has led to a significant transformation of society, the economy, and the job market. ~~Although there is no fixed definition or time frame for this era, it~~ *Today, the Post-Automation Era* typically encompasses several key themes:

Job displacement and transformation: As automation and AI become more capable, many traditional jobs may be eliminated or fundamentally changed. This could lead to a shift in the nature of work, with people increasingly focusing on roles that require creativity, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence, rather than routine tasks.

Universal basic income (UBI) and social safety nets: As job displacement becomes more widespread, governments may need to implement social safety nets such as universal basic income to ensure economic security for their citizens.

Education and skill development: The Post-Automation Era may require a greater emphasis on education and lifelong learning, as individuals need to adapt to new job opportunities and evolving industries.

Economic inequality: As automation and AI concentrate wealth among those who own and control the technology, economic inequality could increase, leading to calls for wealth redistribution and greater investment in public services.

Leisure and quality of life: With increased automation potentially reducing the need for human labor, society could shift toward valuing leisure and quality of life more highly, focusing on personal fulfillment and well-being.

Ethical considerations: The Post-Automation Era may raise ethical concerns about the role of AI in decision-making, surveillance, and the potential for biases in automated systems.

It's important to note that the concept of the Post-Automation Era is speculative, and its precise characteristics and impacts remain uncertain. Different experts have varying opinions on how these trends might play out, and the timeline for their emergence is also open to debate.

Note: GPT stands for "Generative Pre-trained Transformer." It is a type of artificial intelligence model developed by OpenAI, which utilizes advanced natural language processing techniques to understand and generate human-like text. The "transformer" architecture in GPT refers to a specific type of deep learning model that has demonstrated excellent performance in tasks related to language understanding and generation.

The "pre-trained" aspect of GPT indicates that the model has undergone an initial training phase on a large dataset of text from the internet before being fine-tuned for specific tasks. This pre-training allows GPT to learn general language patterns, grammar, and even some factual knowledge, which helps it generate coherent and contextually relevant responses when given prompts.

GPT has gone through several iterations, with each version improving upon the previous one. The most recent version, as of my knowledge cutoff in September 2021, is GPT-3 (Generative Pre-trained Transformer 3), which has demonstrated remarkable language understanding and generation capabilities, leading to a wide range of applications in areas such as content creation, question-answering, programming assistance, and more.

I had been frustrated with myself for a year or so for not getting to this second edition much sooner, but now that you have just read a forward written by an artificially intelligent writing assistant, sadly on the eve of the loss of Intel co-founder Gordon Moore, I forgive myself and I can see how the timing for this edition was orchestrated

by events far beyond my understanding, much less control. God bless, Gordon and please forgive me as a fellow Hawaiian for not making the effort to see you last year when the prompting to reach out was so strong. How many more reminders do we need in our lives to make all we can of each day? Let this, finally, be enough that not another prompting is ignored, or challenge deflected in the name of getting to it later.

For now, let's continue with the original forward.

"The practical success of an idea, irrespective of its inherent merit, is dependent on the attitude of the contemporaries. If timely it is quickly adopted; if not, it is apt to fare like a sprout lured out of the ground by warm sunshine, only to be injured and retarded in its growth by the succeeding frost."

– Nikola Tesla

We chose the quotation above, because the subject of this book has been like that sprout that was “lured out of the ground by the warm sunshine” of the Great Society and the Civil Rights Movement, “only to be injured and retarded in its growth by the succeeding frost” of neoliberal financial capitalism. However, when a seed is strong, it waits patiently for even more favorable conditions to arise anew, so that it may sprout and grow to full fruition, when the timing is right. This work is like that seed.

The creation of this book has truly been a wonderful process to behold. At times heart wrenching, at times uplifting, and at all times educational. For more than thirty years, I have watched and shared the passion, perseverance, and determination of this author to work toward creating a world that works for everyone.

Although this book can at times seem to be steeped in religious references, it is vital to remember that humans make all, and I emphasize *all*, decisions based on their deepest held beliefs; and those usually have their foundation in a person's spiritual life. Separation of church (spiritual) and state sounds fine, even reasonable on paper, but most humans are not capable of separating the two when they are making judgements about how society should progress or how people should be treated, and this human doesn't think we should even ask them to do so.

What I enjoyed and appreciate most about this book is that it is more of a dialogue, a conversation, than just a book to sit down and skim through. The author helps the reader to really interact with the subject matter, its history, its current position in our culture, and where it is heading in the future. This isn't a book to read by the seashore, it's a book to read with a computer or smart phone by your side for reference and a friend, fellow student, colleague, or family member close by so you can bounce ideas off them, and maybe let off some steam as you find yourself possibly needing to vent.

Most importantly this book asks, maybe demands, that we think. Think and reflect. On our history as humans. On the current state of our humanity. On where we want to go from here as a human community. But most of all, it asks you to think about who you are. How we think of ourselves and our fellow human beings. How you came to think the way you do and whether your current positions are a net benefit to all humanity, and whether those beliefs support a world that works for everyone.

So, read this book with an open mind and more importantly an open heart. It is not an understatement to say that the survival of our species may depend on it.

Cancún, México

June 2023

* * *

Preface

For many first-time authors, discovering *what a book wants to be* is the crux of the journey. Especially when addressing a topic that is as deeply entangled with diverse and disparate subjects and disciplines, as is the problematic theme of this work. As a postindustrial civilization, we have been experiencing a kind of societal reformation movement that only takes place perhaps every 500 or even 1,000 years.

The pace of change over the past 200 years has been so rapid and has accelerated so much over the past 20 years, it can appear as if advanced societies leapfrogged vital emotional and cognitive steps and stages of development, skipped vital human scale steps, as the roll-out of industrial and post-industrial civilization infrastructure has whizzed by. Like an adolescent whose body has suddenly sprouted into incomprehensible new dimensions with informing, much less preparing the mind or psyche for such fundamental metamorphic change.

In some respects, childhood can be like a kind of trance. A trance out of which it can be deeply frustrating and difficult to awaken. Yet, awaken we must, for that is the process of the human journey.

As a Post-Automation Era society, there is a kind of trance that delays and stagnates the fullest flowering of our individual and interdependent, superabundant potential. The Job Trance. The childish belief that there is no possible, practical, pragmatic alternative to the bygone industrial era concept of a *job* as the sole *Justification Of Being* that affords individual human beings the sociological and economic right to exist.

While the Job Trance has beset post-industrial society for at least half a century, we began this writing journey just over a decade ago, and initially published this work with a title that, in retrospect, we believe buried the lede: *Where We Go from Here: Chaos to Community*. While the initial title was descriptively accurate, paying homage to the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and to constitutional traditions and values that we inherited, it was not sufficiently focused upon the specifics of this present moment. In this edition, we correct for those errors of timing and focus.

The first edition of this book was published approximately one year prior to the SARS2/COVID19 pandemic. From that moment on, it was very difficult to publish anything on any topic, other than that unprecedented experience in world history. The pandemic captured public attention in such a way that attempting to continue or expand upon other important policy conversations such as the policies discussed in this book became almost impossible.

Also, since publication of the first edition of this book, some of the key policies described in that first edition have since been enacted and are in the process of perhaps

becoming permanent. Also, it has become increasingly apparent to most people that almost everything we write and think -- mind and soul -- is data mined and sold, the moment it is published on-line or spoken into the microphones of increasingly ubiquitous digital assistants.

In terms of narrative voice, we've chosen to use the voice of we, as much as possible, because the effort that went into creating this work was absolutely the result of that vast, active, living intelligence system today known as the internet. This book is the result of a deeply interconnected, collective effort. Many of you know who you are — thank you. Other readers may have been helping for a very long time and didn't even know it. Some of you listened and reflected on these topics in random conversations in cafes, restaurants, offices, and literally on trains, planes, and in automobiles. You listened in hostels, on the trail, on mountaintops, and on beaches while camping and backpacking. This work is the culmination of at least a decade of thinking out loud with anybody who would listen about the topic. It has evolved with the kind assistance of countless strangers along the way, each who helped clarify the multitude of reasons why the amount of universal basic income must be equivalent to a living wage if it is to effectively eradicate poverty as we have always known it. While you may not see your name in the specific acknowledgments, please know that here, you are fully and gratefully acknowledged, each one. Establishing and implementing the principle of Income Security as a basic human right is a long overdue evolutionary step toward a world that works for everyone, and you helped make it possible. Thank you.

This book attempts to summarize the status of all those diverse face-to-face conversations in addition to conversations across dozens of long since deceased social media platforms, blogs, forums, and mailing lists, going all the way back to the Usenet era. It's been the journey of a lifetime, already, and we believe that there is an even better lifetime ahead, as basic income finally stands positioned to become the law of the land, while setting a new standard by which we define what it means to be a successful, advanced, post-automation economy.

Alas, after the first outline eight years ago, the manuscript spent five years sitting in the cloud, until three years ago, when we made a little more progress, specifically with respect to how UBI can be implemented in a politically and economically pragmatic way. Yet, even at that time we were forced to recognize that we were still too early for the kind of direct action called for in this book, today. What's ironic about that is the fact that, from the very beginning of this journey, we've always felt like we were decades behind, when in fact we were still too early for history to play its part in ending poverty with basic income. Over the course of twenty years in Silicon Valley, we came of recognize this type of foresight as common among innovators of all kinds. Some people are somehow able to see the world as it soon will be, and the most skilled are able to engineer the new realities that they see as obvious. From Leonardo da Vinci to Nikola

Tesla, to Steve Jobs, to Elon Musk, this is an undeniable human phenomenon that is proven time and time again, and yet it still defies our common human understanding.

Finally, this book is a snapshot in time, a frozen moment in the context of a dynamic flow of events, in an exponentially accelerating world. By the time this book is in your hands, we will all be living in a different world, a world in which our views will continue to adapt and evolve with respect to the specific strategies and tactics that we explore in this book. While those details may adapt according to changing conditions, the primary thesis of this work is as indelible today as it was when Martin Luther King Jr. demanded immediate economic justice and income security for all, over fifty years ago. That thesis is this: now is the time for unconditional basic income to make the transition from public debate to public policy, from the realm of books and online discussion to the reality of legislation and law. Let's get it right this time, together.

Cancún, México

June 2023

* * *

Acknowledgements

Above all, thank you to the more than 55,000 participants of the /r/BasicIncome Reddit. Without each one of you, this book could not be possible. Secondly, although certainly not in importance, thank you to Guy Standing, Philippe Van Parijs, and everyone at the Basic Income Earth Network (BIEN) for keeping the flame alive for so many bleak years. Special thanks to Karl Widerquist, Georgetown University School of Foreign Service, Qatar, who, as a very early blogger on the topic, inspired us to build upon those efforts, igniting the curiosity and fortifying the resolve to dig deeply into the history of the basic income movement, joining the pioneers of a global effort to retrieve this vital policy from the dustbin of history, in order to make it into a full-scale social movement that people learned about, and built for themselves. A full-scale social media movement, before such a term even existed. This desire to be useful is what led us to dedicate the past ten years of our lives to making the policy relevant to the Silicon Valley circles in which we ran in for almost twenty years. Today, with the likes of Facebook's Chris Hughes publishing a book on the topic, and Elon Musk's vocal support for basic income, we think it's safe to say, we accomplished that.

Thank you to everyone who subsequently took up the torch, as we each played a tiny, yet vital role, lighting the next torches nearest to us and spreading the light. This is your book, so above all, we acknowledge you, good reader. Mahalo.

* * *

Introduction

The purpose of this book is to provide a catalyst for everyday people, activists, academics, and policy makers to make the transition from merely exploring basic income as an interesting concept to implementing it as a policy, at scale. To accomplish this task, we begin by asking why civilization emerged in the first place, how those purposes change over time, what it is we believe civilization is designed to achieve today, and where we are currently situated, on the timeline of human history, so that we may better understand both the context and urgency of the current, precarious economic plight of most Americans.

If we can find a common root in the historic aspirations for humanity, perhaps we can more easily turn attention away from the distracting sideshow of political duality and social media-fed animosity, and better move forward in realizing those aspirations in the context of current conditions.

This is the story of why the time for the Livable Income Security Act of 2019 (LISA) has finally arrived, fifty years after a guaranteed annual income was first proposed in the U.S. Congress.¹ This book is intended as a brief review, for a diverse audience, of both historical and contemporary rationales behind this long-studied, tested, and proven policy for ending poverty as we know it. More importantly, it suggests how we take direct action to enact unconditional basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, immediately, with no new government programs; in fact, by utterly smashing the current dysfunctional welfare state, once and for all.

50% per capita GDP. You're going to see that phrase so many times in this book, that it can't help but be burned into your consciousness as the formula for a citizen dividend that keeps pace with real economic growth while providing a living wage level basic income.

We want to strongly encourage readers to take some time out for yourself with this book, look up any new or unfamiliar lingo online, learn about it, cross-examine it, come to your own conclusions of the concepts, then question even deeper. We hope that this book will motivate at least as much time just thinking, stepping back, and asking “why do I feel this way about that sentence, or that idea” as you spend reading it. We hope that this book will inspire at least an equal amount of time further researching the policy online and sparking productive, civil discussions on social media and in everyday life.

The fact that this book is available in Kindle format is itself a sign of the times. We're fully expecting you to be interrupted by texts & tweets & earbuds & screens & friends & kids & parents & that voice in your head that is still wondering WTF we are going on about, here. That's all okay.

We will do our best to present the information in chunks that can read individually, in any order, because this is the way the post-automation world works; like time-shifted media viewing, in text mode. We want you to be able to open the book randomly and discover something you might not have thought about before, or something interesting that sheds new light on our topic. We also hope you'll join the online conversation at /r/BasicIncome on Reddit.

As this book is being prepared for print, in June 2018, at least one leading global hedge fund has begun calling 2019 a dangerous year for global markets.

Just about four months after Ray Dalio, the head of the world's largest hedge fund, told CNBC in an interview that investors should ignore warnings of a forthcoming market correction and funnel excess cash into the markets, his firm Bridgewater Associates looks to be turning a lot more bearish. The Westport, Connecticut-based investment behemoth now considers 2019 a "dangerous year," according to website ZeroHedge, citing a note from the firm (Delventhal).

The past decade of empty exuberance to get things "back to normal" after the 2008 global financial crisis may be running out of the hot air that has fueled the whole feeble attempt to go backwards to a better time. There is no such better previous time and there never is any such thing as a "return to normalcy," however famous or infamous the slogan.

Perhaps serendipitously, we have also witnessed a rapidly rising awareness of the topic of unconditional basic income in the same period. Basic Income has fully entered the Overton Window – the domain of current and feasible political debate – and steadily moved closer and closer to the center of that window. Simultaneously, with the nascent revival of MLK's Poor People's Campaign, the urgency of ending poverty with a sufficient, livable basic income is rising closer than ever to the top of a long list of public policy priorities. The State of Hawai'i has already demonstrated legislative leadership by introducing unconditional basic income legislation in the past year.

All this progress is being made, despite the explosive increase in the number of flat TV screens that blockade our public spaces, overriding the natural flow of our own thought processes and human interactions. If those screens act as a sort of psychological dam, holding back the rapidly rising flood of economic precarity that fills the average American worker's experience every single day, then that dam is about to burst. When it does burst, every one of those screens will be announcing the progress of unconditional basic income legislation at state, national, and global scale.

These are some of the current conditions that make 2019 the year that legislation must be enacted by the United States Congress to begin the process of implementing a basic income "at levels that sustain life in decent circumstance" (King).

The amount of basic income is one of the final and most pernicious sticking points when it comes to practical implementation. Current popular round numbers run a very real and high risk of being insufficient to be effective. This was the same risk faced by quantitative easing (QE) policy deployed during the economic recovery in 2008. If the low-ball arguments had won, had there not been several rounds, at levels much higher than the precautionary voices argued, we would not have even had the past seven or eight years of breathing room to prepare for what lies ahead.

Unconditional basic income is, after all, a form of QE that circulates from the bottom up rather than top down. Whereas traditional QE is pumped directly into the heart in an extremely risky and complex operation, UBI is more like a normal intravenous (IV) transfusion, a much safer everyday procedure.

However, if the amount of basic income is untethered from the real economy, if it's just a minimal slow drip, with a dosage derived independent of empirical market productivity, if it is benchmarked against outdated, arbitrary thresholds such as the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), it will surely fail. This is the biggest risk facing basic income policy.

Non-partisan logic readily demonstrates that the amount of basic income cannot be a number pulled out of thin air or pegged to the poverty level itself, because the poverty level is, by definition, still poverty, right? Obviously, choosing a round number tossed out for the sake of discussion, as in Charles Murray's book, *In Our Hands: A Plan to Replace the Welfare State*, is an absurdly irresponsible way to craft sound public policy.

So, while awareness of unconditional basic income as the most direct way to end poverty has successfully reached mainstream consciousness over the past decade, today is the time to move beyond theoretical numbers and specify precise, actionable, market-indexed guidance in crafting legitimate income security legislation.

Today, most modern companies offer various methods of profit sharing. Even taxi drivers know that a 50/50 split between labor and capital is a fair way to share profits. 50% goes to the driver (labor) and 50% goes to the owner (capital). This book presents the case for similarly indexing UBI to per capita GDP at a rate of 50%. This is an amount that is both fair and credible to "sustain life in decent circumstance" in today's post-automation economy.

The question of where the money comes from to fund a fully livable, unconditional basic income is not even recognized as a legitimate or useful question for our purposes. It is a pointless and irrelevant question, and we will further support this perspective throughout this book. In short, everybody knows that adjustments across the economy are constantly taking place. Some are foreseeable, others are not so obvious.

No one has ever asked where the money would come from to bomb our perceived enemies into oblivion, to land on the moon, to map the human genome, or to create

massive new bureaucracies like the TSA and DHS. In each of these cases and many more, the mission was set to accomplish these urgent objectives, and the money was found or created. Money is never the obstacle, it's only a convenient excuse to argue against any idea that we don't fully understand, or to oppose ideas that we think we disagree with based upon emotional or childhood convictions about how the world was supposed to work, as if the world could ever exist in a static state.

That said, we can concede the fact that large swaths of the existing welfare state apparatus will be eliminated, and the public savings applied to achieving the ancient societal goal of universal income security.

We can also logically deduce that personal income tax rates will adjust closer to the days when the American economy worked for most Americans, in the late 1950's and early 1960's.

We can even go so far as to suggest that corporate income tax rates could be decreased or even eliminated completely, to spur business growth, which grows GDP, which grows the share of each citizen's dividend. When unconditional basic income is indexed to corporate growth by way of GDP, then corporate growth pays off for everyone, not just a few.

Some readers may find it even more surprising that we can even suggest that the minimum wage be eliminated, as we no longer need to force corporations to pay people a living wage, because every individual receives a livable dividend.

In these ways, achieving universal income security through unconditional basic income directly aligns the everyday American's interests with the interests of wealth, and of increasing wealth generation. With unconditional basic income in place, it's no longer us versus them, capital versus labor. It's all of us, working to grow the dividends of economic freedom for everyone, rather than solely for the benefit of sophisticated insiders and large shareholders, alone.

Let's be clear up front about one important fact: basic income will not end income or wealth inequality, nor is it intended to do so. Unconditional basic income simply recognizes the stakeholder class upon which all other stakeholder classes are ultimately founded: the citizen. Therefore, many argue that basic income is more accurately described as a citizen dividend. A citizen dividend is the most basic and fundamental stakeholder share of our interdependent market economy.

Clearly, basic income will not solve all the world's problems, nor does it need to. Basic income is like a software update that corrects for the cascade of market failures that have created the current dire economic precarity in which most citizens and workers find themselves. Basic income doesn't destroy capitalism as some hyperventilate, it is not instant socialism, nor is it covert communism. As much as some people might like to see capitalism completely eradicated, unconditional basic income

is more like a long overdue software version update that helps markets function more efficiently and crash less often, or at least crash with less catastrophic effects upon everyday Americans.

Deeper rationales for indexing basic income to 50% per capita GDP will be found in reading this book in its entirety; however, we also understand the nature of the current world's fragmented attention patterns, so here is the bottom line, for those who only read this introduction: we propose a universal basic income commensurate with a living wage as the means to provide unconditional income security for all people in this post-automation era. The amount of basic income should be a dividend, just like the passive investment income that millions of wealthy Americans enjoy, who do no labor whatsoever to earn such exorbitant incomes. We propose that nothing makes some people worthy of receiving liberating levels of unearned income and others unworthy of receiving a basic share, as well.

On a macro level, indexing basic income to 50% per capita GDP, returns half of the collective productivity of the entire nation to capital and half to labor.

*WE PROPOSE THAT A LIVABLE BASIC INCOME BE CIRCULATED AS AN
UNCONDITIONAL CITIZEN DIVIDEND, THROUGH AN UPGRADED
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY UNIVERSAL SOCIAL SECURITY SYSTEM.
THIS BOOK EXPLAINS WHY.*

The United States already has the accounting mechanisms in place to implement this, on very short notice. There is no reason to reinvent the wheel with yet another new program named *basic income*. At the point of implementation, there is nothing sacred in a name. The principles are what must be clearly defined and skillfully legislated.

In phase one, the full Social Security age can be dropped to 55, and checks can be distributed in short order. In a phased implementation, that age can then be dropped to 45, 35, and 25, at which point every American adult will be afforded the income security that is their human right. Each of these phases can be one year, two years, or at the most five years, to speed the recovery to the American people as the post-automation environment asserts itself with increased velocity and ferocity.

Even in science fiction, virtually every civilized, advanced society recognizes income security as both a civil right and a human right. Only dystopias refuse or refute this. In 1948, in the first half of the bygone twentieth century, Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) made income security a human right. Prior to that, in 1943, Abraham Maslow described basic human safety needs as inclusive of job

security,² which has ever since functioned as a proxy for income security. It's the income that provides the security, not doing the bidding of an employer because "that's the way it's always been done."

Today, the world's advanced nations have all surpassed the industrial, post-industrial, information, post-information, and even the automation phases of civilization development. The job guarantee paradigm no longer makes sense in such economies, where barely over half the adult working age population is even needed in the civilian labor force. The only reason we would cling to the vestigial mechanism of jobs is lack of imagination and lack of awareness of the myriad of other ways humans have historically led rich and meaningful lives. For most of human history, we have lived without jobs and just as reversion to the mean is nearly a sacrosanct principle of financial speculators, we will revert to the historical mean of human community and meaning in today's post-automation world.

Some readers will have immediately noticed that the title of this book pays tribute to Martin Luther King's 1967 timeless civil rights road map, "*Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community*."³ In that paper, and his corresponding speech entitled, "The Other America," King proposed a guaranteed annual income as a replacement for the complex and expensive welfare programs. By providing income security sufficient to affirm human dignity and effectively eliminate poverty, unconditional basic income provides a solid foundation upon which to build the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness immortalized in the Constitution of the United States. Without this foundation, it is extremely difficult for people to ever break out of intergenerational patterns of poverty psychology. The fact that we make legends out of the very rare few who do so drives this point home.

Against this backdrop, unconditional basic income emerges as a simple, elegant solution to the pernicious problem of poverty. That said, simple and elegant does not necessarily equate to easily implemented. The elegance of today's vertical rocket booster landings is a prime example of a simple and elegant solution that took many lifetimes to finally come to fruition.

The connection we're making between vertical rocket landings and basic income is that history repeatedly proves that the human capacity for foresight far exceeds the typical lifespan of an individual. Time and time again, individuals have demonstrated precise insight of earthly events, far beyond the fleeting duration of their individual mortal time on Earth. Just because we never had reusable rockets in the past, doesn't mean we can't have them now. Just because we have never solved poverty in the past, doesn't mean we can't do so now.

The point here is that the elegant solution of reusable rockets was well known for a very long before they were built, and the elegant solution of sustainable income security

through unconditional basic income has traversed a similar historical arc. Today, both tools have become a regular part of our everyday lives and unconditional basic income is the next reusable vehicle rolling onto the launch pad, the vehicle which enables humanity to reach permanent escape velocity from economic poverty, as we've always known it.

* * *

The Post-Automation Era

Toward a World That Works for Everyone

TOWARD WHAT END?

The paradox, even contradiction, expressed by the subtitle's word choice: *restoring our roots by leaving the past behind*, is as intentional as it is unavoidable, as we hurtled towards the 22nd century at a rate that previous generations could not possibly have imagined; a rate that present generations find completely normal, and in fact, the only rate of change we've ever known. What is perceived as a confusing and unsustainable rate of change by one generation can simultaneously be perceived as boring and drab and excruciatingly slow.

While technology may grow at an exponential rate, the human capacity for understanding slithers along at an evolutionary pace. It's no wonder why the world can seem like an inexplicable place.

If any one place in the world manifests the full spectrum of new capabilities and contradictions that global capitalism creates, it's that cradle of American innovation and free enterprise known as Silicon Valley. Here is where the ever-changing real-time results of our way of life are perhaps most clearly and starkly manifest, day to day, decade to decade. Silicon Valley has played an increasingly prominent role in creating our future over the past century. Today, Silicon Valley shows us the social and economic future that awaits us all if we continue to cling to the policies and politics that have led us to this point in history. Yet, instead of responding to the incomprehensible social crisis at hand, Americans are distracted. Americans are distracted by every conceivable petty contrivance imaginable. Silicon Valley's emergent social media AI already seems to know how to play our 98.8% chimp DNA like a fiddle. We bicker over a billion trifling things that don't matter, in the end. Our petty bickering may even be increasingly instigated by algorithmic design, so that we don't have any attention left with which to contemplate the things that do matter, and to consider together the steps that we might take to make lemonade out of this sour, bitter, present tense social and political environment. Perhaps not coincidentally, today's 24/7/365 mass distraction cycle appears to be almost entirely algorithmically orchestrated by Silicon Valley social media platforms that are painstakingly designed to capture, hold, and engage human attention for the specific purpose of driving human behavior, all for the maximum benefit of the shareholders of those platforms. Is this the kind of society we want to live in? If not, what, if anything, can we do about it?

In so many ways, humanity is at a pinnacle of rational achievement. Among many other contemporary thought leaders, writer, cognitive psychologist, linguist, and popular science author, Steven Pinker has made many of the macro gains of humanity over recent centuries abundantly clear in his comprehensive works. At the same time, just as micro- and macroeconomics differ significantly in frame and scope; so too do micro- and macro-societal trends require different perspectives; to accurately understand the nature of current conditions; to soberly assess options for cultivating better conditions for Americans, and for humanity. For instance, how many readers believe that the following common worker experience represents the pinnacle of civilization, as envisioned by history's greatest visionaries and patriots?

On a recent visit to Silicon Valley, where thousands of full-time workers today live in cars, RVs, and tents, a CNN investigative report asked a 51-year-old woman who has been living in her car for the past three years, "How do these tech companies treat blue collar workers, like yourself?"

The woman, Elizabeth, replied: "They try to be cordial, but that doesn't make up for being paid so little that many of us are homeless. One of the gigs that I have now, is as a security officer for a corporation that happens to clean out its refrigerators, probably about two, big garbage cans full of brand-new fresh food that is one week before expiring. Nobody, not the janitors that clean it up, not the security officers that escort the janitors across the street to the compost bin, none of us can touch that food. All that food gets thrown into the compost bin. And then I, since I'm the security officer, I put a padlock on that. Just about a block away from one of the overpasses where there's a homeless encampment. Sometimes I don't close that padlock. And sometimes when I'm hungry, you know what I do, don't you? Sometimes I eat that food. The massive numbers of people that are homeless, are working people that live in their cars. They serve you your food. Sometimes we're childcare workers. Sometimes we're even lecturers at universities."

Here at ground zero for capitalist wealth creation, Silicon Valley, there is no debating the facts on the ground. This is the end game of American Capitalism, as it has been played up until this point in history. Is this the end game that we believe our founding fathers had in mind? Are these the results intended? If not, what did they have in mind? More importantly, what do you and we have in mind, because we are the only ones here today, who are able to do anything about our current conditions. The bombastic babbling blood sport of traditional and mainstream social media are, in the words of poet James Maynard Keenan, "one great big festering neon distraction" from the responsibilities that we fear to face, directly in front of us. If we don't stop the madness, nothing and no one will. If you are satisfied with this world, as it is, then this book is not for you. That's okay, we understand. Nobody gets along famously with everyone. On the other hand, if you've had enough, if you are ready to get to the bottom

of the causes and effects that got us here, and to turn lessons from those mistakes into tangible actions we can take to begin creating the kind of world we would all like to live in, then thank you for the commitment to read on.

As individuals, communities, cities, states, and nations; as human beings, as a species: what is the end game of our shared creative and evolutionary journey? What are the most desirable short term and long-term outcomes for our individual and shared experiences on Earth? Where do we think we are headed, and why? Toward what end is the story of humanity reaching?

Questions like these tend to awaken the philosophical and religious imagination. These in turn tend to inform and shape our political and economic perspectives. What is the story arc of consciousness in human form? Which of our old stories can we, or ought we continue to believe in, update, build upon, and which stories no longer work at all? Why? What new stories can improve upon both the old and the new, learning from both the failed and the successful?

Are we humans destined to merely strive like chimpanzees to get the most bananas and sex, world without end? Are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness the pinnacle principles of all eternity? Are there no higher goals or ambitions than those already articulated in the Constitution of the United States, the Bible, and the aggregate ambitions of all the generations who have gone before us? Do the current and rising generations have nothing to add to the story, at all? Is the purpose of our existence only to achieve the goals of those who have gone before us?

Are we destined to merely pursue happiness, yet never actually attain a sustainable, flourishing happiness, ourselves? Wouldn't the right to the *attainment* of happiness create more of that universally heralded objective than the right of perpetual pursuit? Some may consider such questions as simple semantics, but what if semantics simply matters more than the tired old clichéd dismissals of lazy imaginations? Can we imagine a world in which the insatiable pursuit of mere material holograms of happiness no longer provides the primary emotional motivation to create compulsory economic models, which subsequently dictate the physical activities of most of humanity?

In other words, what do we want the world to look like when we in the advanced West, we in the top one percent, become the ultimate victims of our own success? When automated labor productivity is so high, that half or less of Americans — or any given human population — are even needed in the labor force? As artificially intelligent automation and machine learning productivity reach asymptotic heights — levels at which only an inflection point reversal or infinitely diminishing returns lie ahead — when jobs are essentially obsolete as the primary method of currency circulation, how do we plan for people to exist? Who will buy all the robot-created goods and services when there is no longer enough need for labor to provide jobs for half or more of the

population? While such practical questions seem relatively straightforward, the cacophony of competing answers is more than muddled by the inertia of our own beliefs about ourselves, and about human nature.

Is our objective, or fate as a species, to simply continue crusading for some symbolic final state of triumph and ultimate domination of this or that group over all other groups? These tribal and herd-like mentalities have served us well, relative to surviving Earth's unique evolutionary pressures. However, in the everyday Anthropocene era; from petty homeowner association politics to billionaires keeping score with personal jets, to the futile and pathological dreams of total control exhibited by hyper-militarized police forces and overreaching empires, is this story of tribal conquest really the most fit to guide both our inner and outer lives through the twenty-first century and into the twenty-second?

Or do these historical motivations and narratives reflect increasingly vestigial values and distorted frames of reference? Are vestigial and distorted narratives the only stories we can choose from, in creating our own life story, today? Or can we maybe, just maybe, set our aim a little bit higher, this century? Can we choose to aim toward an end game that plays more like an endless game of mutual aid, cooperation, and universal flourishing for both humanity and life on Earth as a whole? A world that works for everyone.

If you opened this book looking for answers, you may eventually find one or two, but you'll find them on your own and only in the form of the journey, not a destination. The only way we can possibly begin thinking about useful answers to all these questions, and many more, is to do the much harder work of forging and contemplating better questions.

You can congratulate yourself, now, for being among those readers who were able to consider the large number of questions presented in the first chapter of this book. Shallow answers are easy, in comparison to deep enquiry, and books full of them are easy to find. On the other hand, if we want deep answers to complex challenges, we must be willing to ask deep questions and uncover the deeper causes to the conditions we seek to change.

Good questions, salient and useful questions, can be very hard to come up with, and even harder to contemplate in depth. That may be one reason why "the other America" of today is the America tuned into reality TV shows like *The Proposal*, which pharmaceutically distills the basest homo sapiens instincts, fears, and hopes into, as Priscilla Frank puts it, "an hour long (shit)show" that people can consume without facing any of the actual reality or ambiguity involved in developing authentic and enduring human relationships. It shouldn't come as any surprise. The commoditization

and shrink-wrapping of the most delicate and intimate of all human relationships surely marks a kind of ultimate triumph of capitalism and provides a useful cross-check to other measures of social and economic precarity that indicate we are indeed nearing a major inflection point or asymptote to progress as a people.

On history's timeline, the year 2018 is nearly twenty percent of the way toward the twenty-second century. Whether you recall most of the previous century or have only read about it in textbooks or on the internet, there is at least one perspective we can share: the observation that humanity has well-proven just about all that it could ever need to prove in terms of its capacity for technological and economic prowess. We've done it. Humankind has mastered nature, as evidenced not just in our built environment, but also in the completion of the Standard Model of physics. Whether or not we won the industrialization and automation game; and what that even means, is one of the most important questions posed between the lines of this book.

What humanity hasn't proven, so far, is its emotional and social maturity. We've built and even surpassed the capabilities of many of the gadgets and technologies imagined by science fiction writers of the past 200 years, but despite the overwhelming number of cautionary and alarmist dystopias, we have made little progress toward the penultimate social and economic advantages and benefits depicted in the most aspirational sci-fi franchises, like *Star Trek*. Perhaps it is partly because of the oversupply of dystopias in our collective media consciousness that we seem to be gravitating toward the most common narrative we've been shown: dystopia.

In other ways, our fledgling post-automation society seems a bit like a highly overachieving 40-year-old PhD student who still hasn't decided what she wants to build with all her hard-won knowledge. That doesn't make 40-year-old indecisive postdocs bad people, it only means that by that time in life, one has certainly attained all the skills and credentials needed to do whatever it is one chooses to do. All that is lacking are the will and the confidence to move forward. These are the same imaginary obstacles to ending poverty and homelessness in America.

Against this backdrop, can we envision a game that acknowledges the value and role of all previous world games – with all attendant blessings and curses – while simultaneously motivating us to play better, become stronger, smarter, happier, and achieve more meaning, more purpose, more contentment, and more fulfillment of potential? Can we find a way to move forward from the consumption game to the flourishing game?

What we can say is that outside of the realm of eschatology – end-of-the-world beliefs – there is no such thing as a static-state end game for life on Earth. Everything we perceive, both inside and outside, is changing. To be alive is to be constantly changing. Only death could be mistaken as a static end-state for the body or the person,

and then, the process of decomposition continues as change. Even for the major world religions that advance some static end-state for creation, is that end state static and never changing? Or maybe the sole immutable aspect of God is change?

Even for those who plan to meet dearly departed loved ones in heaven or paradise, change will certainly be ongoing, because each of those encounters will, by definition, take place as changing states, will they not? The point here is only to illustrate the tangled web that our deeper beliefs can create when it comes to making otherwise direct decisions about how to interact with conditions on Earth, to address the question: toward what end?

This isn't a religious book or a religious issue per se, however, we do need to respectfully acknowledge the fact that, in America, 80% of people believe in God. So, it seems reasonable for us to face the fact that our ideas about God shape our ideas about what the world is for, what it can or should become, and consequently, how the social and economic games that we play should be designed and played, all along the way, in order to achieve the ends toward which we are moving. It's all connected.

Of course, a very large number of believers; people who are intelligent, educated, sincere, and well-meaning, can easily fall into the trap of wasting tremendous amounts of energy arguing about what the label God means and then applying that meaning to judgements about who has the right to exist on the human plane, and who doesn't. Who deserves to have their basic human needs met, and who doesn't. Who can sleep peacefully in their \$150,000 RV, and who gets the door of their \$15,000 RV banged on at two o'clock in the morning. Who can sleep peacefully in a tent 50 miles outside of town and who gets cuffed and booked into the local jail for sleeping in the same tent 5 blocks down the street. Obviously, there are a lot of moving parts that we are temporarily holding separate in these scenarios; however, in the most basic sense, sleeping in a tent is sleeping in a tent and sleeping in an RV is sleeping in an RV. In an absolute sense, the activities themselves are entirely equal, only the background scenery is changed. Yet, so much of our world seems to be fixated on the backdrop and oblivious to the human rights being revoked or sacrificed right before our very eyes.

There are countless other books that attempt to bring people together in a religious context to solve these and other persistent social problems, but we won't have time to address all of that in detail, here. Rather, we wanted to acknowledge the fact up front that religious beliefs, convictions, conditioning, dogmas, directives, and emotions deeply influence our understanding and beliefs of what economies are for and how economics should work. That's the question this book raises when it asks, "toward what end?"

How do the highest values of our most deeply held belief systems suggest that economies should function? Does a successful economic system really lead to the

current situation wherein "42 people hold as much wealth as the 3.7 billion who make up the poorest half of the world's population" (Elliot)? Does a successful economic system create the largest number of homeless people within the same 100-mile radius that generates the most wealth and income in a nation? Namely, Silicon Valley. Whatever these systems were designed for yesterday; the question for the current generation is: what objectives do we want these systems to serve, today, and into the coming century?

Tinkering with the Cosmic Clockworks

Some people will argue that ending poverty with a livable basic income is playing God, just as so many innovations in the past were panned as the height of human arrogance. The development of penicillin, airplanes, modern surgery, the list goes on and on. Many believe that nature and reality are fixed, cosmic clockworks, with all the gears and cogs sized and placed just right to make everything work, just as it is. Even the slightest tinkering will break the whole machine. It's impressive that such childlike, mechanistic thinking could continue to exert such an influence after so many centuries.

While the mechanical clockworks view of the cosmos, of society, and even social institutions like businesses or markets have held sway for such a remarkably long time, the way we see it today, economies are much more like living systems made up of constantly changing and adapting components, namely, people and our forever fickle and changing desires.

There is nothing fixed, mechanical, or divine about the way economies work. Economics is not physics. Nevertheless, the principle of physics TANSTAAFL – There Ain't No Such Thing As A Free Lunch – was a convenient and powerful meme for capitalists to befuddle agricultural workers with, as self-sufficient farmers were coaxed into factories. It made perfect sense to farmers, who also knew that if they don't tend to the crops, there will be no crops. In this sense, there is also no free lunch. Except for one little problem. Just about any fruit-bearing crop we raise produces such super-abundance that we can't possibly consume it all, ourselves. Nature automatically rewards our work in a way that one person's energy can feed ten. Now, the problem of that one person feeling bitter about the way nature works is a human nature issue, not a law of physics, much less economics. This feeling that somehow others might get away with relaxing while we tend the crops runs deep in our culture. And it's mostly delusional. Everyone contributes something of value to the world, by their very existence in human form. When we foster than inherent value, when we nurture individual interests into deep passion, people naturally add value in countless ways. If the farmer's son plays the flute, and with years of training provides immeasurable peace

and comfort to his family and community, how is that son mooching a free lunch by eating a few of the hundreds of oranges that dad's orange tree produced? He's not. It's just a dad that feels bitter that the part he plays seems underappreciated. This isn't a government problem or a social problem, it's a personal problem. If you are angry that your family is cared for without having to go through the hell you went through and if you take coercive measures to be sure that they experience the hell you've had to experience, what does that say about you? What does that say about us, as a society?

So, no, economies are not like a clockwork; and yes, in its very essence, nature creates overwhelmingly abundant free lunches for everyone with ownership rights to even a modest parcel of land. This land issue will emerge later as another key argument for why people locked out of land ownership in high population density areas are rightly due compensation, in exchange for the extraction of private property from the commons. The point here is, once an orange tree is planted, the amount of tending required is comparatively minimal. The marginal return on investment is nearly infinite. Can we do things to magnify and optimize nature's gift to yield even more? Of course we can, and so have we done, all the way up to the point of artificially intelligent tractors operated from outer space via GPS in the countryside and vertical farms in the urban core. For those who may not be familiar with vertical farming:

Vertical farming is the practice of producing food and medicine in vertically stacked layers, vertically inclined surfaces and/or integrated in other structures (such as in a skyscraper, used warehouse, or shipping container). The modern ideas of vertical farming use indoor farming techniques and controlled-environment agriculture (CEA) technology, where all environmental factors can be controlled. These facilities utilize artificial control of light, environmental control (humidity, temperature, gases ...) and fertigation. Some vertical farms use techniques similar to greenhouses, where natural sunlight can be augmented with artificial lighting and metal reflectors (Wikipedia).

So, nature's superabundance and humanity's superintelligence and ingenuity are the rules of nature, not the exceptions. The entire concept of scarcity is a fake news meme that capitalism successfully introduced, early on, successfully keeping people terrified that their basic human needs won't be met unless they obey the rules of a completely make-believe human construct called financial markets.

Yet, at an even deeper level, there is increasingly strong evidence that the original physics principle of TANSTAAFL may not even be true. In his seminal book, *A Universe from Nothing: Why There Is Something Rather than Nothing*, physicist Lawrence Krauss explains that "we have discovered that all signs suggest a universe that could and plausibly did arise from a deeper nothing — involving the absence of space itself." If this is the case, then the deeper principle of physics, embedded in the very creation of the universe, is this: it's all free lunch. Always was, always is, always will be. This is also

a principle that Indigenous populations all over the planet independently derived, wherever conditions were suitable to the emergence of human life. Everything is free, everything is a gift, so our task is to become grateful human beings, take only what we need while giving what we can, and become better and better at getting along with one another, amidst the post-scarcity superabundance that already always existed on Earth.

So, yes, Neo, in some significant ways, just about everything you've ever been taught about the world was based upon some fundamental misunderstandings, if not outright lies, financed by conveniently cooked books, baked by the bookmakers themselves, and perpetuated by the fake memes of a few freaked out farmers who begrudged their adult children the fruits of their labor. Some, we assume, were good people, but most were not our friends. Believe me. They've brought drugs, opioid epidemics. They've brought crime, and massive Ponzi schemes such as those operated for decades by the likes of Enron and Bernie Madoff.

Always do your own research and reach your own conclusions. However, what all intellectually curious and honest observers can agree on is the fact that economies are not created by the laws of physics and are not static, single-purpose, unchanging black-box machines to never be tinkered with. Economies are mostly like the creatures that invented them. Humans.

Healthy economies function much more like human bodies, than clockworks or machines. Like a human body, or any animal body for that matter, if 80% of any resource upon which the entire body is dependent for healthy functioning becomes clotted in 1% or 2% of that body's mass, the entire body dies. It has nothing to do with what's right or fair to the resources involved, to the organs involved, to the systems involved, or to the person involved. The body is a constantly evolving, complex adaptive system of systems that also ages, further changing its normal functioning over time. Animal bodies function on the principles of flow, of distributed, decentralized processes, and the continuous, even circulation of nutrient resources common to the entire platform.

That is why, when it comes to thinking about economics in the context of the general direction of society and civilization, we believe that it is far more useful to speak in terms of processes and flows, of nutrient values and ratios, of desired outcomes in terms of sustainable aggregate structures, of energy transmission versus distribution, and of recirculation versus redistribution.

Because economies are like biological systems, when people speak in fixed, rigid, mechanistic terms about income or wealth inequality, they often completely miss the point. If a body's resources are not in balance, it dies. Period. That balance is always changing. It is a continuous flow, not a distribution system. Biological systems don't care about our ideologies or political perspectives. Biological systems don't care about

our opinions. Biological systems do their best to adjust to conditions yet are characterized by relatively narrow ranges within which they function in a healthy manner. Just like economies.

We can force economies to operate temporarily outside of their capabilities, just like we can force our human bodies beyond their capabilities. For example, we can adapt a human body to breath underwater with scuba gear. Temporarily. We can adapt a human body to space with a space suit. Temporarily. Without such “outside regulatory interference” of oxygen and pressure in – let’s call it the body’s marketplace of goods and services, like organs, oxygen, limbs, blood cells, etc. – the body simply ceases to function when pushed too far outside of its organically defined limits. It doesn’t matter what name you give to the processes that cause death of a body or death of an economy. If either organism operates outside of its life-sustaining parameters for too long, it’s dead, Jim.

In terms of so-called natural law and its many diverse denominations, we hope this natural analogy is useful in explaining why making changes to the functioning of markets is as natural as riding a bicycle. Bicycles aren’t natural, but the human practice of creativity, is. We are relentless makers and creators. One balancing aspect of that creative nature is the proclivity for making and creating things with unforeseen consequences. Surely, we don’t need to cite additional examples of the many times humans have committed common foibles that came with unforeseen catastrophic consequences, to establish this point. The state of our current economy seems more than sufficient to establish this principle. Of course, if the reader seeks more evidence of humanity’s profound capacity to both accomplish great things and screw them up at the same time, literally every source of history – religious, scientific, philosophical, even mathematical – is replete with additional examples of both human foresight and foolishness at civilization scale.

In an article that pleads for some hope of long overdue upgrades to centuries of outdated macroeconomic catechism, Noah Smith wrote for Bloomberg Opinion:

Most importantly, the basic notion of recessions as driven by rational actors’ responses to unpredictable, sudden events — or shocks, as economists call them — remains in place (Smith).

Are we simply doomed to never learn from history and forever repeat it, like Sisyphus? Whenever an advanced, post-automation economy becomes so efficient at doing one thing, such as generating and centralizing wealth, it should come as no surprise that this is a case of both great foresight and profound foolishness. Brilliant foresight in creating the hologram of wealth to drive human behavior in the first place, and utter foolishness in the lack of understanding for the long-term consequences of the systems of thought and action that whisked humanity from the agrarian age to the

industrial age, and far beyond. Thus, we stand today at yet another key inflection point of exponential opportunity and risk. This just seems to be what humans do. Not good. Not bad. Just old. Just sick. Just broken. Just human. This isn't to be completely cynical, it's only to face the reality of a species that shares 98.8% of our DNA with chimpanzees. We're not that much further ahead on the evolutionary path.

To return to the biological analogy, if 80% of wealth is centralized, held, controlled, hoarded, in just 1% or 2% of a population's control, this is equivalent to a blood clot. It's not a question of right or wrong. It's not a moral, religious, philosophical, or political question at all. It's a simple feature of Earth's living systems that they cannot and will not operate with 80% of the blood, sap, or other circulatory currency clotted up in 1% of 2% of the system. Our bodies do not care if the clot is in our pinky toe, our spleen, or in our brain. Blood clots kill, and they kill both gradually, then suddenly. Blood clots kill gradually as they pile up, often with no symptoms for an extended period of time, prior. Sometimes they kill with no symptoms at all, until they grow to just the right size that all flows cease. That's oftentimes the case with stroke. So why would we be surprised when the global economy has had a stroke?

The health of our national and global economies is clearly in critical condition, and there's no guarantee either will make it out of the intensive care unit. What we do know is that for any economy in such a state to revive and survive, all the clots must be removed and permanently dissolved. We can accomplish this through progressive taxation and massive QE blood transfusions, in the form of a fully livable, individual, basic income. These are the most advanced and effective surgical methods available to recover from the initial catastrophic blood loss of the most severe economic body shocks and restore healthy systolic and diastolic blood pressure most quickly and permanently, to an economy on the brink of annihilation.

However, if we just jam blood directly into the heart, in the form of traditional QE, without removing the clots, and without ensuring that the procedure restores the body from the capillary level, where it can naturally be circulated back to the heart, no amount of new blood will save the patient, much less keep the patient alive for long. Filling the heart or brain with unlimited supplies of donated blood will do nothing if the capillaries are not nourished by a sustainable systemic flow.

When people talk about unsustainable wealth accumulation and centralization, the mythical specter of wealth redistribution is often raised in protest against doing anything to correct these imbalances. Raging over the word socialism, with little or no idea of what socialism even is, this hyperventilating redistribution meme is often framed as unnatural meddling in an otherwise divinely decreed system. As if capitalism were handed down from on high by the likes of Moses, Jesus, or Joseph Smith. However, economic systems are not God ordained, they are wholly man-made systems. Moreover, currencies are said to go into *circulation*, not *distribution*, so protests that use

the word redistribution, as if the word itself were a demonic incantation, are not just misguided, they are often willfully ignorant to even the most basic economic principles.

Whether we choose to call it Unconditional Basic Income, a Citizen Dividend, a Freedom Dividend, or Universal Social Security, ending poverty by establishing income security as a fundamental human right is nothing like the wealth redistribution tar baby of Pepe the frog meme traffickers. UBI is not a static, one-time event. It's not distribution, it's circulation. It's not like building out Amazon distribution centers to make sure that this year's popular tennis shoes are as close to your location as possible.

Income security means sustainable income circulation and the prevention of blood clots throughout the economic body. It's not about everyone having equal wealth. Will equal amounts of blood ever be present in each of the organs of the body? Of course not. Neither does universal Social Security ensure that everyone always has the exact same amount of money forever and ever. Income security as a human right does not mean, in the memorable words of Neil Peart, that "the trees are all kept equal; by hatchet, axe, and saw." It simply means that the circulatory system will return to a normalized flow capable of keeping the body alive.

Please let us dispense with fearful, corrosive, hateful hyperventilation around the labels of socialism, communism, libertarianism, or any other demonized ism that our perspective finds polarizing. Let us become aware of the experience of polarization itself and explore the thoughts and perceptions that tend to make us feel polarized, opposed, different from others on an existential level.

Economic survival isn't about any of these beliefs or belief systems, although there are members of countless competing tribes who seek to convince us otherwise. Economic flourishing is, at its core, simply about negotiating life itself, and understanding ways to sustain life within the operational boundaries of the parameters within which life can continue to exist. This applies to both circulatory systems, and to growth itself.

In July 2018, Martin Kirk wrote for Fast Company:

... yes, all other things being equal, economic growth is a positive thing. But all other things are not equal ... for all its positives, economic growth has a dark side; its ecological impact.⁴ The impacts of our ever-growing economy have become so stark and so widespread that they are by any sane measure portents to catastrophe. Whether it's the fact that Antarctic ice is now melting three times faster than we thought, or the unfolding "biological annihilation" that has already wiped out 50% of all animals and up to 75% of all insects, or the fact that, in spite of all this, we are pumping out CO₂ at record levels, it takes willful ignorance or a blinding ideology to deny the severity of the crisis.

This creates a terrible paradox: Economic growth keeps economies stable today but threatens not just future growth but medium-term social and civilizational cohesion, and ultimately the very capacity of this biosphere to sustain life.

A little thought experiment shows how growth can be a problem: Insert the word “a” before it. “A growth.” That feels very different from just “growth,” right? Growth is a big part of what we all understand happens in a healthy life. Children grow, knowledge grows, love grows. But “a growth” is what happens when life gets corrupted. “A growth” is when the growth is unchecked, and thus a symptom not of health but disease; when it takes on the character of an invader, attacking its host. The word for growth that gets out of control in this way, such that it becomes “a growth,” is, of course, cancer.

These processes are clearly reflected in equivalent economic principles of circulation, respiration, metabolism, and growth.

Growth, to be healthy, must be meticulously regulated. Our bodies have evolved to keep this balance without our slightest conscious perception. Economies, on the other hand, are fabricated, man-made systems that require man-made regulation. Exponential cell growth is a cancer that will kill us. Left unchecked, wealth hoarding and income inequality act just like blood clots that kill us. Healthy growth and healthy circulatory systems sustain us. Unhealthy or unbounded growth, anemic or inadequate circulation kills us. Nothing we believe about the political world does anything to change these simple life and death truths of biology and economy.

Up until the present moment, we have somehow managed to continue existing within “just right” Goldilocks conditions that sustain physical, social, emotional, psychological, environmental, and economic life conditions on Earth. The question is, how long will this marvelously inexplicable experience continue?

Of course, if sustainability of our Earthly realm is not the point of life for some readers, then one could argue against the principles outlined above, but in that case, what is the point? Why do we even bother doing all the work that we do to stay alive, ourselves, if none of this will last anyway, and none of it matters? #IReallyDontCareDoU

* * *

What Is The Point Of Civilization?

What is the point of human civilization, anyway? Where do we think our current civilization is headed? What’s our story?

Birth. Consume. School. Consume. Work. Consume. Death. Consume. Yes, even after death, the trend is to teach the next generation a lesson by leaving nothing but scorched Earth behind, after you die. What lesson would that be? For the most part, the lesson that “if I had to suffer, you need to suffer.” Oh, it’s couched in politically correct sound bites about esteem and meaning, but mostly it’s just bitterness and fear that somebody might get something that you didn’t. We’ve seen this movie a thousand times.

So that’s the script. That’s the point of civilization. Get all you can before you die and leave nothing behind to those horrible, ungrateful punks who failed to do what we told them to do. Surely there are exceptions, but in general, if news headlines and political currents are any indication, the animosity of previous generation toward Generation X and Millennials is at all-time highs. But that surely can't be all there is to it. So where else might we find the point of civilization? Why are we here and how are we supposed to do this thing called society? What's the point?

Biblical and other scriptural narratives have broadly guided humanity’s “big story” for millennia, so it is certainly relevant to explore this frame. We’re not going to cite chapter and verse, here, because modern day Pharisees can never be appeased, so we’ll just summarize a commonly held understanding of this perspective about the point of life and civilization.

In the Old Testament, due to sin, God cursed man to eat bread by the sweat of his brow. In the New Testament, Jesus came to atone for all sin, thereby lifting all associated curses for those who believe. At some future date, there will be a perfect Heaven and a perfect Earth where nobody will need to toil or fret, where all needs will be met, in resurrected, corporeal bodies. The job of humanity will be to sing praises to God for all eternity.

Yet today, all day, every day, in Christian-managed businesses, the demand is constantly for more sweat from the brow, as if this were the quintessentially biblical way to be civilized. Why would Christians, above all, not be working to bring about conditions on Earth as they are in Heaven? Does this make any sense at all? Many believe that there must be some cataclysmic event and an extended time of human suffering before any of this can come to pass, and that we as humans are powerless to do anything except wait for a bail out from Daddy. So many of us are waiting on precisely the kind of bail out, on a grand scale, that we emphatically begrudge our own offspring on this tiny, earthly scale.

So, is it true that humankind is simply predestined by God to forever eat bread by the sweat of his brow? Is that curse permanent, immune to the blood of Christ, while somehow other curses are selectively lifted? Is it ordained that people must labor 80 hours a week at two or three jobs to barely get by, because we are such a bottomless basket of deplorables? That's exactly what the capitalist market we currently live in has

decided, because this is exactly the kind of economy we live in, right now. Or, others might ask, was not the work of Christ on the cross enough to pay humankind's sin debt in full? As Christians, we don't get to have it both ways. We don't get to quote and defend the old letter of the law whenever we want others to obey our orders or attempt to force agreement with our perspective; while simultaneously preaching the good news that Jesus paid off our sin mortgage in full, thereby fulfilling all the law and the prophets, and liberating humanity from the ultimate punishments for sin. While most would agree that eternal death is clearly the worst of those curses, it certainly isn't the only curse that was levied as punishment for sin, and it wasn't the only sin that Christ's blood atoned for. We'll leave the question of whether eating bread by the sweat of our brow is one of the lifted curses or not to the pulpits of America. You're welcome for the content. We only ask that you send us the proper 10% tithe for every time you take up offerings after speaking on the topic.

Relax. It's a joke. Sort of. Perhaps all of this is a new way for some readers to think about the situation. Perhaps some are angered, perhaps some are intrigued, perhaps some have already burned this book. In any event, none of us can really be blamed for believing the only perspective that we were ever exposed to while growing up in an otherwise well-intentioned church or community. We are all products of our environment, and it's certainly no sin to have been inadvertently or purposely misled by others whom we respected and trusted. We've all felt that sense of betrayal at some point in our lives. It's not a good feeling.

At the current inflection point in history, we could also be in for several other unexpectedly interdependent revelations about how we thought the world worked, versus how it works. If we stay focused on what Jesus did and try not to worry so much about what people say about what Jesus said, we'll all stand a much better chance of weathering the transition to the post-automation world we find ourselves in, today.

What are some of the things Jesus did? For one, he gave away free lunch to everyone. How? By making those who had fish and loaves share, so it could be broken up, multiplied, and redistributed. Jesus provided free healthcare with instant healings. Jesus provided free education with every sermon. Jesus called fishers to lay down their nets, to quit their jobs, and follow him. Yes, in today's context, he said, "quit your job and do what really matters." Yet, we throw a conniption fit if our adult children follow his advice, right? What happened to us? Where and how did we accidentally become the people that we pledged to never become, in our youth? Is it too late to change?

Of course not. It's never too late to repent of our mistaken views. If what we've just read has angered us, we can do that today by taking a deep breath, maybe taking a nap, or maybe set the book down until tomorrow.

While the current state of our world and the upheavals immediately ahead may be infuriating to many people today, when we look back from the twenty-second century, there's a reasonable chance that we will then see how June 2018 marked the official end of capitalism as we've known it. We'll also see the decades of precursor events to that date, but in hindsight, it might turn out to be as good a date as any at which to draw the line.

On June 19, 2018, Matt Phillips, writing for the New York Times, may have inadvertently penned the obituary when he wrote:

And then there were none.

General Electric (GE), the last original member of the Dow Jones industrial average, was dropped from the blue-chip index late Tuesday. It was the last remaining original member of the index when the stock market measure was introduced in 1896.

In the more than 120 years that followed, the company was often at the center of American capitalism. And as recently as the 1990s, G.E. was at times the most-valuable American company by market value. Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Facebook, and Microsoft are the five most valuable companies in the United States today" (Phillips, emphasis added).

So, G.E., an icon and exemplar of the success of capitalism for the past century, is gone from the DOW industrial average. G.E. has become too worthless, too irrelevant, to be used as a measure of financial market health. It's only a matter of time before its carcass is recycled by one of the new Big Five.

But wait, there's more.

On October 10, the Wall Street Journal reported that Sears (SHLD) was [possibly] preparing to file for chapter 11 bankruptcy, potentially as early as Sunday night (October 14). This is because of a \$134 million loan maturing on Monday that the company doesn't have the ability to pay.

That's no surprise given that Sears has gone from the largest retailer in the world to a zombie company kept alive by hedge fund financial engineering.

Cumulative net losses of \$11.2 billion since 2011. Store count shrank from peak of 3,500 to 900, with another 150 store closures just announced (and 250 more potentially coming) (Dividend Sensei, emphasis added).

Several generations believed in and strived to create the world pictured in the Sears catalog. That catalog defined the American ideal. To a large extent, it was the standard of the post-war consumption, and what it meant to live "the good life." And, it's been dead for a long time, now. A zombie institution barely kept alive by way of hedge fund

manager sleight of hand applied to grandma's semi-annual vacuum cleaner filter replacement sales.

These former consumer stalwarts are just among the very final vestiges of a bygone and utterly fallen industrial empire, because remember, all the other original DOW industrial components have long been long gone. General Electric and Sears may be among the most conspicuous heralds possible, holding on until last, just to trumpet Gabriel's horn, officially announcing the end of the Post-Industrial Era and the full flourishing of the Post-Automation Era. Listen. There it is now.

It's a predictable response for some readers to dismissively pronounce that this is exactly how capitalism is supposed to work. It is and equally predictable place where heavily indoctrinated minds tend to throw in another tired, snarky, and irrelevant pejorative about socialism. Something along the lines of, "Oh, so that means you want to abolish capitalism and turn America into Venezuela!" Such outbursts would be pure comedy if not for the fact that so many believe this kind of radically misinformed and ridiculously hyperbolic perspective.

It's arguably the first of the ten commandments of capitalism that companies either adapt or die. However, there's more to it than this in the case of G.E. The global behemoth was the last of its kind. Its passing marks the end of an entire era of capitalism, along with all associated assumptions, ambitions, and value propositions, thereby clearly demarcating the new post-automation era we've been gradually entering for the past several decades. This is yet another clear indicator of an inflection point on the graph of human economic history.

Today's capitalism is dominated by five companies competing to see who can build the most sophisticated artificial intelligence, fastest. Today's financial capitalism is a game of innovation with the speed of light, at the speed of light. Sophisticated hedge funds either race to build shorter fiber optic paths to the exchange or find ways to insert themselves lower down the pyramid scheme known as Wall Street, in order to aggregate, arbitrage, and skim order flows. This is not a prediction about the future. This is the present. This is the only wealth-building and redistribution game in town.

It isn't just the present, it's also the past, because this game has been going on for at least a decade before the 2008 global financial crisis. From the day that online trading networks began to be built, the game changed forever. Now, we see both how powerful the game of financial capital is in amassing historical accumulations of wealth, and how incapable it is of circulating that wealth throughout an economy where jobs are less and less necessary, every single day.

In a September 2018 conversation with Joe Rogan, one of the most prolific engineers of our era, Elon Musk, described the current environment like this:

The Post-Automation Era

The percentage of intelligence that is not human is increasing, and eventually, we [humanity] will represent a very small percentage of intelligence. But the AI isn't formed, strangely, by the human limbic system. It, in large part, is our id written large. All the things that we like, and hate, and fear. They're all there, on the internet. They're projection, of our limbic system. And the more limbic resonance [that AI achieves], the more engagement. It could be terrible, and it could be great. One thing's for sure: we will not control it.

It is now incontestable that we are living in the post-automation era that we read about in science fiction for at least the past fifty years or more. The passing of G.E. from the DOW industrial average is just the last nail in the coffin for a world that no longer exists. No matter how loud Boomers and their elders scream about “the way we did it,” two or three generations ago; no matter how virulent the insults about lazy Millennials and entitled hippies; no matter how verbally violent the provocations of the alt-right; no matter how high pitched the squeals of the neo-liberal Resistance movement; none of those polarized perspectives make any sense or useful difference in terms of adapting to the post-automation era of deeply embedded super-intelligent algorithms, devices, and machines.

For some, the most emotionally charged objection to unconditional basic income is that people are inherently lazy. The sentiment is that if left to their own devices, if left alone working on their computer in a bathrobe all day, nothing good can possibly result, and society will come to an end. The idea is that the world can't possibly work if everyone is free to work however they choose, wherever they choose, and however they choose to work. We'll call this mistaken view, Lazy Human Theory.

The fact that thousands of people work together with Linus Torvalds, the creator of Linux, empirically refutes this mistaken, yet widely held laziness presumption. Torvalds is not the only example, not by a long shot. The global open-source software developer community numbers in the millions and is growing faster than ever. This is perhaps the most striking evidence of the fact that Lazy Human Theory is completely wrong-headed and cynical. In August 2108, according to Forbes, “83% of hiring managers say open source is a high priority today, up from 76% in 2017. Linux is the most in-demand open-source skill category, considered a must-have for nearly all entry-level open-source careers” (Columbus).

We highly recommend looking at the YouTube video linked in the bibliography, in order to enjoy the entire twenty-one-minute conversation described below. The salient points, for the purpose of our discussion, are briefly summarized below.

When TED curator Chris Anderson pointed out that, “Companies like Google have made literally billions [of dollars] from your software. Does that piss you off?” Torvalds

replied, “No. It doesn't piss me off for several reasons, and one of them is that I'm doing fine. I'm really doing fine.”

Can you imagine America's most successful CEO's ever saying something like that? I'm doing just fine; I don't need or want any more money? No. In America, it's never enough. It's a game of who can get the most and when you get the most, how can you make it even more. It is an infinite loop of greed.

The creativity and productivity of people like Torvalds happen when people are raised in a society that puts the income security of all ahead of the economic domination of any one individual, or small group of shareholders. When we recognize that my right to hoard billions of dollars ends, where your right to a livable basic income indexed to 50% per capita GDP, begins, we'll begin to cultivate a more efficient economy and a more perfect union.

When Anderson said, “Your software, Linux, is in millions of computers, it powers much of the internet, and there are like a billion and a half Android devices out there. Your software is in every single one of them. You must have some kind of amazing software headquarters, driving all this. I mean, that's what I thought. So, when I saw a picture of this ...” the crowd burst into knowing, collegial laughter, as an image of Linus Torvalds is displayed on the mighty TED Conference main screen. It's Torvalds, standing in front of a simple flat screen monitor perched atop a desk that could have come from Walmart or Ikea, squeezed neatly into a corner just like any of us might use in own home office, today. “This is the Linux World Headquarters,” says Anderson.

“Yeah, it really doesn't look like much,” Torvalds replies, flatly. “The way I work ... my computer doesn't need to be big and powerful ... my office is the most boring office you will ever see. I sit there all alone, in the quiet. If the cat comes up and sits in my lap, I want to hear the cat purring, not the sound of the fans from the computer.”

Anderson continues, “Working this way, you are able to manage this vast technology empire. It is an empire. That's an amazing testament to the power of open source.”

“I work alone, in my house, often in my bathrobe. When the photographer shows up, I dress up. That's how I've always worked,” says Torvalds.

Still, some people will try to say that Linus, and millions of open-source developers, are somehow the exception to the rule, and that regular, normal people are not this way. Not this curious. Not this passionate. Not this persevering. Not this productive. Why would we respond that way? Maybe because we are the lazy ones, projecting that belief onto everyone around us. Who are we to decide who is a regular normal person and who isn't? Today, the Linux operating system continues to grow into billions of devices and the number of people contributing to this work continues to grow, apace. Most

people do all this unpaid work for the love of learning, contributing, and participating in community, and many don't have the slightest interest in money other than needing it as an annoying distraction, as required to pay off bullies who show up at the first of each month threatening to throw them out on the street and destroy their lives if monthly protection money is not paid. These people and corporations call themselves landlords. They call the extorted protection money, rent. Meanwhile, other people around many open-source contributors scream at them to “get a real job” in between texting their friends on the smartphone that could not exist without the software that these “lazy people who don't know how the real world works,” create.

In the 21st century, working this way is less and less of an exception, and more and more the new rule of our emergent post-automation society. One of the key problems during this transition period is not the people working more independently and creatively with less concern for turning big profits; it is a culture that has normalized bullies, who effectively act like thugs in many cases, who do not understand how to value anything other than what they consider worthwhile; it is a culture that reifies blue collar physical activity; activity that they can directly observe and approve of, or disapprove of, while vilifying and demeaning intellectual, artistic, creative, or white collar work. Obviously, blue collar work is honorable and there is nothing wrong with it, but there are many kinds of work in this world that are equally honorable and deserving of equal respect and dignity. Students, writers, rappers, graphics and fashion designers, architects, artists, journalists, aspiring professional gamers and game creators, and of course, software developers in dozens of different disciplines. The list of creative human expression continues to grow exponentially with technology, because the two are inexplicably integral to who and what we are as human beings, and as natural workers.

Work is fundamental to what we are. Jobs are not. Jobs are a social construct, created to serve the interests of those who benefit most from the current economic system. Jobs are, all too often, a forced redirection of our meaningful work, to fulfill someone else's objectives, to satisfy someone else's goals for their own lives, using our lives as tools. This is the antithesis of the tradition of American individualism, American liberty.

So, the real question is, what kind of post-automation world do we want to live in? Which version of the many science fiction futures do we want to live in, today, and tomorrow? What are the most beneficial characteristics of our globally interconnected, interdependent, inter-evolving species, given the extraordinary capabilities developed over the most recent century, over the most recent decade? What steps do we need to take in the ten years, five years, and this year, to set us on the most likely trajectory to cultivate the kind of world we wish to live in and to leave the kind of legacy we wish to pass on to the generations that follow?

In August 2018, one candidate for U.S. President in 2020, Andrew Yang, put the question in the most pragmatic terms possible when he wrote:

If we were to include care work, particularly that done by women, our GDP would be 26%, or about \$5 trillion dollars, higher. "Society is getting a free ride on women's unrewarded contributions to the human race." Universal Basic Income would help right this wrong.

One thing is clear, in the post-automation era, the entire just over broke (J.O.B.) justification of being (J.O.B.) paradigm of currency circulation is over. The point of life is no longer to go to school, get a good job, work for forty or fifty years at a repetitive specialized task like a robot, then sit in front of the television regretting the whole thing. That game is long since over, and the end of JOB-JOBs as the sole legitimate method of currency circulation is not just limited to the United States. At the 2018 Cultural Economy after Neoliberalism conference in Australia, George Morgan, author of *The Creativity Hoax* said, "'there was an enormous sense of disappointment from the young people we spoke to'. He mentions people trained as film editors working in a cinema box office, or PhD grads working in university admin" and "there is this enormous betrayal - dropping people off a cliff, because there are no jobs there for talented people" (Eltham).

The hard work of education simply doesn't pay off the way that it did for previous generations. That doesn't mean that education isn't just as vital and valuable as ever, in fact, it is more vital and valuable than ever, but for different reasons. Education is key to enabling people to realize that their intrinsic value is not found in a job title or task. Lifelong learning is fundamental to creating a post-automation society that works for everyone.

For more about the work of improving ourselves as the new justification of being, see the section titled "Science Fiction, Technology, and Public Policy."

What Is Our Vision Of Civilization?

In his article *Millennials Must Work Until They Die, And Other Facts*, Steve Rousseau wrote:

This week we have Alicia Munnell, a Federal Reserve economist and director of Boston College's Center For Retirement Research, writing in Politico that there is indeed a simple solution for Millennials to overcome the gaping generation wealth gap: work longer. "In fact, my research shows that the vast majority of millennials will be fine if they work to age 70," concludes Munnell." And although that might sound old, it's historically normal in another sense:

The Post-Automation Era

Retiring at 70 leaves the ratio of retirement to working years the same as when Social Security was originally introduced."

Ah we'll be fine! We're just returning to a time when Social Security was a new thing, and apparently the luxury of retiring at 55, heck even 65, was only to be enjoyed by the generation that introduced Social Security and their children. Everyone else can go kick rocks.

Here is a number to add some more context to the "historically normal" retirement age of 70. As of 2017, the US average life expectancy is 78.7 years. That doesn't seem "historically" normal to us.

Is that a world that you would want to live in, given the practically infinite supply of resources that now exist within arm's reach of current technology? Do you really want to beat the kids into wage slave labor conditions because that's what was done to you? Are you sure about that? Should every generation suffer the way your generation suffered, to meet some abstract concept of character or grit that may no longer be relevant in the current world we live in? Do you really believe that you became a better human being *because* of the suffering you've endured in life, or *in spite* of it? Were the beatings and abuses you may have suffered *required* to improve your life and character, or could you have been guided skillfully to the same destination, without the fear, the coercion, the emotional abuse, the violence?

For readers of more gentle constitution, this is a bit of a heads up that we have some – as our current president likes to call them – animals to deal with. We used to believe that ignoring them would make them go away but have long since learned the hard way that this is all too often not the case. So, let's get on with it.

No doubt, some people do believe that the beatings were and are required for humans to become whole persons. "Spare the rod, spoil the child." We are not numbered among the believers of this doctrine, nor are most mental and spiritual health practitioners, nor are most readers of this book, we suspect. But, if you still believe that beating people up is the best way to create a happy life, that's your right. Nobody is here to stop you from proving your superiority over defenseless children or from killing guinea pigs with your bare hands to prove your God-like power to take life at will. Good luck with that attitude and that kind of behavior.

The problem is that people absorb and internalize strong impressions that create indelible beliefs, very early in life. People who live by this law of the jungle mentality were very likely raised in that kind of environment and were very likely victims of domestic violence and emotional abuse, themselves. From the experiences in our very early family environments, communities, tribes, and nations, we construct beliefs that feel more solid and more certain than beliefs we form later in life. This is one reason why some of our least helpful vestigial beliefs we harbor are so deeply held, still feel so

true to us, even though all the evidence we see today indicates otherwise. It's very difficult to unseat some of these deeply held convictions without taking some serious time to look inward and examine their source; and who has time for that, when working two or three jobs at 60 to 80 hours a week, just to survive? Now we begin to see a little more clearly what all this has to do with a twenty-first century vision of the kind of world we want to live in, moving forward.

In The Rise of the Useless Class:

Historian Yuval Noah Harari offers a bracing prediction: just as mass industrialization created the working class; the AI revolution will create a new unworking class.

The most important question in 21st-century economics may well be: What should we do with all the superfluous people, once we have highly intelligent non-conscious algorithms that can do almost everything better than humans?

Unworking is not likely the case. Un-job-ing is more like it. One of the laziest possible points that lazy people like to make in opposition to basic income is made for the laziest possible reasons. Perhaps unexpectedly to some, one can often find many of these lazy bums driving new F-150's on payments that we can barely afford. Many of us good ol' boys may be some of the laziest people on Earth, hiding behind two tons of gleaming, carbon-spewing denial, doing the bare minimum each day, so that we can fritter our lives away on mental autopilot, without ever thinking about how or why we do what we do. Obey the boss, get me more stuff, drink beer. Repeat. Are we the people calling the rest of humanity lazy, by nature? Maybe the reason we can preach with such conviction is that we know how lazy we are, so we assume that all of humanity is just like us.

Breaking news: we might not be the quintessential prototype humans. Do you know what's lazy? Lazy is accepting everything we've been fed by our environment as the only possible experience of existence. That's lazy. So, if we are worried that we'll quit our job and sit on the couch eating Cheetos and moco loco, playing video games with our basic income for 40 years until we die (because we won't last 80 or 100 if we live that way), well, that's a personal problem. But it's okay, we're not alone. Of course, this book cannot, will not, and does not even try to change the mind of anyone who has already permanently cemented their beliefs, like an epoxy that can't be uncatalyzed. However, for those who do become ready to reconsider our worldview, help is always available, usually right inside our own family and community. Always on the internet.

Alas, for those possibly losing their Cheerios at the previous paragraph, it's almost guaranteed that there are people who love us and have been waiting a long time to see us come this unraveled, so that we can finally all move forward together toward a world that works for everyone. Pro tip: maybe start by saying "I'm sorry, I was wrong. You're

not the lazy ones, I am.” Then, we need to stop bashing everyone over the head with whatever scripture we most like to use to intellectually beat others into submission. Whether that scripture be the entire tome of scientific knowledge, the Bible, the Quran, the Torah, or any other weapon of mass indoctrination and behavioral compliance, we can choose to just stop.

Evolution very simply proves that humans are inherently industrious. If this were not the case, we’d all still be living in trees, having been so lazy as to only tend to the most basic survival pressures, then goofing off for most of our slack-jawed, mouth-breathing existence. But that’s not what happened. We worked. Ceaseless. For eons. For eons before there was ever the concept of a market, of money, or any of the other abstractions that have come to dominate our consciousness today.

Humans are inherently productive. God made us that way. In His image. Unless, of course, you want to call God lazy. That’s your call.

* * *

To Make Hell into Heaven or Heaven into Hell?

“The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven.” – John Milton

Which will it be for us? In his ThinkTech Hawai'i commentary, “There is Never Enough,” Seymour Kazimirski excavates through the muck of fake fear and scarcity memes that have driven so much human activity, particularly, over the past century, and gets to the core of the matter.

We live in a world where there is never enough. We constantly feel as if we have to do more, be more, go faster, work harder, accomplish more, go further. We are in a permanent state of “not good enough” or comparing what we have to someone else. And while I am all about having goals and always trying to push or stretch ourselves in many ways, it is really hard in our culture to really be present where we are because we are constantly thinking about the next move or what we lack.”

It's overwhelming. It's frustrating. It's unfulfilling, because what we really want, the thing that is really going to make us happy or make us successful is just out of reach. But what if I told you that what is out there in the great beyond, those dreams and goals on your vision board, they are not the key to unlocking your happiness?

The key to happiness is right now, as in this very instant that you lock your eyes with these words: right now. Once you can find gratitude and joy and love in your life as it is right now, without any changes, or minor improvements, everything else will open up to you.

It doesn't mean that you can't desire more in your life, just that you need to be grateful for what you have right now, to look back on your journey, and see how far and you have come, and recognize the fact that you're alive, that you have a roof over your head, and that you are truly blessed.

We know what you're thinking, that all of this sounds great, but you just have so many problems and challenges in your life, and it's so dark.

We understand. We know what that is. We've been through deeply dark times and continue to struggle with my own ignorance, which never helps to lift the darkness. We all experience darkness, ignorance, and evil in various times in our lives. What we are asking you to do is to stop looking at the macro and zoom in on the micro. Don't focus on your life as a whole right now, focus very precisely

The Post-Automation Era

on this very second. This has been the most effective way that we have found to combat my anxiety, my depression, and frustration when it threatens to take over, and we call it a mindful moment.

Here is what you do. Ready? Bingo! [There is literally nothing to do.]

Life is going to hurl arrows at you from every angle and you are going to feel that you're getting knocked out of the game. There are going to be moments when you feel like an utter failure and that your life totally sucks. The point is, how quickly we can get back to gratitude, and to love, and acceptance, when we are thrown off by all these things.

The point is that whatever the future holds, is the future. The most we can do is focus on the present, on bringing the love and joy to the now, and recognize that when we focus on those things that are good, we will attract more of them into our lives.

While it seems to be popular amongst the latest crop of hippies and so-called hopeless utopians, how does this supposed mindfulness magic trick work when we read about the endless stream of unconscionable events taking place in our world? A recent piece from *The Atlantic* magazine revealed that:

Malaysia provides a window into a troubling part of the global economy that makes the whole system work, one that touches and connects practically every part of the world and billions of people: a flow of humans that shapes lives, creates the world's things, and is built on the availability of a massive, inexpensive, and flexible labor supply. In Malaysia, it's possible to see what maintains that flow: the recruitment strategies that bring workers to factories, the government policies that are so ineffective at protecting workers, the struggle to improve working conditions up and down supply chains, and the global political and economic realities that sustain the demand for cheap, unremitting work.

In 2014, the watchdog organization Verité released a study on migrant workers in the electronics sector in Malaysia. Among a sample of more than 400 foreign electronics workers, at least 32 percent were, by Verité's definition, forced to work against their will. According to the report, "these results suggest that forced labor is present in the Malaysian electronics industry in more than isolated incidents, and can indeed be characterized as widespread (Ramchandani).

How can all these contradictory things be true, all at the same time? In "Why We're Underestimating American Collapse," Tyler Durden at ZeroHedge has one possible explanation:

If you mindlessly imbibe your social-media-sanctioned news feed from the palm of your hand, then you could almost be forgiven for thinking everything is awesome (with perhaps a nod to your implicit feed's bias that things would be 'awesome-er' if "the other side" just got out of the way).

However, if you have your eyes opened matrix-like to the real world surrounding you, the number of divergent and dissonant headlines begins to leave you questioning the reality of exceptional America ... record stock prices, record homeless, record wealth, record food stamps, and so on.

For readers who struggle to see the world through any lens but their own tradition, this opens a whole new can of worms. In the age of preppers as a powerful marketing demographic, we may also have to address all these questions, at least briefly, from an eschatological, end of the world perspective.

According to sources on Quora, there are 30,000 to 40,000 Christian denominations in the world. With such a cacophony of Christianities to choose from, to imagine that we can address “the Christian perspective” on any of these ideas, much less on basic income, seems ipso facto arrogant, in addition to being plain meaningless.

Nevertheless, when it comes to end of the world beliefs, we can observe from direct experience that there are large numbers of people who are convinced that there is more inevitable suffering ahead for humanity. One all too frequent, if unfortunate response to this is along the lines of the following: why even bother trying to stop global cataclysm if it's God's will that the Earth is gonna' burn? Might as well get it over with. Except, how can we know that's what was meant, and how can we know that we'll get the outcome that we believe we'll get, in the precise time frame that we forecast? Given the fact, “that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only,” how can we be so sure of what “should” happen next? The answer is, we can't know. Neither of us can possibly know. So, letting the world blow up, as if on some kind of schedule, doesn't really seem like it's going to work out as a compelling argument to just let things continue to get worse and worse for everyday people, because maybe God wants us to destroy the world, yet again, so that he can come back and fix it, yet again.

While this perspective strikes us as both defeatist and essentially opposite to what Jesus actually taught; namely, that we are to be the light in the world, right here, right now; that it's not at all hopeless, in fact the very meaning of gospel is “good news” that the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand; let's just go ahead and talk about this idea of tribulation for a moment, because underneath all the reasoning for why we need to end poverty with unconditional basic income, lies many layers of this kind of utterly irrational strong belief that prevents human minds from functioning as designed by the very creator these minds portend to worship.

Imagine that you had to live through a biblical time of tribulation – or maybe we are in said tribulation right now – when would enough tribulation be enough for you to let it go and see that eternity has been here, the whole time? That the kingdom is literally at hand, as Jesus said, and failure to experience that has simply been a matter of your own blindness? How many seven-year cycles of sheer madness would you need to go through before conceding: okay, that must have been it, that was enough?

Put another way, how can we even ever know whether we've already been through the end of times, considering that the only experience we have to rely on is our own interpretation of what we've been taught, further constricted by our vastly limited human perception of how the world seems in the present moment?

For those inclined to reply with God said it, I believe it, that settles it, it might be useful to recognize that this only works in a very small subset of situations in life, at best. What did God write about machine learning, artificial intelligence, 3-D printing, and high frequency trading? While it's convenient to adlib quips that apply to these conditions, clearly there's nothing that "God said" when it comes to robots replacing 50% or more of the labor force, or how mining asteroids will literally create such superabundant supply, that the value of plutonium will match the value of pennies.

So, when people pray that God's divine will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven, what exactly does that mean? Is it not the Divine will of all legitimate religions to cultivate conditions on Earth as they are in Heaven? Isn't that how we are all taught to behave, in one way or another? Aren't we taught to take responsibility for our actions, to make the most of every opportunity to alleviate suffering, and to act the way we'd like heaven to be, right here, right now?

Maybe. Or maybe some people's idea of faith is just all about exacting relentless punishment and blind retribution upon all those who disagree with or displease them.

In his article, *The Stories We Tell Ourselves at the End of the World*, Kevin Lincoln writes:

The novels of Charles Dickens are nothing if not a story of man struggling against his own ingenuity; the horror in Heart of Darkness comes from the thrasher of capitalism processing land and people alike. But no matter where it began, in just the last few decades we've come to face a different kind of intellectual and emotional challenge than previous generations, one that artists are increasingly steering into: the certainty that we are destroying our environment, and what might be the ultimate cost of that effort.

We are facing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual challenges that no other generation has faced. Poverty, too, is a kind of environmental catastrophe. Poverty is utterly destructive to the environment of our towns and cities, large and small, as we sentence human beings to the fate of abandonment and isolation in ways that we

couldn't imagine imposing, even on animals. Then we call these humans animals and treat them like vermin. How does that happen in a so-called Christian nation? Because we let it happen. You let it happen. We let it happen.

The good news of this book is that we can fix it. Despite the past century of wars beyond the supposed wars to end all wars, we can still manifest the post world war visions that have thus far proved so elusive, by refusing to give up on the ideals that have always underpinned the true American Dream. As Nikola Tesla put it:

Out of this war, the greatest since the beginning of history, a new world must be born, a world that would justify the sacrifices offered by humanity. This new world must be a world in which there shall be no exploitation of the weak by the strong, of the good by the evil; where there will be no humiliation of the poor by the violence of the rich; where the products of intellect, science and art will serve society for the betterment and beautification of life, and not the individuals for achieving wealth. This new world shall not be a world of the downtrodden and humiliated, but of free men and free nations, equal in dignity and respect for man.

Now, just because we attempted to touch upon the religious dimension of what it means to end the hellish tribulation of poverty, that certainly doesn't mean we have any idea how people who claim to hold this or that faith can be so dogmatic, judgmental, essentially hateful, and punitive, toward their fellow humans. We don't get it, although we definitely see it all the time. If that's you, maybe you can enlighten us, maybe you are being called right now to write the authoritative book explaining how God requires suffering on Earth for all eternity, and how he requires us to not alleviate suffering through public policies that we know work. Please, if you would be so kind, explain to us how and why God is against a livable, unconditional basic income.

* * *

Science Fiction, Technology, and Public Policy

While we're traversing the realm of belief and imagination, this may be a useful time to recall how science fiction has long been a genre of writing and film in which we encounter and contemplate different ways that the world could be. While many science fiction plots include the end of money and jobs as an obvious near-future condition, unlike modern gadgets, drones, smartphones, surgical robots, self-driving cars, and vertical landing reusable rockets, for some reason we seem to have a collective fixation

on creating all the shiny stuff of the future, while experiencing some kind of collective mental block about adopting the sociological aspects of the future that obviously accompany these ultimate technological accomplishments. This dialog from a 1988 episode of Star Trek, The Next Generation sums up this inexplicable situation rather nicely.

CAPTAIN JEAN-LUC PICARD: A lot has changed in the past three hundred years. People are no longer obsessed with the accumulation of things. We've eliminated hunger, want, the need for possessions. We've grown out of our infancy.

RALPH OFFENHOUSE: You've got it all wrong. It has never been about possessions. It's about power.

PICARD: Power to do what?

OFFENHOUSE: To control your life, your destiny.

PICARD: That kind of control is an illusion.

OFFENHOUSE: Really? I'm here, aren't I? I should be dead. But I'm not.

PICARD: This is the 24th century. Material needs no longer exist.

OFFENHOUSE: Then what's the challenge?

PICARD: The challenge, Mr. Offenhouse, is to improve yourself. To enrich yourself. Enjoy it (IMDB).

If this were social media, we'd be posting #JeSuisRalphOffenhouse. It's as if we are living 300 years in the past, even though we wake up every single day in a post-automation world of superabundance, today.

In her eye-opening 2017 TED Talk, University of Tokyo AI expert researcher, Noriko Arai, posed the following challenge: "AI researchers have always said that we humans do not need to worry, because only menial jobs will be taken over by machines. Is that really true? The real question is, how many of those who lose their jobs to AI, will be able to land a new one? Especially when, AI is smart enough to learn, better than most of us?"

Similarly, world-renowned computer scientist and machine learning educator, Andrew Ng, is on a mission to educate the world about the promises and perils of machine learning and artificial intelligence, without underestimating or overstating either. When he says, "AI is the new electricity," you can bet on it. It is. Like electricity at the dawn of the twentieth century, AI will very soon become an invisible commodity utility, embedded in our environment to the point that we don't really give it all that much thought. For example, with the addition of AI, we will finally be able to safely

assume that everyday processes that used to be managed by dreaded automated phone systems, now actually work as expected.

For example, when you use a smartphone app to summon a tow-truck to unlock the keys locked in your car and the tow-truck driver is either too distracted, too tired, or maybe too unmotivated to look around to find your car and tries to ditch you, a couple taps or presses now assures that the driver comes back and finishes the assigned task, even though they might have tried to avoid accountability by using that old trick of keeping the twentieth-century voicemail box full. This happened to us, recently. The roadside assistance app leapfrogged the full voicemail box trick, and the driver had to come back within minutes, to finish the job. It was both glorious and gruesome. For us, we obtained the service that we had paid for every month, for years, without ever using it before. For the driver, there's no way out, the robot recognized and counteracted his every move to get out of doing a task that he perhaps just didn't feel like doing today.

Why people behave like this is in one sense beyond the scope of this book, but in another sense, tends to reinforce one of our main themes: people forced to work in jobs that they hate, under threat of utter destitution, don't tend to perform very well. One way to address the situation is to deploy increasingly relentless and omniscient AI to make the humans do the bidding of others, by way of this omnipotent invisible taskmaster. On the other hand, one of the central benefits of unconditional basic income is granting humans the power to say no to that kind of oppression. Workers don't need to accept jobs that make them feel miserable or treat them like slaves to the machine. The result of that human autonomy is a far better match between jobs and the temperaments of people performing them, rather than merciless obedience to the algorithms, for the sake of programmatic obedience.

As keynote techno-sociologist Zeynep Tufekci explains, "We cannot outsource our [moral and ethical] responsibilities to machines. We must hold on ever tighter to human values and human ethics." We'll see a lot more about this vital point in later chapters.

In our example, the tow truck driver or company might not be too thrilled that their voicemail era accountability-dodging measure – leaving the box forever filled – no longer works. Instead, they must fulfill the contracts they signed up for, even if marginal profits on such calls aren't as high as retail calls. At the same time, for the person stuck with the defective auto door-lock system, the roadside service automation was an invisible guardian angel that saved the day by giving the customer the power to immediately feedback through the most direct and effective channels, in order to complete the task, so that they could get on with fulfilling their obligations for the day, too. We're all more deeply interconnected than ever.

The crisis could be on either one, or both side of that interaction; most of us probably don't even consider the fact that automation, machine learning, or AI is directly

working with us or against us, when we engage in such mundane tasks. On the service side, we might get angry that we have to go back to the job twice, when we should have just done it right the first time. On the customer side, we might get annoyed that our car could be so *stupid* as to auto-lock when the key is still in the ignition. Surely the car *knows* this, and if anything, it should chirp at us, to remind us that we are the stupid ones, about to leave our key in the ignition.

We already assume that cars manufactured in the past five years, even cheap cars, are smart, to some limited degree. We get irritated at the *lack of intelligence in a car*, without even thinking about it. The fact that we get mad at everyday artificial intelligence in such mundane situations, should tell us something about just how technologically advanced a society we live in, and how fast our expectations ratchet up to meet the new capabilities. As recently as ten years ago, many people would never have imagined that we could be living in this world, in our lifetimes. Yet, here we are. This is everyday life the Post-Automation Era.

Let's pause, just for a moment, to contemplate the next ten years of hybrid human-computer superintelligence. Where do you think this trend of embedded superintelligence is heading? Odds are pretty good that, however imaginative your wildest forecast, odds are very high that it will happen in half that time.

One of the most insightful science fiction scenarios, in terms of depicting how a hastily developed global superintelligence might interact with a hopelessly war-like species like humans, is the 1970 film, *Colossus: The Forbin Project* (Hutter). It's not inconceivable that the end of all wars finally arrives as the result of super intelligent systems that take away humanity's "free will" to blow itself up. We can debate the benefits and drawbacks of leaving all other freedoms in place, except the freedom to kill other humans, in another volume. For our purposes here, it's good enough to illustrate the point that we are much closer to the practical reality of such scenarios than many people might suspect.

Today, according to non-profit AI research company OpenAI, the development of AI is accelerating nine times faster than the infamous Moore's Law. The concept of a technological singularity is no longer just a cute meme, and never was; it is a process that is happening and has been happening for decades. We simply can't afford to indulge in the luxuries of intellectual laziness and socioeconomic stagnation of the status quo now that this tsunami of exponential change has crashed upon the demolished shore of our vestigial preconceptions.

In June 2018, OpenAI wrote:

We're releasing an analysis showing that since 2012, the amount of compute used in the largest AI training runs has been increasing exponentially with a 3.5 month-doubling time (by comparison, Moore's Law had an 18-month

doubling period). Since 2012, this metric has grown by more than 300,000x (an 18-month doubling period would yield only a 12x increase). Improvements in compute have been a key component of AI progress, so as long as this trend continues, it's worth preparing for the implications of systems far outside today's capabilities (Amodei).

This means that AI is accelerating five times faster than Moore's Law, the trend that brought us the computing revolution of the late twentieth century. If we can say, "yeah, but this time it won't really change society all that much," with a straight face; then congratulations, we absolutely deserve to win a Darwin Award for positive failure to adapt to the new environment.

When it comes to tracking the state of AI in the context of society, the Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technology (IET) is an excellent non-profit organization to both follow and support. IET is where we discovered Marcus Hutter, Professor in the Research School of Computer Science at the Australian National University, and progenitor of Universal Artificial Intelligence (UAI) – now widely referred to as Artificial General Intelligence (AGI) – who recently discussed current progress in AI, and contrasts this with public perceptions of AI.

In his February 2018 presentation given at the AGI17 conference in Melbourne, Australia, Professor Hutter explained that:

Intelligent systems have an increasing impact on our society. We already benefit from [them,] particularly through your smart phones and experiences on the Internet. Self-driving cars and household robots could also be standard technologies, very soon. Intelligent Systems approach and exceed human intellectual capabilities in an increasing number of domains (expert systems, board games such as Chess and Go, speech recognition and translation, process optimization, search engines), some can autonomously deal with unknown and unexpected situations. Indeed, Intelligent Systems have the potential to be deployed in almost any facet of our lives. The creation of super-intelligent systems will change our society in the next couple of decades more than the industrial revolution has in the last 200 years (emphasis added).

Combine this with the July 5, 2018, AngelList Talent Newsletter, where we are reminded why capital loves "pure software plays" because they don't add anything to a local economy, whatsoever. No real estate. No employees. Just software eating the world. This is what capital does. Eliminate humans.

Here's the catch, and the crux of this entire book, which we'll revisit in more depth, later. Doing away with human labor is not only a patently Good Thing™, but also indisputably the whole point to industrialization in the first place. The objective of greater labor efficiency was always to create more leisure time: just not for Americans.

We'll let Sir Richard Branson explain why more leisure is a Good Thing™ a bit later, in the chapter titled 80 Hour Jobs vs 20 Hour Work Week. For now, back to AngelList:

VCs have long loved pure software businesses like Trulia, a real estate search engine which went public in 2012. Trulia avoided buying buildings or employing agents directly. Scaling up was just a matter of adding more servers.

[Today,] Opendoor is a tech-enabled real estate investor based in SF. They use data science to figure out what homes to buy and at what price. They pay up-front and then flip the homes at a profit. We estimate that they're buying and selling over 10,000 homes annually.

While pure software is the ultimate efficiency gain, there are still plenty of tasks that require hardware to implement software's will. In June 2018, Melia Robinson wrote for Business Insider:

One restaurant in San Francisco has hatched a more surprising way to operate without restaurant workers. The buzzy new burger joint, Creator, which soft opens for lunch on Wednesday, uses a robot to prep, cook, and assemble hamburgers with no human help.

Founded in 2009, the startup formerly known as Momentum Machines has been quietly tinkering with its mechanical line cook out of a vacant retail space in SoMa for almost two years. Its robot uses an array of sensors and computers and makes up to 130 burgers an hour. It eliminates the need for line cooks.

Creator isn't the only restaurant putting robots to work. Cafe X relies on a robotic coffee bar to take your order and make your drink — no human interaction required" (Robinson).

So, this means that one of Silicon Valley's biggest ideas in 2018 is robots flipping homes for a profit. While robots treat housing like pork bellies trading on Wall Street, what could possibly go wrong for humans, for whom housing a biological necessity, right?

If all these human-removal-from-the-workforce developments aren't yet painting a sufficiently clear picture of the world as it is, let's look at some other practical, recent AI achievements that working people may not have heard about. Largely, because they were out working two or three menial jobs, just to barely get by, right?

In Stephen Shankland's June 2018 CNET article, "An IBM computer debates humans, and wins, in a new, nuanced competition" he succinctly summarized the acceleration of machine intelligence over the past twenty years. Giant leaps occur in a halving function of shrinking intervals. 12 years. 6 years. 1 year. "Computers beat humans at chess in 1997, beat humans at Jeopardy in 2011, and beat the world's best Go

players in 2017. This Monday, a computer won a far more nuanced competition: debate” (Shankland).

So, perhaps even the once-considered sacred uniqueness of human reasoning and the art of interpersonal persuasion are no longer enough to differentiate us from machine learning systems, either.

Yet, despite all these profoundly significant developments, up until the past year, even leading technological publications like MIT Technology Review have been historically antagonistic, and even mocking of the concept of unconditional basic income. This shouldn’t really come as any surprise from a leading institution that sustains itself on a combination of essentially unpaid graduate student labor and lucrative defense industry contracts. Why would they want their cushy party to come to an end?

Nevertheless, in 2018, even sniffy MIT is being forced to come around to the idea of a guaranteed annual income, in an article that acknowledges that, “the basic income is something broader: a social equalizer, a recognition that people who make little or no money are often doing things that are socially valuable. ‘It gives one the assurance that the work you’re doing is not in vain, even though you’re not working in a bank or doing other things that are considered part of a career,’ he says” (Bergstein).

As basic income activist and educator Scott Santens puts it, “It’s Time for Technology to Serve all Humankind with Unconditional Basic Income.” We couldn’t agree more.

Writing on Quora about the perspective of Elon Musk, who has made his support for UBI abundantly clear on numerous occasions, community member Johnny Le wrote:

... he wants a robot to do the job FOR a person, not simply replace that person. The income that robot creates should go to that person. So that basic income is the income a robot created FOR you.

Our tax system needs to change so that income created by humans should not be taxed or taxed little while income created by robots/computers/AI should be taxed a lot more. The problem now is that every time we hear higher taxes, we scream, even though the target isn’t us.

Some financial technology startups are attempting to bypass the entire existing, broken system, avoiding the sacred cow questions, altogether. Mannabase has developed a cryptocurrency that is currently modeling the circulation of a universal basic income through its blockchain implementation.

Looking even further beyond the horizon are blockchain visionaries like Vinay Gupta of Mattereum. Mattereum is ostensibly a blockchain for managing extra-terrestrial transactions. One that routes around the stagnation of the nation state. In short, the

billions of us who have created some level of financial security for ourselves can create our own blockchain central bank and ecosystem to bootstrap the new space race.

As Gupta puts it:

The blockchain people desperately need something to do, right? The ones that got in early and made an enormous amount of money are basically wandering around wondering what to do with their lives, and they're making a dreadful mess, because they're not good at being rich. But many of them are pretty good engineers, right? And all these space guys coming out of Silicon Valley could sure use a lot more money and a lot more talent. So, I think the folks that have kinda graduated from the blockchain university, of the basically "whack the future on the head and stick it in your cooking pot," probably ought to be looking at bigger challenges.

So, first you make a bank and then you pull the money out with a bank that you made, and you use it to build rocket ships. And the rocket ships build an industry, and the industry generates a lot of wealth, and then that comes back down the pipe and it turns into more rocket ships. And you kind of start the feedback loop that builds the economic engines that build the capacity to expand into the void. And at that point, we've basically won at life. We've solved humanity's most primary problem, which is "why don't I have the things I want?" And that's doable right here.

This is the first blockchain and space conference in the world as far as we know this is the beginning of the narrative, and I want to set the narrative off at the right tone. Which is, our job is to conquer the void. We've got all the tools that we need, we've got the necessary political structures within arm's reach, we just pull that stuff into reality, we build the necessary structures, we raised the necessary money, we figure out how to fund the engineers who are actually doing the work, and we break out of the deadlock that has trapped us on the planet since the nation-state lost its will to go. Right? We are here to go, and we're gonna do it.

Now here's the real kicker. Like the original space race, this space blockchain ecosystem could accomplish much more than just its primary purpose. Mattereum could claim all outer space as a non-nation state public good, to be used first and foremost for the benefit all of humanity, thereby creating a nearly infinite wealth from which to circulate a livable basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP (or later, GPP, Gross Planetary Product) with the mere stroke of pixels. While that might sound far-fetched to some, so did every idea that fundamentally altered the way humanity experiences this planet. It's certainly no more far-fetched than the Wright brothers,

Nikola Tesla, or Elon Musk landing vertical rockets and throwing electric cars into orbit around neighboring planets.

What may be far-fetched is the prospect that humanity, and perhaps even you dear reader, in addition to those we both know; are among those who hold steadfastly to the view that humankind must forever be lashed to the cross of physical toil and subservience to Caesar's soulless capitalist machine. If we have been inadvertently or unconsciously complicit in these beliefs, letting decades go by without updating our model of an exponentially changing world, then this is our opportunity to revisit and reassess our world view in the context of the current environment. To contemplate whether we will, as individuals, as communities, as a species, ever grow out of the base proclivity for kicking people while they are down, and if they aren't down, pulling them down to be kicked, so that we might feel better about ourselves in some deeply troubling troglodyte sense.

The only thing preventing the end of poverty is human greed, jealousy, lust for power over others, anger, selfishness, ignorance, and malice toward those who differ from us. Building a space-faring civilization is child's play, compared to restoring the soul of a species.

That's the only far-fetched thing about unconditional basic income. It can be done today, this very instant, if we stop begrudging one another the simple right to the income security to live a dignified life. Why do "they" deserve it? Because we all deserve it. Because, if we believe in a Creator, all humans are inherently dignified creatures, made in His image. Even the ones living in cars and RVs down the street. Even the ones living in tents in any spare patch of grass or dirt they can find. Even the ones we step over, in disgust, on the way to get our ritual morning latte.

80 Hour Jobs vs 20 Hour Work Week

In June 2018, Sir Richard Branson told CNBC that:

"The purpose of humanity is not just to sit behind a counter and sell things. More free time is not a terrible thing," he said. "I think with artificial intelligence coming along, there needs to be a basic income," said Branson. "With the acceleration of [artificial intelligence] and other new technology ... the world is changing fast," Branson wrote on his blog in August. "A lot of exciting new innovations are going to be created, which will generate a lot of opportunities and a lot of wealth, but ... also reduce the amount of jobs," he said. "This will make ... basic income even more important in the years to come." A report from the McKinsey Global Institute confirms the idea that automation will cause

major disruption to the job market globally. By 2030, 75 million workers around the globe will need to change occupational category due to automation, according to the December 2017 study, and 400 million jobs could be potentially displaced. The McKinsey Global estimates are based on analysis of 46 countries that include 90 percent of global gross domestic product and a mid-level pace of adoption of automation (Clifford).

A mid-level pace of adoption. After everything we have read so far, and all we've witnessed of the pace of advancement on Earth to date, do we really expect only a mid-level pace of adoption when it comes to the most efficiency-amplifying technology in the history of humanity? Really? Probably not. Definitely not.

Moving forward, the majority of the most important work in the world is not even remotely associated with the concept of a job. Raising children. Caring for elders. Listening to friends, helping them work through the challenges in their lives, something that you get paid \$150 an hour to do, if you have a little piece of paper authorizing you to do so as a professional counselor. Volunteering at church, synagogue, mosque, temple, or in our communities. Work does not equal job and job does not equal work. There is an entire book by David Graeber titled, "Bullshit Jobs," because so many jobs increasingly resemble make-work social clubs where people spend large portions of their so-called workday, scrolling through social media, flirting, having office flings, and ordering more and more stuff online. These are not your great grandfather's factory jobs.

A trend that goes almost completely unaddressed in the current age of Bullshit Jobs is the fact that so many people use the workplace as an escape from the real work they prefer to avoid dealing with; namely, personal growth and relationship work in their own lives at home. This could fill a whole additional chapter, but for now, let's please slow down with whining about who is doing the real work in life and finger pointing about who is avoiding responsibilities, or who is being lazy. Laziness comes in many insidious forms, intellectual and emotional laziness being among the most pernicious laziness of all.

The default consensus narrative of 2018 encourages fortunate workers – those of us who do manage to land a good Bullshit Job – to consider themselves the ultimate role models of middle-class success. Often bored out of our Bullshit Job skulls, day in and day out, still, we proclaim that everybody who isn't doing what we are doing is some kind of slouch, a taker, a drag on proper productive society. Never mind that we produce nothing at all in taking phone calls from cranky callers unhappy with this or that minor shortcoming about their latest TV shopping impulse buy. But in all our self-righteousness about being employed, we aren't even middle class anymore. Not even close. Decked out in the latest cubicle-dweller costume from Walmart or Ross Dress-for-Less, after a full 40 hours a week stylishly posting on Facebook from our air-

conditioned cubby hole, it's still not enough to get by, let alone save anything for the future. The prevalence and popularity of click-bait articles like, "50 ways to make a fast \$50 — or more,"⁵ provide overwhelming evidence, in the form of deeply depressing daily news feed updates, of the precarity of the average American worker in 2018.

It is in this environment that our most senior and therefore entrenched politicians overwhelmingly represent and attempt to recapture a long bygone era that hasn't existed for over half a century and will never exist again. The arrow of time moves in one direction, forward. The days when hundreds of different blue-collar careers could enable anyone to buy a house, support a family, and pay for annual vacations to far-flung dream destinations, all on a single wage-earner's income are as relevant as stories of valiant knights slaying fierce, fire-breathing dragons, rescuing damsels in distress, in an age when it was believed every man's house was his castle. We'll leave critique of the horrendous patriarchal aspects of that fairy land for another time; the point here is that both the concept and the existence of honorable everyday jobs that held sway in the post World War II era have long since dissolved into the mists of time. In the article, "There's a Bus Driver Shortage. And No Wonder," on the CityLab.com website, Laura Bliss wrote:

Once upon a time, it was considered an honorable and desirable gig—a stable union job with a good middle-class salary, a public pension, and at least some cultural recognition for the contributions it made to society, if bus-driving everyman heroes like Ralph Kramden of "The Honeymooners" were to be believed. Like many public sector jobs, it provided a reliable foothold on the ladder of social ascension. Even if you didn't have a college degree, being a city bus driver meant you could buy a house, feed your family, take a vacation, save for your child's college tuition. And relative to other transportation jobs, transit is still more inclusive of women and people of color.

But public sector jobs of all kinds have declined in pay as collective bargaining continues to be eroded. The median hourly wage for a municipal bus driver in the U.S. is \$19.61, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Entry-level paychecks tend to be much smaller, which can pose a barrier to many young workers, especially with the fee required to earn the requisite commercial driver's license.

"We have drivers who are homeless in this country," Larry Hanley, the president of ATU International, the largest labor union representing transit workers in the U.S., said. "In the Google area of California, the pay is so suppressed that we have drivers who are sleeping in their buses."

Hanley was referring to a policy in Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority, which for 20 years has permitted employees who live more than 50 miles away

to sleep on trailers parked on its property. Some drivers also choose to snooze in their cars on nearby streets, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. News broke this week that VTA, which faces a \$26.4 million budget gap for the coming fiscal year, is phasing out its official sleep-permitting policy. Operators there aren't sure what they're going to do.⁶

So, just as conditions are becoming intolerably dire for workers, the policies that historically provided at least some means for people to scrape by – include the luxury perk of sleeping in your car 50 miles from your home and family – are also being eliminated. Add to this the rapid evolution of self-driving technology, and this can't end well for bus drivers. For all their trustworthiness and reliability, it's not too likely that many bus drivers will easily transition to the artificial intelligence and machine learning programmer jobs that statisticians use to advance the claim that there are plenty of jobs in America. So, the zombie-like Job Trance in America persists. If you don't have a job, you aren't considered a whole person, a person worthy of the dignity and respect that comes along with a steady, living wage income. Meanwhile, the entire institution of jobs itself is becoming increasingly precarious and in many sectors obsolete, at the same exponential rate by which technology is growing and software is eating the world.

Trance Ended: Continuous Integration and Rewilding Capitalism

For at least the past half-century, we in the post-automation West have fallen deeper and deeper into the Job Trance. The Job Trance is the blind capitalist religious conviction that if we don't hold a job, we are not a worthwhile member of society. No matter what we've accomplished in the first 40, 50, or 60 years of life, we are only as good as our current job title. In this kind of environment, giving up a job title is practically social suicide. The inability to provide a snappy, impressive answer to “so, what do you do?” instantly stigmatizes us as an unimportant person. If we dare to answer, “I'm retired” the retort is often, “oh, you're too young to be retired,” or “isn't that boring?” No, we aren't too young and no, it isn't boring. Boredom seems like more of a personal problem. Just because some people lack the curiosity, imagination, and creativity to find wonder and opportunity in every moment of every day without someone else telling you what to do, doesn't mean that others live such empty lives.

The inherent worthiness of everyday vocations, such as stay-at-home parents, is beside the point to people lost in the Job Trance. The selfless service in providing companionship and care for aging parents is nice, but something to be done on your

own time. If you are not independently wealthy or cannot afford to hire caregivers; as conventional thinking goes, you should also work full time to “pay your own freight” in addition to the exhausting emotional and physical demands of caring for parents the way they cared for you as a child.

The intrinsic value of essential domestic and community work does not count toward being afforded the equal respect and dignity of citizenship in America, unless it is performed within the context of a Just Over Broke, Justification Of Being (JOB-JOB).

To use the Hawaiian slang style, “You no have JOB-JOB you no EAT-EAT!” Of course, this meaning is further reified by asserting that a JOB-JOB is the only thing that qualifies as legitimate work, so you’ll see the t-shirts on the islands that read, “You no work, you no eat.” Which as a cliché, finds its roots in the Protestant work ethic, further derived from the Christian religion that took hold in Hawai‘i in the 19th century. It’s at best, an ironic resurrection of the curse of the Garden of Eden, “by the sweat of thy brow, thou shalt eat bread,” which was atoned for, along with all other curses levied upon humanity in the Old Testament, by the work Jesus Christ. So, this JOB-JOB trance way of thinking is a pernicious conflation of industrial capitalism and the protestant ethic that God’s favor can be objectively measured by the wealth of the individual. This leads to the tired old presumption that if you are not wealthy, it must be due to some personal character flaw, or just plain laziness, because God himself rewards all hard work in cold hard cash, right?

The Job Trance is, possibly, a byzantine attempt of humankind to assuage itself from the miasma of misinterpretation and misunderstanding of biblical principles of freedom from sin and its consequences. It’s as if we can’t *really* inherit the Kingdom. Jesus must have been speaking literally about everything else, but figuratively on this one point. For believers, this makes no sense whatsoever. Either we are free from the bondage of sin and the curses are all lifted, or we are not. Which is it?

Book review website Goodreads says of David Graeber’s provocative and poignant book, *Bullshit Jobs*:

... a powerful argument against the rise of meaningless, unfulfilling jobs, and their consequences.

Does your job make a meaningful contribution to the world? In the spring of 2013, David Graeber asked this question in a playful, provocative essay titled “On the Phenomenon of Bullshit Jobs.” It went viral. After a million online views in seventeen different languages, people all over the world are still debating the answer.

There are millions of people—HR consultants, communication coordinators, telemarketing researchers, corporate lawyers—whose jobs are useless, and, tragically, they know it. These people are caught in bullshit jobs.

Graeber explores one of society's most vexing and deeply felt concerns, indicting among other villains a particular strain of finance capitalism that betrays ideals shared by thinkers ranging from Keynes to Lincoln. Bullshit Jobs gives individuals, corporations, and societies permission to undergo a shift in values, placing creative and caring work at the center of our culture. This book is for everyone who wants to turn their vocation back into an avocation.

The advent of bullshit jobs over the past few decades serves to extend the life of a widely held irrational fear that, somehow, if we allow people to choose the work they want to do, rather than forcing them into JOB-JOBs that they either hate or barely tolerate; JOB-JOBs taken only in response to the physical and mental duress created by the threat of utter destitution; that somehow the entire structure of civilization will crumble within days or weeks, or at most perhaps a year or two. This is the essence of the Job Trance, and it's a literal nightmare for everyone who knows it first-hand in the form of two or three menial-paid jobs, just to make rent, or in the form of a well-paying, but utterly meaningless, bullshit job.

It's a deal you can't refuse. Refuse to accept a bullshit job or a menial poorly paid job, and the individual member of the most advanced civilization humanity has ever known is immediately stripped of personhood, including the basic human right to a safe and legal place to sleep. Parents dehumanize and disown their own children in the name of supposedly teaching character. What character is there to be gained by homelessness? None whatsoever.

In May 2018, a 30-year-old man was legally evicted from his parents' house, because they could not imagine a world in which their own son has the basic human right to shelter. The Garden Island printed the Associated Press account:

The 30-year-old man whose eviction from his parents' suburban home drew national attention finally left Friday, hours before a court-ordered deadline.

"There are jobs available even for those with a poor work history like you," one letter they sent him reads. "Get one — you have to work!"

And USA Today added, "As for his parents, Rotondo claims he'll never talk to them again."

That, dear reader, is the Job Trance, as deep as it goes. Such people are such failures as parents, that they need the courts to impose their will in a vain attempt to force compliance to a machine that couldn't care less about the fate of anyone in their family. The entitlement in such families is beyond astounding. We can only speculate, but these are the kind of parents who will scream that their son is an "entitled Millennial," yet, they are the ones who very likely may have micro-managed his life for thirty years, then felt embarrassed by what the neighbors might think. Such people would rather disown and never speak to their son again, rather than imagine a world in which men and

women can live meaningful lives outside of the twentieth century factory paradigm. Those entranced by the Job Trance are conditioned to turn one another in, 1984 style. Ironically, the year that many consider the beginning of the Millennial generation. Those disowned can totally forget about other luxuries like healthcare. You're out, on the street, literally, where the pavement is used to coerce disturbingly dysfunctional behaviors in families and companies, alike. It's the ultimate existential threat in an advanced economy and it's brandished about by people with little or no conscience of the long-term consequences of throwing human beings face-down into the pavement. Not to mention your own children, whatever their age. Such agents of empire were deeply conditioned to do what they were told and then insist that all others must do what they are told, simply because that's how it's always been done.

Never mind the inherent talents and aptitudes of the artist, the designer, the musician, the philosopher. Those are for dreamers, fairies, and snowflakes. We must all conform to the hard-cold reality of a world paved over with asphalt, and we must become willing agents of extending that world or face the consequences. That's the Job Trance. There's nothing subtle about it. Once again, in the immortal words of Neil Peart, "conform or be cast out."

On the Master Investor blog, Victor Hill reflected the often-exhausting work of engaging with this deeply held cultural presumption that we are calling the Job Trance, even as we do our best to (try to) politely show people the obvious error in this kind of histrionic catastrophizing:

Last year my colleague Felipe R. Costa wrote in these pages that UBI would destroy our economy. Felipe's principal objection to UBI was that it devalues work. While we agree on the iniquity of central bankers, it seems that we don't agree on the nature of "work". What is work? (That is not a new question – Marx, amongst others, asked it.)

Yelling into a phone on a trading floor; working for nothing in a charity shop; composing a string quartet; singing in a choir; caring for a baby or an elderly relative; excavating a Roman villa on an archaeological dig; writing an article about UBI... These are all forms of work.

Our pre-industrial forebears regarded "work" as whatever you needed to do at the time, rather than the activity for which we are paid by patrons or "clients". What is required in the age of robots is a change of culture, values, and metrics. And it's already underway (emphasis added).

So how does the Job Trance continue to hold so many sleepers in their Matrix-like pod-cubicles? Before the era of Cambridge Analytics and AI manipulation of human psychology, one could understandably be confused as to how people could become so thoroughly convinced of ideas like the Job Trance and coerced into behaviors that

diametrically oppose their own self-interest; all in the name of their alleged self-interest. Today, with more awareness of the way online information is used to drive our beliefs and behaviors, along with the development of the field of behavioral economics, at least some the answers are becoming a little clearer. We've been conditioned and manipulated into believing things that are simply not true. Our job title doesn't define us as a human being. We do have a basic human right to a sufficient income to sustain life in decent circumstances, regardless of what we've been told to the contrary. It has nothing to do with capitalism, socialism, or communism, it has to do with nature and nature's law of interdependent superabundance. There's always enough and it always all works together in harmony, even the predatory parts. That doesn't make the predators the only class allowed to live. Without an entire balanced ecosystem, they too will perish. A few of the predatory plutocrat class are beginning to sit up and take notice of this fact. It's now their own existence at stake, so suddenly these ideas will matter to them. That's fine. Whatever it takes to get a livable basic income done, indexed to 50% per capita GDP.

All that said, we're not so naive as to believe any of this to be news. Stockholm Syndrome has been understood for a long, long time and may even be utilized intentionally and internationally, when it serves the interests of big financial capital and the central economic planners and bankers of Wall Street and the Federal Reserve.

In the Economist's somewhat obscurely named 1843 Magazine article, *Why Do We Work So Hard?* Ryan Avent reckons that our jobs have become prisons from which we don't want to escape.

When John Maynard Keynes mused in 1930 that, a century hence, society might be so rich that the hours worked by each person could be cut to ten or 15 a week, he was not hallucinating, just extrapolating [doing the math]. The working week was shrinking fast. Average hours worked dropped from 60 at the turn of the century to 40 by the 1950s.

The combination of extra time and money gave rise to an age of mass leisure, to family holidays and meals together in front of the television. There was a vision of the good life in this era. It was one in which work was largely a means to an end – the working class had become a leisured class. Households saved money to buy a house and a car, to take holidays, to finance a retirement at ease.

The vision of a leisure-filled future occurred against the backdrop of the competition against communism, but it is a capitalist dream: one in which the productive application of technology rises steadily, until material needs can be met with just a few hours of work. It is a story of the triumph of innovation and markets.

Keynes, in his essay on the future, reckoned that when the end of work arrived:

For the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem – how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares, how to occupy the leisure, which science and compound interest will have won for him, to live wisely and agreeably and well.

However, if Keynes seems too ancient, or isn't sufficiently persuasive, fear not, for there is much more. Simon Gottschalk gets right to the core of the matter, in more contemporary terms in his essay, "In Praise of Doing Nothing" on the academic publishing platform, The Conversation:

In the 1950s, scholars worried that, thanks to technological innovations, Americans wouldn't know what to do with all of their leisure time. Yet today, as sociologist Juliet Schor notes, Americans are overworked, putting in more hours than at any time since the Depression and more than in any other in Western society.

In a hypermodern society propelled by the twin engines of acceleration and excess, doing nothing is equated with waste, laziness, lack of ambition, boredom or "down" time. But this betrays a rather instrumental grasp of human existence ... to equate "doing nothing" with non-productivity betrays a short-sighted understanding of productivity. In fact, psychological research suggests that doing nothing is essential for creativity and innovation, and a person's seeming inactivity might actually cultivate new insights, inventions, or melodies.

As legends go, Isaac Newton grasped the law of gravity sitting under an apple tree. Archimedes discovered the law of buoyancy relaxing in his bathtub, while Albert Einstein was well-known for staring for hours into space in his office.

Doing nothing – or just being – is as important to human well-being as doing something. As we race along, it seems as though we're not taking the time to seriously examine the rationale behind our frenetic lives – and mistakenly assume that those who are very busy must be involved in important projects.

Touted by the mass media and corporate culture, this credo of busyness contradicts both how most people in our society define "the good life" and the tenets of many philosophies that extol the virtue and power of stillness.

French philosopher Albert Camus perhaps put it best when he wrote, "Idleness is fatal only to the mediocre."

So dear reader, would you count yourself among the mediocre? If you are among those who were taught that men must forever only labor, in community, or be denied their share of sustenance from the commons, that is a textbook communist belief. Sit with that for a minute. The whole point of capitalism is to expand the leisure class. If you are against that, you just might accidentally have become more aligned with

communist thought than capitalist objectives. This is a good place for some readers to throw this book against a wall or into the trash. That's okay, we've been there, we know the feeling. However, if you found your core beliefs deeply challenged in this paragraph, yet are still reading, give yourself a big pat on the back, and we hope you'll brave on.

Today, we are barely a decade away from the 2030 that Keynes forecasted. Instead of achieving the capitalist dream of toil-liberated and leisured masses, "Minimum-wage jobs can't pay rent anywhere in U.S., according to report on Affordable Housing" (Johnson). Americans have become the communists, without even realizing it, and we are beating it into our children every time we whip them to go cut the grass. That's how communism works. Brute force, right? Strong preying on the weak. Smart exploiting the simple.

This was not the capitalist's dream of a century ago. This was not the promise of just one generation ago.

Turns out that socialism might just be the middle ground to help us find ourselves again, in a world turned upside down.

So here we are, nearly a quarter of the way through the twenty-first century, spinning upside-down, out of control, Americans are mostly communists who don't believe in the liberation of the masses from toil through ingenuity and innovation.

This is how we are traversing the post-automation phase of global civilization development. Robots have long since taken over vast swaths of redundant, backbreaking, and monotonous human activity, and are in the process of rationalizing highly sophisticated human routines, up to and including such highly specialized skills as surgery on human bodies.⁷

While robots won't be doing unattended surgery any time soon, the number of surgical robots is growing exponentially. This means, one skilled surgeon will be able to do the work of ten. So even in very specialized, human-touch dominated fields, the writing is on the wall.

According to BioSpectrumAsia, in 2018:

The market leading device is the Da Vinci, manufactured by Intuitive Surgical, sales of which have rapidly risen despite the latest model's £1.7m price tag and annual maintenance costs of £150,000. Between 2007 and 2011, the number of Da Vinci robots in use in the US increased from 800 to 1,400, while the number worldwide reached 2,300 in 2011. There are around 50 in the UK.

The inexorable acceleration of optimization which we tend to, at each iteration, dismiss, thereby again and again returning to the old behavior, like a dog returns to its own vomit – doubling job hours instead of cutting them in half – as if the optimization didn't even come into existence, is keenly described by Kevin Kelly, "These inadvertent

anticipatory inventions are called exaptations in biology. We don't know how common exaptations are in nature, but they are routine in the technium.⁸ The technium is nothing but exaptations since innovations can be easily borrowed across lines of origin or moved across time and repurposed."⁹

Somehow, what both biology and technology do naturally, we, caught in the middle, don't do. We don't integrate and adapt to our own iterative exaptations. This can only be characterized as some form of devolution. We have long since passed the point, in the advanced economies, where most people could live lives of leisure, finding and doing the work that fulfills them and adds new value to society, rather than being forced into JOB-JOBs whose primary purpose is to pass out paper of which at least half is given to landed lords, to keep their social station intact. There really is no politically correct way to describe this. In the technical, economic, and even moral-philosophical sense, the current American version of communism in capitalism's clothing is just plain stupid. It's a joke. It's a cheap clown's mask. It's an utter waste of the potential for human creativity, except, for the ever-shrinking proportion of the population moving through a stage of personal growth in which "winning" this stupid game serves to educate them to these facts. Fortunately, we have a non-trivial number of blockchain millionaires in a position to lead the rest of the economy through the awakening they've experienced, if the rest of us are willing to learn from this exaptation, this time.

Some of us live in the JOB-JOB world and go along with it because we're forced to do so, while knowing precisely how stupid it is. Some of us take it seriously, as if it is the One True Real World and will one day realize we were duped. Some of us ignore the stupidity altogether and play it like a video game to distract us from deeper introspection. Some of us leave the game and head off-grid because we can't tolerate the inanity or even stupidity for even a moment longer.

Perhaps the bottom line for breaking the Job Trance is to awaken from the simple human intellectual laziness that leads people to call other people lazy whenever we see them relaxing, yet when we ourselves relax, we are certain that it's earned leisure. Of course, those most deeply asleep in the Job Trance would never, ever, ever take a moment of leisure because they can't ever imagine feeling worthy a moment's rest, for fear of what their own judgmental minds would do to themselves; namely, incriminate and berate themselves, just as they do to others, if they dared to sample the smallest portion of liberation. Even after working tirelessly for decades, the most deeply entranced won't change because they would lose their moral high ground from which to incriminate and intimidate others.

This is both a shame and a needless obstacle to a more meaningful and flourishing human civilization. In his book, *Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less*, Silicon Valley consultant Alex Pang argues that we can be more successful in all areas of our lives by recognizing the importance of rest: *working better does not mean working more*,

it means working less and resting better. Treating rest as a passive activity secondary to work undermines our chances for a rewarding and meaningful life” (emphasis added).

“It took a century to create the weekend—and only a decade to undo it,” Katrina Onstad sagaciously wrote for digitally native news outlet, Quartz. Things weren't always the way they are today, and they can change as dramatically now as they have in the past.

Bragging “I never take a weekend” is [considered] a gesture of strength: I corralled time, I beat it down. Actually, taking a weekend means ceasing the fight with time, and letting it be neutral, unoccupied. Why isn't this a good thing?

... with industrialization, clocks now determined the task, and the measure of productivity was how much labor could be wrung out of a worker over a period of time. Time had a dollar value, and became a commodity, not to be wasted. “Time is now currency: It is not passed but spent,” wrote historian E. P. Thompson.

Clocks in factories would often mysteriously turn forwards and backwards. Bosses were stealing unpaid hours from workers, who feared to carry their own watches for, as one factory worker wrote in his memoirs in 1850, “it was no uncommon event to dismiss anyone who presumed to know too much about the science of horology.”

In 1926, Ford introduced the five-day workweek. “People who have more leisure must have more clothes,” he argued. “They eat a greater variety of food. They require more transportation in vehicles.”

Ford, probably by accident, articulated a contradiction that sits at the heart of the weekend as we have come to know it: It's both a time of rest and a time of consumption. A Marxist might point out that the weekend is an act of corporate trickery, a dangling carrot that keeps workers tethered to their jobs.

So, which will it be, comrades? Eighty or twenty? The choice is entirely up to us, right? No, not really. Not without the bargaining power of a livable basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP.

Socialism and Mixed Economies

In this book, we are grappling with social, economic, and public policies and narratives for adapting to the significant disruptions experienced by both individuals and institutions, as we transition to a post-automation economy and society.

While things are changing dramatically in 2018, we can still browse any of the popular social media sites and apps for the keyword or hashtag #socialism and find plenty of histrionic and religious fervor, intentionally distorting and obfuscating the principles expressed by the word socialism. The visual memes depicting socialism as essentially demonic are among the most bizarre and obtuse propaganda found on the internet; and it's pervasive.

Sometimes, dealing with the vile and violent anti-socialist propaganda in America is beyond exhausting. Over the years, we've conducted our own experiments in addressing the topic of socialism online, and time and time again it is clear that there are people and organizations that watch for this keyword and then unleash torrents of propaganda to squelch any budding conversation. Again, things are changing, but in the period from approximately 2004 to 2014, this phenomenon was widespread and common. There were clearly concerted efforts to demonize and discredit anyone who dared raise the subject in online public forums in the United States. This is our direct experience.

And because exhaustion is exactly what the religiously capitalist propagandists want, to wear down the will to think clearly and advance common sense thought about the benefits of hybrid economic systems, we must take this topic on, one more time. From "you just want free stuff" to "since you love Venezuela, move there" to "whose money are you going to steal to do that?" The irrational, violent hatred of the ideas of being socially conscientious and environmentally responsible triggers millions of Americans, who somehow seem to believe that they are each entitled to live in their own private Idaho, with no awareness, much less conscience to consider the impact that their lifestyles or words might have upon others. If such people believe that the United States should get rid of entitlements, the entitlement to willful ignorance is a good one to cut from the budget process, first. The principle of income security as an inalienable human right is not merely an ideological curiosity or philosophical debate. It also isn't a political war in which "to the victor goes the spoils." It represents a sea change in what currency itself means, in the context of post-automation society, and an opportunity for the process of raising awareness to the historic precedents that made income security a fundamental human right, in the first place.

Income security as a human right? Are these people completely clueless about how the real world works?" From a very early age, people start telling us "how the world works" based only upon how they believe the world works. They tell us that we have a certain menu of choices, and if we don't pick from their menu, then we aren't permitted to live peaceful lives, because they themselves, along with others who have bought into a particular way of thinking, will continue to harass, and extort us, until we comply. The twentieth century culture of American industrialization was so successful at

conditioning human thought and behavior that, almost no matter where we go in the world today, we will likely encounter a similar situation.

But not in the age of Anonymous Ethereum Investor #2, and millions of others like this person. In MIRI's summer update email newsletter, Rob Bensinger wrote:

We ran a successful internship program over the summer, and we're co-running a new engineer-oriented workshop series with CFAR. On the fundraising side, we received a \$489,000 grant from the Long-Term Future Fund, a \$150,000 AI Safety Retraining Program grant from the Open Philanthropy Project, and an amazing surprise \$1.02 million grant from "Anonymous Ethereum Investor #2!"

For people who have been telling us how the world works over the past 100 years, based on the past century, instead of the century ahead, Anonymous Ethereum Investor #2 is a powerful example of "how the world works," today. In increasing measure, it works by blockchain currencies that re-balance and realign social and policy priorities by routing around the damage of the current dysfunctional and rapidly disintegrating system.

This is why understanding the practical ways in which principles derived from a diverse set of historical and emergent economic systems can work together to cultivate the best outcomes for the greatest number of people, is vital to creating a world that works for everyone, with none excessively benefiting at the expense of others.

Hybrid economics is the study and implementation of such systems. While economies are man-made systems, we can take lessons from nature, where we see common adaptations appear in diverse biological systems. Our own human bodies are among the most extraordinary hybrid systems. We are a complex system of systems. If each were studied in hyperbolic isolation, the way economic ideas often seem to be approached, the parts would make no sense whatsoever to the whole. Yet, the federation of hybrid systems within the human body is the only way that a human body can even exist, on this planet. For example, science is still in the earliest stages of marveling at the delicate intricacies of the microbiome, the entire humble civilization of life upon which the life of the rest of our body is completely dependent.

Hybrid systems are by far the norm in nature. While we talk of pure-bred horses and dogs, none of these beings, within themselves, are even close to pure. They are hybrid systems of systems, just like us. Much less can there be anything even remotely considered as a pure race of humans. There are no such thing as pure races and no such thing as pure economic systems. We are all hybrids, and we will all be better off the sooner that we can all come to terms with the fact that this is the one thing we do all have in common. We are all hybrids.

Economics and economic systems are not embedded in the laws of nature, they are man-made, but we can look to nature for hints about how systems work together in harmonious hybrid contexts and use those lessons to improve our systems. Nature often surprises us in unexpected ways, with unexpected survival advantages gained by unexpected associations between and among systems, that, on the surface may even appear adversarial.

Writing for VOX, Sean Illing explains in the article, *Why Capitalism Won't Survive Without Socialism*:

We think of capitalism as being locked in an ideological battle with socialism, but we never really saw that capitalism might be defeated by its own child — technology.

This is how Eric Weinstein, a mathematician and a managing director of Peter Thiel's investment firm, Thiel Capital, began a recent video for BigThink.com. In it he argues that technology has so transformed our world that "we may need a hybrid model in the future which is paradoxically more capitalistic than our capitalism today and perhaps even more socialistic than our communism of yesteryear.

Which is another way of saying that socialist principles might be the only thing that can save capitalism.

Hence, many technologists and entrepreneurs in Silicon Valley are converging on ideas like universal basic income as a way to mitigate the adverse effects of technological innovation (emphasis added).

That sums it up about as succinctly as possible. The world of polarized political absolutes never was realistic, to begin with. What more evidence do we need of that fact, than the entire human history of futile war and senseless bloodshed?

Even if we can accept the fact that these historically disparate systems can and do function better together, we will need to do a lot of work to translate this understanding into the political will to transcend maladaptive twentieth-century political narratives and advance adaptive twenty-first century narratives.

Two of the most authentic minds that we know of, Nikola Danaylov and David Wood, recently shared their discussion about how we can transcend traditional politics and find our way out of the currently hyper-polarized political environment. In this environment, personality-driven puritans on each side mock and dismiss anything perceived as less than pure to their particular ideology. Puritanical thinking, by definition, tends to oppose hybridization, and it is this kind of thinking that then emerges in our economic and political narratives, in the form of strict and rigid absolutes that cannot and must not be violated in any way. Total discourse gridlock.

In contrast, Danaylov and Wood acknowledge this harsh reality, but rather than lament, they offer guidance on how to transcend the invective distortion field. Wood's book begins with:

"There's no escape: the journey to a healthier society inevitably involves politics."

To which Danaylov adds:

My favorite quote that I will take away from this interview with David Wood is:

"A better politics is possible. A better politics is beckoning us forward. And it is up to each of us to hear that call and figure out how to get involved in it."

David Wood isn't just any old futurist. "As one of the pioneers of the smartphone industry, he co-founded Symbian, the creator of the world's first successful smartphone operating system. The EPOC32 mobile operating system, of which he was the architect, went on (renamed as "Symbian OS") to ship in half a billion smartphones between 2001 and 2012" (IET).

So, Wood is clearly not just hand waving and guessing, he has been skillfully observing and interacting with long-term trends at a world class level, for all his life. At this juncture, that kind of wisdom is what the world needs more than ever. The entire two-hour conversation between Danaylov and Wood on Singularity.FM is highly recommended for serious students, as linked in the endnotes.

Of course, the question of what it specifically means to live in a better world is obviously one of the most subjective questions of all. Better for whom?

It's an old cliché that history is written by the conquerors, and it is an equally catastrophic fact that in the history of war, murderous conflicts have generally been waged between leisure classes, each pitting their working classes against one another, to maintain their own high quality of leisure life. While oftentimes cloaked in religious fervor, the underlying dynamics are the same. Religious leaders who are largely liberated from the requirement of hard labor required to sustain the basics of food, shelter, and healthcare; sending out laypeople to widen the sphere of their influence, to better fortify their positions of leisure worship of the deity. It would be tremendously ironic that working people all over the world would simultaneously loathe leisure for themselves, yet fight and die for the leisure of others, often in the name of their respective deities; if it weren't so glaringly obvious that the majority of people who oppose their own self-interest were deeply conditioned into that state of mind, by people who may or may not have even realized they were doing such a thing. We can't just blanket accuse any particular religion or its teachers, of intentionally brainwashing people into ideas that are not in their own best interest. There are millions of good and well-meaning souls who were born into circumstances in which this was the most

logical path for them to follow, and they followed it. This doesn't change the result, but it does end another blame game.

The concept of "you no work, you no eat" becomes especially ironic when, in just about all the world's religions, the deity is said to be the source and provider of all our earthly needs, and we are never to worry about such things, in the first place. "And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore, take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Luke 12:28-33).

Now, the biblical imperative to "Get a Damned Job" is generally contorted from the New Testament book of Thessalonians, in which it appears that the apostle Paul is addressing what's commonly referred to as the tragedy of the commons. Paul wrote, "If anyone is unwilling to work, he shall not eat" (2 Thes 3:10). Of course, quoting individual sentences from the bible, out of context, is a favorite game of many, in every religion or philosophy.

A more reasoned perspective, that considers the entirety of any work, is also vastly more likely to be accurate in terms of any writer's intention. It's clear that Jesus fed the multitudes with no work requirement, and when he did encourage work, it was exclusively the work of spreading the gospel. Jesus never said, "put down your fishing nets and learn to code in Python." He said, "follow me." The plethora of contradictions between the actions of Jesus and the pronouncements of Paul and other disciples, written down dozens or even hundreds of years after the fact, already fill many other volumes, and are not the subject of our current inquiry. So, let's stick to work, remembering the vital distinction between work and job.

What Paul meant by work is, of course, vague beyond comprehension. There was certainly no such thing as the 40-hour industrial work week, nor the 60 to 80-hour labor weeks that came before that; and to which we have, all too depressingly, since returned. Yet, in Paul's time, there was no such thing as job, in the modern sense. People tended to inherit crafts and vocational callings by family lineage. What it meant to earn one's keep was, and still is, completely subjective. It's a social construct, built of the feelings and perceptions of humans in smaller social groups, be they towns, tribes, congregations, or families. Still, in consummate fairness and intellectual honesty, let's give Paul the Apostle a full hearing on his letter to the Thessalonians. While the Greek would be more accurate, we'll use the New American Study Bible, as it comes closer to

the uniquely American account of what Christian Americans have taken this passage to mean, and how it's been opportunistically exploited by capitalism. Paul wrote:

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example, because we did not act in an undisciplined manner among you, nor did we eat anyone's bread without paying for it, but with labor and hardship we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you; **not because we do not have the right to this**, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you, so that you would follow our example. For even when we were with you, we used to give you this order: if anyone is not willing to work, then he is not to eat, either. For we hear that some among you are leading an undisciplined life, doing no work at all, but acting like busybodies. Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to work in quiet fashion and eat their own bread. But as for you, brethren, do not grow weary of doing good (2 Thes 3:7-13, NAS, emphasis added).*

Now, in Paul's time, the church consisted of groups of early believers doing their best to understand who Jesus was, what he had done and said, and what that meant to the way in which they were to live their lives. Were they to be like the lilies of the field, taking no care for raiment (clothing)? Or were they to maximize profits for shareholders? Paul is not shy about saying that he is all about seeking behavioral compliance. He wants people to emulate his behavior, even though it's not at all required, by his own account. He even goes on to address the busybodies of his day, which today we might refer to as those engaged in make-work "bullshit jobs," in the words of David Graeber. Looking busy all day long for the paycheck, while contributing little or nothing to the community. We see similarly stark contrasts between human values and shareholder value play out today, in the form of the largest corporations that have ever existed on Earth.

As Filipa Ioannou wrote for the San Francisco Chronicle news site, SFGate.com,

On Friday, [respected UK newspaper] the Guardian published a story about 50 million Facebook accounts being compromised by a hack that allowed hackers to take over the user's accounts. But when Facebook users took to Facebook to try to share the story in the early afternoon, a funny thing happened — they were served with error messages, and the posts were blocked.

What does it tell us about a de-facto public commons platform, when it blocks publication of stories that are unflattering to it, just like communist regimes do with state newspapers? How do we know this hasn't happened in less widely known, but just as important instances? When we are just one isolated user, what power do we have to protest? Virtually none. Yet, this is just the latest in a series of trespasses that reveals the incongruity between maximizing shareholder value and advancing human values.

Political economist, public policy analyst, and author Michael Harrington, writing for Tuka Global, summed up an earlier meltdown like this:

After the company's quarterly earnings call with investors, FB's stock price dropped ~20% in after-hours trading. Over \$100B in value disappeared in an instant after FB announced disappointing revenue numbers and user growth.

Some context: that's comparable to the entirety of General Motors, Ford, and Target ... combined. Why did the stock tank? A perfect storm hit one of Facebook's core features, the News Feed:

Less "viral" clickbait in the feed. Facebook has committed to optimizing for "time well-spent" in the app, not overall engagement. While this shift made for a better experience for users, FB can't show users as many ads as before.

Less feed personalization. In the wake of the Cambridge Analytica scandal and recent GDPR regulations, Facebook revamped its data usage policies and privacy controls. These changes hurt FB's ability to charge companies big bucks to specifically target ads.

To be sure, this is not just all about Facebook, as much as the company might like to think so highly of itself. This company and its platform simply provide a handy template for illustrating the more general economic dysfunction of the first quarter of the twenty-first century. Such experiences are typical of shareholder worship as the de facto state religion. A state religion of worshipping private capital. Make no mistake, this religion is strictly enforced by the current state, which has been effectively taken over by the billionaire caste, as of this book's publication. But is the concept of state itself, really to blame, or is the Golden Calf itself the false god?

When added to so many similar examples of booms and busts in the past, we see a clear track record that convinces most reasonable people that shareholder and user interests can't possibly be aligned in a mutually beneficial way, over the long term. Our fundamental interests as humans, and those of corporations as they currently exist, have become diametrically opposed. Growing numbers of people have come to see this as nothing less than late-stage capitalism collapsing in on itself. Like a super-massive wealth-magnetizing black hole that simply can't hoard even one more photon from the infinite space around it. Not that it wouldn't, if it could. A black hole would eat all of creation if the laws of physics in our particular universe didn't intervene. In retrospect, it's as if the American capitalist system as we've known it, and as it has been practiced for the past century or more, has predictably evolved into a self-correcting state analogical with the heat death of the universe.

In contrast, the Apostle Paul makes it very clear that all of the apostles have the right to food, without doing any exorbitant physical labor when he says in verse 9, "not because we do not have the right to this (food), but in order to offer ourselves as a model

for you, so that you would follow our example.” Paul says we do have the right, and we have the option of doing more to inspire others. The option. Not the obligation. Not the compulsion. Not the edict. Not the commandment and certainly not the law. Paul doesn’t even raise the issues of shelter or clothing because it was just assumed that wherever the apostles went, free Couchsurfing – in the contemporary vernacular – was their divine right. No mention of clothing is made, either, which could reasonably imply that hand-me-downs and free rummage exchanges were both welcomed and encouraged to make certain that not a single person lacked even a single basic human need.

Then, in verse 11, Paul specifically calls out those doing “no work at all.” This does not even remotely apply to people who are not engaged in 40 hour per week job, because our concepts didn’t even exist. Yet, many today willfully misinterpret Paul that way because it serves their own interests. Paul did not lecture and label mothers as “welfare queens” for working their fingers to the bone at the primary task of raising children. He didn’t emasculate men who pitched in here and there as they saw the need, but who otherwise returned to meditation, prayer, or their own individual leisure interests.

Yet, today, these verses are instantly conflated to mean, in extremely punitive terms, that anyone not abiding by the industrial American JOB-JOB norms is not worthy of the most basic of human needs for food, shelter, clothing, transportation, and a level of income security sufficient to participate in the community; that is, an equitable means of exchange. Without access to our most basic human needs, humans simply can’t live. In short, throughout the 20th century, mistaken and just plain false doctrines have been used to revoke the very human permission to exist. We’ll see more on this most basic sovereign principle of permission to exist, a bit later.

In verses 8 and 9, Paul says that “we kept working night and day so that we would not be a burden to any of you” ... “so that you would follow our example.” Now, who would stand to gain the most with this behavioral multi-level-marketing approach? In the early days of the church, according to Acts 43-47, “And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.” What does this sound like to you, dear reader? Selling all their property and belongings and having all things in common. That would be, how would you say it in contemporary terms? Common-ism. Or maybe a Common-istic Free-Market system.

In Paul’s time, the bosses of these common resources were the disciples. So, who stood to gain the most in convincing smaller groups to keep “working day and night” as the traveled from community to community, instilling the same behavioral template? Obviously, the bosses stand to gain the most, the disciples stand to gain the most. Particularly when you include the principle of tithing, it’s not too difficult to see

how this arrangement may have functioned as the original wealth redistribution upward to the top, from the bottom.

In the present political environment, where blindly polarized political opposites spend most of their time attempting to out-shout one another, the bible makes it very clear about how it considers loud, histrionic, obnoxious, busybodies, however articulate they might seem in imposing their views. In a spectacularly public and collective act of psychological projection, these labels – histrionic, obnoxious, busybodies – are the very labels that many on the so-called alt-right hurl at the so-called “social justice warriors” of the left. Yet, every Christian is held accountable to a higher standard. “If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal” (1 Cor. 13:1).

So, there’s a pretty good test. We must ask ourselves, whenever we might tend to freak out that somebody seems to be getting a better deal than us, whether or not we are thinking, acting, and speaking in love. Claiming that we do this, does not make it so; and it’s transparent to most when people try to fake a loving and compassionate disposition.

In Matthew 20, we also find the parable of the laborers in the vineyard. The parable is too long to reprint in its entirety, here, but in essence, those who joined the vineyard labor force last, got paid the same as those who joined first, causing those who felt they did “more work” to grumble and complain. In verses 9 through 16, we see how the analogical landowner responded:

When those hired about the eleventh hour came, each one received a denarius. When those hired first came, they thought that they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. When they received it, they grumbled at the landowner, saying, ‘These last men have worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the scorching heat of the day.’ But he answered and said to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? ‘Take what is yours and go, but I wish to give to this last man the same as to you. ‘Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with what is my own? Or is your eye envious because I am generous?’ So the last shall be first, and the first last (Matt 20:9–16, NAS).

Or is your eye envious because God is superabundantly generous, in all ways, including all the material necessities of life?

Now, complicating all of this somewhat is the fact that the vineyards are yet another analogy for the field of all humankind. The “labor” that Jesus calls all disciples into is not anything remotely resembling a JOB-JOB, in fact, it is quite the antithesis of the Job Trance, as we describe it in this text. Jesus is commanding disciples to quit chasing

material wealth, status, and meaning in things, quit grumbling that somebody might get a better deal than you, and instead find all the highest values in people.

Let's take a tiny break from the heavy "feels" (to use the internet lingo) and enjoy a Charleton Heston-inspired flashback, from the film *Soylent Green*. "My God, the vineyard is ... people! The vineyard is people!"

There was one kind of work and only one kind of work Jesus was interested in: restoring people into right relationship with God, whom He said, repeatedly, lies within you. To twist the purpose of his life into justification to hold the eviction gun to every single head is one of the most demonic possible abuses of scripture imaginable. To support a society in which people must work tirelessly night and day, or lose their housing, healthcare, and food security, is equally damning.

In contrast, the book of Acts reminds us of the centrality of awe, in living a meaningful and worthy life, secure in access to all our divinely granted fundamental human needs. Again, from Acts, Chapter 2:

Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe; and many wonders and signs were taking place through the apostles. And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need. Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved (Acts 2:43-47, NAS, emphasis added).

If that sounds a lot like, "from each according to their ability, and to each according to their need," that's because, it does sound a lot like that. No matter how hard the captains of capitalism work to cultivate hardline, histrionic, polarized extremists to take 2 Thes 3:10 out of context, it will never work in the end. As they did a century ago, and a century before that; today, tens of millions of Christians will doubtlessly concede that we appear to be closer to the end times, than ever before in history. Nevertheless, in its full context, the bible says what it says and is what it is. No misperception of reality changes the nature of fundamental reality, in the least. It only causes suffering to the mistaken perceiver. The best way to create better lives, is to cultivate better perceptions, which in turn makes better humans, which ultimately makes a better world.

No Such Thing As A Better World

What if there is simply no such thing as a better world? What if the world is, in the words of Voltaire, already the best of all possible worlds, just the way it is? What if technolibertopians,¹⁰ social justice warriors, anarcho-capitalists, and all the other competing tribal voices, left, right, and center are wrong in fighting for a better world or a better future, because there simply is no such thing as a better world?

Consulting our own direct experience, the world as it is right now, in this moment, is the only world we know, the only world we have ever known, the only world we have direct access to. Does that mean that this is the only world we can ever know? Does this mean that all conceptions of a better world are just that, conceptions, and nothing we do today, nothing we ever do, can change the current unsatisfactory world into a more satisfactory, better world? If we are unsatisfied with life, and nothing we think or do can ever improve upon our unsatisfactory situation, then what is the point of anything?

Many readers may conclude that this is precisely the world we live in, and accepting this fact is the key to lasting happiness, in which case, there is no reason for this book, or hundreds of millions of others littering the planet. Just put this book down, right now, close your eyes, bring all attention to the breath, just notice it, don't control it, and then direct all your attention directly at the mind until you realize your true nature.

If you achieved that, congratulations, you may well be on the road to nirvana. Now, the trick is to see if you can get there and stay there. #TheDudeAbides

For the rest of our readers, the only way we can even begin to contemplate a better world is to first see the present world, as it is. Because any different, better world, can only be built of the components we have on hand with this world, here and now. Again consulting our own direct experience, it does appear that as a platform for kaizen, or continuous beneficial improvement, this world appears to be good enough. We can observe countless examples of things that improve or have improved as the result of continuous application of even tiny beneficial changes.

So, if there is a path to a better world, even if we can't instantly manifest anything different from the present moment, differences between minds can emerge when we start explaining what a better world looks like. Many people would like to see the reduction of human suffering and the maximization of human flourishing as the desired function of society on planet Earth. In the Hawaiian language, there is a saying, “‘O ka pono ke hana ‘ia, a iho mai nā lani.” Roughly, those who act righteously, bring Heaven to Earth.

In this case, the question remains: how do we achieve such lofty goals, and what do we do about trolling, antagonistic, outdated ideas, people, and institutions that seem to represent obstacles to cultivating conditions on Earth as it is in Heaven?

In this book, we have been exploring some of the relevant domains of public conscience that bear upon these questions. How do we create a world that works for everyone? If the long arc of history indeed bends toward justice, then it might also be helpful for us to try to discern our present location upon said arc, to better consider the most skillful means of interacting with the present, to cultivate a better future.

Let's call it the Long Arc. By roughly situating the present moment in the context of ages past, in addition to forecasting one or more of the desired future scenarios that we've explored or imagined, we can, to the best of our finite ability, approximately graph the position of the inflection point on the Long Arc that we appear to be responsible for traversing, during our fleeting time on Earth in the first quarter of the twenty-first century.

To attempt this thought exercise, we'll begin by focusing upon the present moment with respect to the experience of poverty. Poverty is both a very simple, and impossibly complex metric. When we talk about poverty as a term used by public policy wonks and PhD's, countless semantic complexities emerge, along with their intricate social and ideological interdependencies. Poverty is a big messy topic that is very easy to make messier and messier, which leads to more complex analysis, which produces more PhD theses claiming to explain what poverty really is, and how to address it. Now, we are big fans of lifelong education, but there are times when theoretical convention can hobble practical application. Ironically, this seems to happen commonly, even when all the ingredients to create a direct solution are obvious to almost everyone with an elementary level education.

For example, the perennial academic over-analysis of poverty is one key reason why Martin Luther King Jr.'s crystal clear advocacy of universal and unconditional basic income (in his words, guaranteed annual income) has been largely buried in the dustbin of history for more than the past half-century. Unconditional basic income has long been considered as an academic curiosity for economics postgraduates, all too often utilized to try to prove that it didn't work, and therefore that it can never work. Like other Long Arc accomplishments of abolition, women's suffrage, civil rights, and marriage equality, sometimes, very smart people can think so hard about a straightforward topic that they make it impossibly complicated to simply do the right thing.

This is where basic income shares some of the hallmarks of good engineering solutions. It's simply stated. It's readily imagined. And it is an elegant solution to an extremely complicated objective. Which means, it's easy to say and hard to do. In the words of JFK, "We choose to go to the moon, not because it is easy, but because it is hard." In that case, gigantic rockets were an elegant solution to a simply envisioned, very complex objective of "landing men on the moon and returning the safely to the

Earth.” Anyone who has ever watched a rocket blast off – and these-days, land – can’t help to see a poetic elegance in the dance to reach escape velocity and return.

In a technological sense, basic income is similar, with respect to the elegant simplicity of its function to blast poverty out of existence, and the complexity of its development. In a biological sense, we know how to end poverty by circulating cash throughout the economic circulatory system in a way that prevents clotting, we have the medical and technological know-how to do this, we only need the political conviction to get the job done. We need to make a bold, high-level, public JFK-like commitment *to end poverty with a living wage level unconditional basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP.*

In the Hawaiian language, they have a beautifully concise phrase for expressing the straightforward requirement for immediate action when something needs to be done. They say “hiki nō” (hEEkee noh), which is loosely translated, “consider it done.” It’s an especially useful saying, as later on we’ll see how Hawai’i has already become so significant to traversing this historical inflection point. To consider UBI done, one of our most pressing challenges is to move beyond all the academic complexity, and into practical applications in the world as it is, today.

Over the past fifty years, countless experiments and trials have already provided this kind of essential guidance, across all cultures and demographics, so let’s leave the mechanics of implementing UBI to the side for a moment, and attempt to tackle that impossibly messy academic term, poverty. What does it mean when we talk about ending poverty with a livable universal basic income?

Poverty in this context simply means lack of currency. That’s all there is to it. It’s the inability to make the bills on a long-term consistent basis. It’s being forever broke. Some readers may feel free to take all the academic nuances they’d like to any local PhD review board, but for this discussion, in this book, we are living in the regular world of regular people. Broke people. The 40% of Americans who can’t possibly weather a \$400 emergency, much less \$1,000. The 25% of Americans with zero retirement savings and the more than 60% who say there’s little to no chance they’ll ever have enough savings to retire.¹¹

Inadequate cash flow, a chronic lack of income security sufficient to sustain life in decent circumstances. That’s poverty, period.

To understand this definition, we need only listen to people working multiple jobs to barely make the rent, or working full-time jobs and living in cars, vans, or tents, because there simply isn’t enough cash to make all the bills associated with conventional housing. This is not just happening in a few highly desirable locations like Hawaii, San Francisco, or New York City, it’s become typical of all of the world’s major cities. Poverty is not just a problem of housing shortages, it’s a problem of inadequate

currency circulation. To be sure, the two issues are deeply interconnected, and we'll get to that in a bit, but for the moment, we are faced with the reality of a catastrophically anemic currency circulatory system and understanding the reasons why it continues to remain so persistently dysfunctional, decade after decade.

In the July 2018 LA Times article, "Employers will do almost anything to find workers to fill jobs — except pay them more," Michael Hiltzik wrote:

Billions of dollars are funneled to owners of capital in the form of dividends and stock buybacks, while laborers go begging for even the measliest wage increases.

"America's labor shortage is approaching epidemic proportions," reported CNBC, "and it could be employers who end up paying." Well, yes. That's how things are supposed to work.

Unfortunately, it hasn't worked that way in a very, very long time. What we are seeing today is textbook, cataclysmic market failure, and unless we think that greed will end overnight, we are going to have to seek alternative solutions to increasingly anemic currency circulation. Hiltzik goes on:

The underlying cause of the "labor shortage" is hiding in plain sight. It's the long-term trend of funneling the gains from labor productivity not to the workforce, but to shareholders. As with any addiction, this process produces short-term euphoria, reflected in share prices, but long-term pathology, reflected in income inequality, poverty, and social unrest.

But it's been going on so long that the addicts, that is, corporate CEOs and their mouthpieces, have forgotten how to respond.

"Labor is being paid first again," Kevin Crissey, an airlines analyst for Citigroup, bellyached to clients after the announcement. "Shareholders get leftovers." Hardly: From 2014 through 2016, American had authorized \$9 billion in share buybacks to fatten the shareholders' take. By contrast, the pay raises will cost American \$1 billion over three years.

As a share of gross domestic income, corporate profits have nearly doubled, to 6.4% in 2016 from 3.3% in 1990, according to figures from the Bureau of Economic Analysis. Meanwhile, the labor share, measured as wages and salaries paid to individuals, has been on a schneid, falling to 42.2% in 2013 from 46.2% in 1991. The labor share has since crept up to 43% as of 2016, but it's still well below its postwar peak of 51.5%, reached in 1970 (emphasis added).

Here we see yet another market-derived confirmation that 50% per capita GDP is a reasonable amount of basic income, sufficient to sustain life in decent circumstances. Because it's not likely that the hearts and minds of men will become less greedy at any time in the near future, it is abundantly clear that the time has come to amend the rules

of this game to restore a healthy currency circulation system. To end poverty as we've known it in the industrial era.

There is a deeper problem here, however. The problem of narrative. The relentless corporate media narrative that makes capital out to be the poor victim of labor. As that banker whined a minute ago, "Shareholders get leftovers." As if that's not exactly how it's supposed to work. We need to develop and amplify narratives of systems in balance, biology in balance, of the interdependence of cells in bodies and of individuals within social systems. Until mainstream narratives change, it will be extremely difficult to make the kind of progress needed to end poverty with unconditional basic income.

Among the displaced, the under-housed (those making do with couch surfing and other temporary, shared, creative options), and completely unhoused people, this fundamental definition of poverty is as plain as day. As we've already said, but apparently can't repeat enough, *the functional definition of poverty is simply being flat broke*. Poverty is workers having next to zero cash and vanishingly scarce prospects for ever generating sufficient income to ensure a sustainable sense of Maslow Safety.¹² Without that economic foundation, people living in a post-industrial, or post-automation world cannot ever be regarded as equal participants in the local community, endowed with equal dignity as human beings and citizens. This cycle of poverty is further exacerbated by employers and community members who practically make a career out of grumbling that "nobody wants to work anymore," while suppressing wages, stalling professional advancement, stifling personal growth, treating lower wage earners like servants, and worse. Unfortunately, most workers will be able to add their own experiences to this short list.

Adding insult to injury, anyone who cannot, or prefers not to provide a home address is further ostracized from many of the very institutions that are allegedly here to help. This isn't theoretical, in fact, it is the personal experience of your author, who went on to be valedictorian and graduate with honors from one of the nation's most esteemed universities. Yet, when first applying to college was told, "you can't attend without a fixed home address." This also reveals in a subtler way, the fact that many of our institutions are not actually concerned with work, or the ability to do work, per se. Instead, these systems are more specifically focused upon achieving a much more comprehensive behavioral compliance. Conform, or be cast out. First, the non-compliant individual is pathologized, and given the label of client. Next, the objective is to lead the client through a series of hoops – ostensibly for her own benefit – hoops which are incrementally geared toward achieving a very specific outcome: producing an individual from which reliable monopoly rent extraction may be maintained on a long-term basis.

Once thoroughly conditioned to accept the lifelong inevitability of rising shelter rents, the client is deemed rehabilitated. Her rewards include access to whatever

clothing is deemed fashionable by the big box stores this season, modern countertops, and all manner of smart appliances and furnishings with which to adorn her environment. It's like a bad sci-fi movie where the host creature doesn't even notice that it has been manipulated by the alien parasite. Everything looks so neat and clean and normal. Yet, to step out of line for just one month, one week, or even one day immediately reveals this entire illusion for what it is. A fancy zoo cage, which is provided so long as the monkey does all the right tricks, day in, day out, without so much as a sick day or an ill-advised restroom break.

And what would give employers, rent-extraction corporations, or landlords any motivation to change, given the fact that shareholders are so deeply dug in, seeing themselves as the victims of this scheme, and enraged if they are called upon to share the fruits of productive labor more equitably with the very people who create that wealth. Instead, the entire human effort and value extraction machine is designed to constantly redistribute wealth to the same 1%, the same 0.01% of wealth holders.

Despite the recalcitrance of the stakeholders involved, we can end this poverty gridlock; the labor market can be rebalanced, and poverty can be ended once and for all with an unconditional basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP. Some people might even call that making a better world.

Unconditional basic income is the systemic poverty solution for which Dr. King died, not long after he initiated the Poor People's Campaign in 1968, more than 50 years ago. Even at the 51.5% labor share of domestic income mentioned earlier, the situation was sufficiently dire that King called for emergency humanitarian legislation to end poverty with what he called a guaranteed annual income. It is our collective productivity, measured by GDP, that is the life blood of an economy and which therefore must be sustainably circulated, if the American economic body is to stay alive, let alone recover to live a long, healthy life.

This is why King's deeper question, particularly in the last year that he was on Earth, can be essentially summarized as, "Toward What End?" Where are we headed as a people, and why? What kind of civilization are we building? What kind of global community do we want to live in? All of these questions are neatly distilled into his book title, "Chaos or Community: Where do we go from here?"

Like so many fundamental human values questions, often the old answers have been handed down to us across the generations, lacking only implementation. Like many addicts and alcoholics, we've long known the effective and lasting solution to our problem; we just haven't wanted to act on it until we hit rock bottom. Well, here we are, dear readers. Is our current predicament of exponential inequality of both opportunity and outcome finally enough for us to call it rock bottom? How much more desperate do

we need to feel about our world and our children's world before we are willing to make the needed changes that are obvious to all?

In 1948, a very clear vision of the kind of world that humans would most like to live in was clearly specified in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is a declaration that remains woefully unfulfilled nearly three-quarters of a century later; however, it is still a beacon and very important data point on the Long Arc.

Yet, why do such obviously beneficial policy advances take so long for humanity to realize? Why did it take a full century and a massive Civil Rights Movement to finally move toward full implementation of the 1863 Emancipation Proclamation? Why do we still battle the issue of racial equality, today? Perhaps it is due to the vestigial animal brutishness of humankind. A brutishness that in an earlier era, enabled us to evolve into the planet's apex predator, but which today no longer serves our individual and community best interests. In fact, a brutishness that now will be our undoing, if we refuse to adapt to the new environment.

From direct observation, we clearly see that technology, automation, and artificial intelligence have already changed the local environment so completely and so suddenly, that what was once a key adaptive advantage has now become terminally self-destructive. We now need to deploy another key adaptive advantage, human reasoning and cooperation, to compensate for our outdated, war-like, tribal, destructive tendencies that once enabled humans to survive against all the odds of the savannah. Underneath all the competition, there has always dwelled a deeper level of cooperation, because we all wanted the species as a whole to survive and thrive.

While it's absolutely true that carnivorous Darwinian threats to humanity haven't technically disappeared in the post-automation age (sharks and lions will still eat us, in the rare cases that they have no better option) but perhaps our most urgent impending threats have changed from primarily external to primarily internal.

The effects of internal existential stress and its link to aggression is something Stanford University behavioralist Robert Sapolsky found in his book, *A Primate's Memoir*:

Sapolsky studied the activities and lifestyle of the Forest Troop to explore the relationship between stress and disease. In typical baboon fashion, the males behaved badly, angling either to assume or maintain dominance with higher ranking males or engaging in bloody battles with lower ranking males, which often tried to overthrow the top baboon by striking tentative alliances with fellow underlings. Females were often harassed and attacked. Internecine feuds were routine. Through a heartbreaking twist of fate, the most aggressive males in the Forest Troop were wiped out. The males, which had taken to foraging in an open garbage pit adjacent to a tourist lodge, had contracted bovine

tuberculosis, and most died between 1983 and 1986. Their deaths drastically changed the gender composition of the troop, more than doubling the ratio of females to males, and by 1986 troop behavior had changed considerably as well; males were significantly less aggressive.

After the deaths, Sapolsky stopped observing the Forest Troop until 1993. Surprisingly, even though no adult males from the 1983–1986 period remained in the Forest Troop in 1993 (males migrate after puberty), the new males exhibited the less aggressive behavior of their predecessors.

The authors found that, while in some respects male to male dominance behaviors and patterns of aggression were similar in both the Forest and control troops, there were differences that significantly reduced stress for low-ranking males, which were far better tolerated by dominant males than were their counterparts in the control troops. Analyzing blood samples from the different troops, Sapolsky and Share found that the Forest Troop males lacked the distinctive physiological markers of stress, such as elevated levels of stress-induced hormones, seen in the control troops.

In this case, the young baboon transplants might learn that it pays to be nice by watching the interactions of older males in their new troop. Or it could be that proximity to such behavior increases the likelihood that the new males will adopt the behavior.

But if aggressive behavior in baboons does have a cultural rather than a biological foundation, perhaps there's hope for us as well (PLoS Biology, emphasis added).

Without the constant existential threat of poverty and homelessness, this – along with many other studies relating stress and violence – is reasonable evidence to suggest that people, especially men, will be less aggressive in an economy with a livable basic income, leading to a more peaceful society, overall.

In cases like this, it could come down to the very way we think about things like ending poverty with a livable, unconditional basic income, that becomes equally or more important than prepping for other theoretical worst-case scenarios by building aggressive baboon clans and bug out cabins. What if poverty is just as dire as other zombie apocalypse scenarios that include sudden and complete shutdown of global civilization, with the added assumption of an immediate flashback to the most ruthless version of humanity? Are we still that much like the Forest Troop, despite the advances that we have long since etched into everyday society? Many Americans are obsessive about prepping for scenarios that could theoretically kill 100,000 people or more, while ignoring the very real death and destruction wrought by poverty, every day. Poverty

already kills more than 100,000 people, not just once, but every single year; and it has been doing so for a very long time.

A 2011 Columbia University study published in the *American Journal of Public Health* found that poverty kills about the same number of people as heart attack and stroke, every single year. “Overall, 4.5% of U.S. deaths were found to be attributable to poverty—midway between previous estimates of 6% and 2.3%” (Columbia). According to the most recent 2015 CDC data, the total number of U.S. deaths was 2,712,630. 4.5% of that total is 122,068. That’s more than the entire population of Abilene, Texas, Allentown, Pennsylvania, or Santa Clara, California, killed by poverty every single year.

Think about that for a minute. Every single year, poverty kills an entire U.S. city worth of people. Over the past decade that amounts to 1,220,680. A million people killed by poverty as the root cause. Imagine if there were a bacteria or virus suddenly discovered that would kill over a million Americans over the next decade. The outrage would be overwhelming. There would be panic on the airwaves. That panic would immediately be transformed into funding for finding solutions. Yet, the epidemic of poverty has already killed that many Americans over the past decade, and is on course to meet or beat Wall Street expectations, moving into the 2020’s. Where is the moral outrage at this epidemic? This isn’t just a failure to act, it’s a failure of thinking.

We think it’s their own fault. We don’t consider poor people as worth the thought it takes to save their lives. By our actions, in very practical terms, poor people are literally regarded as some kind of unfortunate, undesirable, and therefore undeserving sub-species. We don’t care if they die. They have no right to exist. It’s too bad when they die, sure, but they were poor, and that’s what happens to poor people. Lesson: don’t be poor! Obey your masters and do your wage slave JOB-JOB, or we’ll leave you to die. This is not hyperbole. This is what we do in America because this is how we think. If we don’t think right, how can we ever act right?

In a post-automation society, how we think and what we choose to think about, become increasingly important, because what we think about determines what we do next. If what we do next is more of the same that we’ve been doing for the past century, we will inevitably end up with more of what we have today, with exponential consequences.

Thinking has already become more important than doing things, but we still live in villages run by alpha males who define themselves and their tribes by what they do. Whoever does the most is seen as the most alpha. All too often, thinking is for lazy people who don’t want to do real work. There are even global networks like Scholars at Risk, that are designed to protect and rescue young thinkers – thinkers of all ages – from cities, towns, and villages that demean or suppress their cognitive abilities.

In a post-automation society, thinking is very much real work, and labor is partly what we choose to do to implement that thinking; not the other way around. Both kinds of work are equally important, the problem is that in small town contexts, thinking is all too often maligned as indolence. This must change if we are to cultivate a flourishing society of free people in the post-automation age.

So, if it's our thinking that's out of date, it's time that we think more about thinking itself, and about how we arrive at conclusions about such vital public policy issues as ending poverty with a livable basic income, equivalent to a living wage. Why do we feel so strongly that people deserve to be in poverty, while others deserve to be released from poverty's merciless death grip? Even if we agree that we want to end poverty, how can we believe that a basic income that is barely \$1 above the poverty level, will achieve that? A drowning man who is given one breath, just before he takes his last breath, then who is left to flail again until he is given just one more breath to avoid drowning again; that man is not saved from drowning. He's in a hellish state of economic waterboarding, forever drowning, barely kept alive by providing just enough oxygen to keep him right where he is. This is just as unconscionable a thing to do to a drowning person as it is to say, "here's \$1 more than poverty level, you're now out of poverty!"

To continue this exercise, perhaps we can use the tool of cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) as a brief analogy. CBT can roughly be described as the mapping of more effective internal thinking to more effective external behavior. Often, the way we think about things can cause us as much or more suffering than real life events, themselves. In like manner, better thinking can literally liberate us.

In the first quarter of the twenty-first century, humanity is in dire need of this kind of practical, methodical, individualized, and self-managed, incremental improvement and intervention. Particularly when it comes to some old economic ideas that history may have dismissed or resisted for a long time, but which are now required for us to reconsider, if we want to recover from rock bottom. Ideas like unconditional basic income, "at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances" (MLK). If you've noticed this phrase in quotes repeated like a mantra in this book, that's good, because that's the mantra we need to be chanting to arrive at a basic income that achieves its intended objectives.

Whether you have encountered similar ideas before, or not, the current environment is presenting an excellent opportunity to map these ideas, within our own minds, to better outcomes.

The first idea was expressed seventy years ago, in Article 25 of the UDHR:

“Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.”

In a post-automation capitalist society, “the right to security in the event of unemployment” can only mean “the right to income security,” as without income security, none of the other securities are viably attainable.

Perhaps you did not know that these rights were clearly mapped out by the global community, so very long ago. Perhaps you did not know that this set of fundamental human rights, rights that are directly dependent upon an adequate income to sustain them, have been exhaustively cross-examined and scrutinized with the utmost moral and ethical rigor, by people across the socioeconomic spectrum of all nations. Now you do know.

The principle of income security as a fundamental human right has long been established in the global community of workers, scholars, activists, and policy makers.

Despite such long-standing convictions, we have yet to map direct cognition of these rights into direct behavior that implements and ensures those rights. This is one way in which thinking can become just a little more important than doing in a post-automation world. Because without the thinking, we are doing things blindly. Without thinking, we are overwhelmed by the rapid rate of change in our artificially intelligent environment, stuck in a cycle of reacting to random life circumstances, rather than directing our lives skillfully in this new post-automation environment. It’s perfectly natural to perpetually want to “do something” when we feel persistent existential risks; that evolution equipped us with such an acute sense of fight or flight is one of the principle reasons, if not the primary reason, that I’m able to write this sentence and you are able to read it, today.

However, being perpetually driven by fight or flight plays out as a catastrophic failure to bring our individual, social, ethical, and community behavior into alignment with what our individual, social, ethical, and community reasoning informs us is the most adaptive path forward in terms of human flourishing.

As we hurtle toward a twenty-second century that surely includes – assuming we survive the current upheaval and transition – the settling of other worlds and the transcendence of those ancient shared enemies of disease, aging, and scarcity, this is indeed an opportune time to reflect upon how far we’ve come as a species, and where we go from here. This is a time to reflect upon the seeming chaos of a world of runaway stock markets and fake news, both of which are increasingly managed by automation; the result of machine learning that is learning that humans, for the most part, still respond most quickly and forcefully to fight or flight stimuli.

Like the computer HAL in the film 2001: A Space Odyssey, or Colossus and Guardian, in Colossus: The Forbin Project, the catastrophe is not that AI runs away of its own volition, the risk is that AI figures out how devolved humans are and exploits that understanding in ways that we may not find all that appealing. We’re already seeing some fairly undesirable effects of this kind of exploitation and manipulation of human cognition, on a global scale, in the way that social media platforms of 2018 are owned and operated.

Some of our brightest thinkers already ask, what if the robots have already taken over in a very real sense? What if we have effectively become those robots, or at the least reliable agents of those robots, because our behavior is constantly, and very precisely guided by the contents of our social media timelines? What if we are the ones who have fallen – like primitive machine minds – into hard-wired, predictable, repetitive, redundantly protected thinking about the nature and kind of world that we live in? What if we haven’t upgraded our own software, our own thinking, our own cognitive maps, and behavioral choices to actually survive in what could otherwise be the post-automation paradise so intricately described by science fiction writers of bygone eras?

Remember that thing we mentioned earlier about humanity’s uncanny ability to accurately forecast events well beyond their own short lifespan, much further out on the Long Arc than objective reasoning might expect, much less explain? Let’s return to thinking about that for a moment, while that last batch of questions queues up in a parallel background process.

In his essay, *Artificial Intelligence — The Revolution Hasn’t Happened Yet*, computer scientist Michael Jordan writes, “In the current era, we have a real opportunity to conceive of something historically new — a human-centric (Intelligence Infrastructure) engineering discipline. Finally, and of particular importance, II systems must bring economic ideas such as incentives and pricing into the realm of the statistical and computational infrastructures that link humans to each other and to valued goods” (Jordan).

This is particularly relevant to basic income policy, as the Intelligence Infrastructure train has already left the station and we haven’t even come close to

building the rest of the tracks. In no domain is this more obvious or impactful than in the everyday economics of the roughly 60% of Americans that comprise the Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate. Despite deceptive headline employment numbers, derived from fractions of fractions of the population, we have been running our booming economy with 40% of Americans on the sidelines for quite some time, and efficiency only keeps increasing. Here's the catch, the returns on that efficiency continue accruing wildly and disproportionately to financial capital, at a breathtaking rate. What that means is, we are experiencing the direct effect of decades of "wealth redistribution" away from American workers and into the pockets of the 1% and 0.01% financial engineers on Wall Street and Sand Hill Road, in Silicon Valley.

Interpolating the labor participation rate curve, we can clearly see that within a decade, "the market" will only require 50% of the population in the labor force, or perhaps even less. When computer scientists like Jordan speak of incentives, he is pointing to jobs, wages, consumerism; the things that incentive people into JOB-JOBs, rather than WORKING to develop their own individual aptitudes, talents, skills, and passions. In a post-automation world of exponentially increasing efficiency, all of these fundamental human motivations will be reframed, whether we accept it or not, whether we resist it, or not. This reframing is already happened in some career fields and is continuing now, right before our very eyes.

How can we express this in a way that might convey a palpable sense of the breathless acceleration that has been going on for the past several decades, and is still accelerating today? Let's try.

This all leads back to our hydra-headed thesis question from the first pages of this book. Namely, given the past two centuries, crowned by the most recent two decades of accelerating capital and technological change; change which has delivered increasingly ubiquitous computation, instant global video conversation, increasingly sophisticated automation like self-landing rockets, both hyper-rationalization and hyper-marginalization of industrial and post-industrial labor, along with staggeringly successful material developments that have elevated humanity-as-a-whole to this lofty plateau where — at least in the privileged portions of the world — most people are very seriously realizing that our robot overlords have become all too real and essentially have already taken over enough functions of global civilization, and that we do indeed already live in a post-automation society: if that is all true — and it is — then what are our intentions for ourselves and our fellow humans, in such a world?

Try reading that paragraph out loud. To yourself. To a friend. If that doesn't leave you breathless and a little light-headed, then you will do just fine in the new economy. If, however, it takes a few trials to even get through it; well, you might be in for even more anomie — sociological disorientation — than the average bear. But what other alternatives are there for adapting to the Post-Automation Anthropocene?

What is global capitalism's plan, once it becomes so successful that it only needs 50% or less of a population waging in JOB-JOBs, to easily exceed the material needs of 100% of the population? In the United States, we have been there, before, and are already almost there again. As alluded to a moment ago, the Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate has been falling precipitously since the late 1990's and is hovering now at just a point or two above 60%,¹³ after falling precipitously for twenty years. These are additional markers of global capitalism's overwhelming success, but that success also includes some very severe, not entirely unintended, consequences.

From the post World War II boom in 1948 through the 1970's, the normal Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate was stable, resting near 58%, even lower than today.

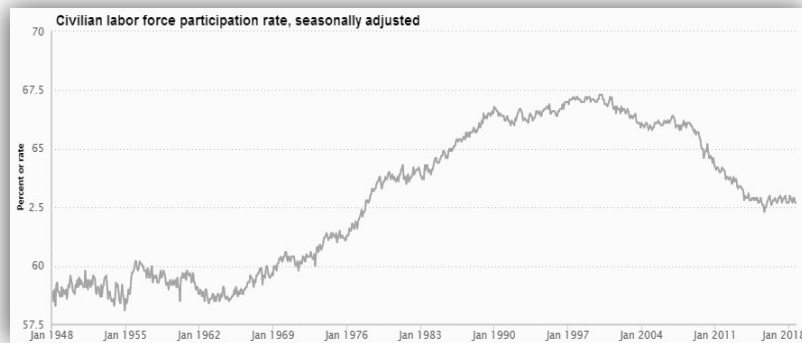


Figure 1 — Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate, 1948-2018

Workers enjoyed both more wealth and more leisure time than at any other time in U.S. history. Productivity soared. The American Dream was at its apex, and less than six in ten adults were even in the labor force. It appeared that productivity dividends were indeed accruing to workers, steady reduction of work hours seemed inevitable, and the Great Society seemed right around the corner.

It's no coincidence that just at the time the War on Poverty was abandoned, and Nixon's Family Assistance Plan (FAP) basic income proposal was extinguished once and for all in 1972, the fate of workers changed dramatically. Single-income families came under increasing pressure, as the proportion of economic growth and productivity going to wages dropped, as people flooded into the workforce for the next 30 years. It's not that there was any shortage of goods and services, it's not that people suddenly wanted to work 80 hours a week or require two full-time income earner households just to maintain the same standard of living that was previously enjoyed at 40 hours per week. It was the co-opting for the women's movement to provide corporations with lower wage labor, with absurd pay gaps that continue to this day, and the primacy of

shareholder value became ascendant, for all practical purposes, becoming the sole objective of corporations. Thus, casting the spell that conjured today's narcotic cultural JOB-JOB trance; the hypnotic idea that in order to be perceived as a worthwhile human being, people must wear an employee badge. Throughout the vast majority of human history, this was never the norm. Employee badges as validation of personhood may be one of the most bizarre developments in human history, to date.

After the dot-com bust in 2000, the labor participation rate began its reversion to the mean, its return to normalcy, in earnest. What didn't return to normalcy was wages, or the proportion of productivity and wealth that was circulated as income through the bank accounts of everyday people. Having bled workers and families for every spare minute of labor for over 30 years, the bubble burst, leaving people relatively worse off than ever. Surrounded by self-driving cars, self-landing rockets, intelligent

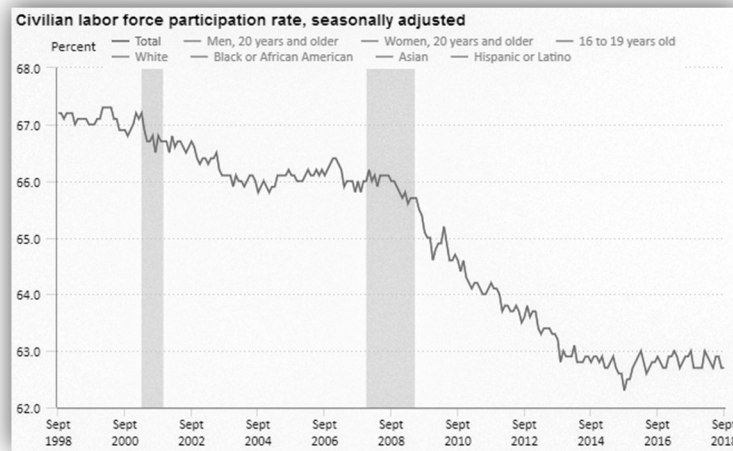


Figure 2 — Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate, 1998–

conversational smartphones, and all manner of material stuff that lends the appearance of wealth, the existential precarity of workers increased in dramatic inverse proportion.

While partisans make the claim that labor participation rate has “stabilized,” one look at the long-term trend chart shows otherwise. We are at a time of profound disruption and indecision, as a nation. What kind of world do we want to live in, really? Do we want to pick up the trend of the 1970’s to 1990’s and become great again by working more and more hours and require more and more full-time incomes to support a single-family household? Or do we want to return to the long-term baseline of more leisure and more sustainably circulated incomes?

When we say that the robots have already taken over, we are observing that heavy factory labor as we've known it for the past 200 years has already become almost completely robotized, while more and more light and intricate processes are also in the process of becoming automated as well. Heavy automobile manufacturing is almost completely automated, and the more up to date the manufacturer, the less humans needed in the assembly process. Take a moment to google search "Tesla manufacturing robots," to have a look for yourself. The fact that Tesla had to add humans back into the equation in some phases of assembly is not proof that humans have staying power, it's proof that we don't. The humans are only there long enough to keep training their robot overlords, to get them up to speed. Then, it's out with the humans.

Even intricate processes as complex and nuanced as driving those automobiles, are well automated to a degree of precision that exceeds human skill by such magnitudes that self-driving cars could soon virtually eliminate the auto insurance industry. "According to the US National Motor Vehicle Crash Causation Survey, 94% of all accidents in the US are caused by driver (i.e., human) error. And as Tesla pointed out, there is a fatality every 94m miles in all vehicles in the US (the worldwide figure is about one fatality for every 60m miles driven). Joshua Brown's death was the first known [autonomous vehicle] fatality in the 130m miles where Autopilot was activated in Tesla cars."¹⁴ No trucking or transportation company will keep human drivers on the books, once they can operate so much cheaper, faster, and safer, without liability of human error.

But this is not about scary robots taking over, runaway AI, or technological job loss. Those points have been well presented in many other books. Our story is about human values, human thinking, human choices, and human behavior in the context where we are on the Long Arc, at an inflection point that literally flips the world on its head, from Chaos to Community. In many respects, and for many people, we already live in a post-automation near-utopia, if our current day to day lives were to be viewed from the perspective of those who lived here just one hundred years ago.

So, is there no such thing as a better world? Maybe. But from the perspective of those who lived just a generation or two before us, we are living in their science-fiction fantasy land. What's up to us is whether we act in ways that make the current situation into a stereotypical B-movie catastrophe, or if we choose to create an uplifting blockbuster that elevates our spirits and renews our hope in one another, and in this wonderful, absurd, magnificent, infuriating, miraculous, confusing, exhilarating, and mysterious story that we call life on Earth.

What To Do About “Those” People: The Otherization of Everyone

Assuming we can create a better world, that most people would agree constitutes a better world, what do we do about all those other people who either thought the world was fine in the first place, don’t want a better world, or who seem to be wired to just oppose any world they find themselves in? We live in a world of duality, characterized by clichés like “people are no damn good” on the one hand, and “people are our most valuable asset” on the other.

So which is it? No damn good, or most valuable asset? We don’t get to have it both ways, but that’s precisely how the dominant cultural narrative plays it. Virtually every corporation claims that people are their most valuable asset, yet worker salaries are listed as liabilities. If people are assets, appreciating assets as they improve their skills, then how exactly are their salaries liabilities, and not investments in “our most valuable assets?” If people are the most valuable assets, why are they so often tossed away like disposable coffee stir sticks?

Without so much as a hint of irony, another refrain that drowns out corporate praises of humans as valuable resources is the chorus that people are basically lazy by nature, and no damned good by default. People can’t be trusted with the very income security that wealthy people take for granted. This income security is exploited by leveraging the income insecurity of others into compliance to do their bidding. This is the fundamental dynamic of capitalism. It is an abusive power relationship defined by who has income security and who does not.

The principle of income security itself is not debatable; the wealthy enjoy it and support it. So income security, all by itself is widely regarded as a “good thing.” For some of us. Just not for you.

Through the eyes of capital, the labor force is a faceless, amorphous other. Human resources. Resources are raw materials to be exploited and strip mined. Humans are especially valuable repositories of talent, intelligence, and boundless energy which, once extracted, can be, and are tossed aside like human slag to seep the toxicity of disenfranchisement and marginalization into the social environment. This has been going on for a very, very long time and explains a lot about why our public narratives seem to be so polluted today, just like the rest of the planet. It’s all a result of maximizing the extractive capabilities of industrial capitalism.

The good news is that in recent years, organizations like Stanford University’s Center for Compassion and Altruism Research (CCARE) have arisen to challenge and heal this historic otherization of everyone. “James R. Doty, MD, is a clinical professor in

the Department of Neurosurgery at Stanford University School of Medicine. He is also the founder and director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University of which His Holiness the Dalai Lama is the founding benefactor. He works with scientists from a number of disciplines examining the neural bases for compassion and altruism.”

In “A Quest for Meaning – Discussion and Q&A with Dr. James Doty and Co-director Marc De La Menardiere,” Dr. Doty explained,

We have a subset of individuals, who we have typically made CEOs, who are often ruthless and self-serving. How is it possible that the income of CEOs has increased by 682% in the past decade or so? We've never seen such a discrepancy between the lowest paid individual and the highest paid individual. What I find fascinating is you'll hear a certain group of people say that if you want to increase the pay to others, or "redistribute income" it's socialism. If you actually examine it, the middle class has been destroyed. Their money, from their work, has been taken away from them for the rich to benefit.

[Redistribution] is not socialism. [A subset of rich people] have redistributed the income which allowed people to live a life, to have a home, to care for their family, so that they can enrich themselves. How is it even possible to believe that an individual can have a life on \$7.25 an hour? That was minimum wage 30 years ago. The minimum wage should be \$22 an hour if you look simply at inflation. That's what people should get. This idea that somehow paying that would destroy businesses ... no it wouldn't. Do you know what it would do? It would allow for more equality and you just wouldn't have, as an example, the bonuses on Wall Street being more than it would cost for all education in the United States, in one year (edited for written clarity).

Organizations like Stanford CCARE demonstrate that vital institutional evolution is both possible, and is already happening. We are already finding ways toward reducing the polarization and otherization perpetuated by the excesses of capitalism.

The Poor Will Always Be With You

“Get off your duff and take responsibility for yourself and your worthless life, you lazy bums!”

Calling people worthless, while simultaneously screaming at them to take responsibility is one of the most counterproductive and ugly things we can possibly do to human beings. It may make us feel good to have shoved our truth in the face of perceived sloth, but does it really accomplish what we hope to accomplish?

What if, instead, we cultivated passion? What if, instead, we asked, “what would you do for work if you won the lottery and didn’t have to work anymore?” Some, of course, might say things like, “I’d travel and never work another day in my life,” or, “I’d quit work and never go back,” which are perfectly enlightened interests and pursuits for those who possess a healthy curiosity about the world beyond their own comfort bubble.

However, when it comes to just quitting life and becoming a slouch after winning the lottery, the data on lottery winners simply doesn’t support these popular notions of checking out from society.¹⁵ By asking people what they would do if money were no object, we can get closer to the root of what actually motivates people, which helps us to ignite our own inner motivation to grow, for personal growth’s sake, rather than chasing the unattainable carrots of materialism while dodging the punitive sticks of social stigma and marginalization for refusal to participate in that futile dualistic pursuit.

Many have never even been asked such a question – what would you be freed up to do, if money were truly no object? – we have only ever lived like urban savannah-dwellers, responding to an endless barrage of existential threats; most prevalent and pernicious of all: eviction.

Having fought for survival in this environment for most of their lives, many people don't even realize the extent of their own abilities. We don’t realize the power of our own thoughts and minds. Awareness of our ability, followed by faith and confidence in our ability, form the foundation of the capacity with which to adaptively respond to the environment in which we find ourselves. When we don't feel able, we don't feel response-able – we don’t feel able to respond – so, when many people in America scream at people living in tents, cars, vans, or RVs, to "take responsibility," this often amounts to an extremely destructive and counterproductive kicking of people while they are down, even if that wasn’t the intention. Of course, for some people, kicking others when they are down is sport; but we aren’t even trying to reach people at that extreme, here.

What many people don’t know is that a surprising proportion of tent-city dwelling "losers" have already played the mainstream responsibility game all the way through, complete with multiple degrees, successful careers, and nearly perfect credit scores. Still, people look at us living in our tents and tell us to "take responsibility!" Really? To many of those people, we say, "Come, let us compare credit scores, let us compare resumes, and then you can lecture us about responsibility. Come, live the way that we live for even one single week, and see if you can hack it, then lecture us about responsibility."

So far, the number of takers has been zero. You know how “those rich people” are, after all. Everyone else’s hypocrisy is an outrage, but not ours.

This is why the vicious cycle of hating the poor who hate the rich for hating the poor is an infinite hate loop that leads to nowhere. Which is, in many respects, precisely where we are in the present moment. Somehow, we have to find a way to break out of this destructive loop of otherization, from all directions.

“Judge not, lest ye be judged,” is not merely about condemning or condoning any particular behavior, it is about labeling. It is about othering. It is about denying our connection, interdependence, and our complicity in all things. As judgement intensifies, it becomes a hate so toxic as it wishes a person, or category of persons to no longer exist. Short of its murderous extreme, judgement revokes another person’s or group’s permission to exist. It says, “you don’t belong here.” It puts up signs to make sure we don’t have to see “those people” in “our neighborhood.” It says “get out of my face” regardless of setting. In the city, in the country, in the mall, at the beach, you don’t have permission to exist in my line of sight.

This is very similar to the precepts of Interbeing, taught by one of Martin Luther King Jr.’s non-violence mentors, Thich Nhat Hanh, “Do not force others, including children, by any means whatsoever, to adopt your views, whether by authority, threat, money, propaganda, or even education. However, through compassionate dialogue, help others renounce fanaticism and narrowness. Do not avoid contact with suffering or close your eyes before suffering. Do not lose awareness of the existence of suffering in the life of the world. Find ways to be with those who are suffering, including personal contact, visits, images, and sounds. By such means, awaken yourself and others to the reality of suffering in the world.”

There is something lurking in all this othering that many Americans don’t understand. That something is marketing and propaganda about what *home* is.

The concept and experience of home is first a psychological experience; second, an emotional experience; and third, a physical location or shelter.

Only recently in human history did real estate marketing succeed in misconstruing the word home into house and framing the word house into one particular type of dwelling. People were at home in caves. People were at home in huts. People were at home in covered wagons. Many people today are at home in tents or simple shelters on a beach where nature’s abundance supplies more than they could ever want or need to live long, healthy, and happy lives.

Home is a concept. Home isn't a building and home isn't the permanent habitation of a particular kind of building. Home is literally where our hearts dwell. It's not a cheesy Disney cliché, it's one of the most substantial and consequential truths in human life. People have been at home in all kinds and varieties of dwellings across the span of human history. Yet, in recent decades, the type and location of shelter that people are allowed to inhabit has grown increasingly restrictive, particularly in the so-called advanced West. In everyday conversation, there is generally only one kind of structure that is allowed to be called home, and we all know what that sticks and bricks box looks like. The boxes vary somewhat in size and shape, but the DNA is the same. If you don't own one of these boxes, or pay someone who does own one, you are labeled homeless, and a whole host of laws – primarily forbidding rest, or heaven forbid, sleep – subsequently strip you of your right to exist and chip away at your inalienable rights to equal dignity as a human person.

Well-intended building codes and safety standards, combined with the unbridled profit motive of private real estate developers, have combined to create an unholy alliance in most major American cities that, in essence, revokes the individual's permission to exist outside of that very specific type of housing stock. Cities do all they can to get rid of affordable modular housing, mobile housing like RVs, not to mention the most basic shelter common in communities like Thousand Trails,¹⁶ where untold numbers of working-class people live for years and years in the hopes of saving up enough money to one day "escape" and achieve other goals.

The primary reason most people seek to "escape" such circumstances is social stigma. We have met hundreds of happy families living with modest shelter, who's only complaint is that these kind of housing options are only available fifty or a hundred miles away from urban work centers. Why can't Thousand Trails facilities be available every twenty-five miles throughout all the top global mega-city regions? Greed. Labeling. Judgmentalism. If not for these poisons, the inventory of housing could be widely diversified and expanded, immediately bringing runaway real-estate speculation into check.

Writing for the San Jose Mercury News in July 2018, Khalida Sarwari provided a quintessential example of this relentlessly destructive trend:

Michael Goldman, one of Sunnyvale's seven City Council members, suggested that mobile home parks are victims of the Bay Area's dysfunctional housing market and flourishing tech industry.

In Tharp's opinion, council members have given longtime Blue Bonnet residents the "second-class" treatment. "I've been providing their income and part of their salary and I've been part of their community and they just turned around and said, 'OK you're worthless, you're useless, you don't matter'."

Similar to what many municipalities did by creating their own fiber optic networks, which spurred healthier competition for high-speed data networks, counties and cities can become more active in the real estate development market, correcting for runaway market failures. Unfortunately, we don't have enough space here to explore this topic further, or to investigate complementary policies such as the land value tax (LVT), so let's move on.

For many of us, the experience of home is sitting in quiet meditation, regardless of outward surroundings. We might sit in a public square or park or utilize a public bench for its intended purpose. Yet, we are all too often labeled loiterers for engaging in the act of being at home within ourselves. This is particularly true if it's known that the person engaging in these most ordinary and healthy of human activities is neither a local landowner, nor paying land rent to local landed lord. In effect, this makes all such public space and infrastructure into private space and infrastructure. The extermination of public space, the loss of the commons has led to policies that essentially seek to exterminate the commoners, themselves. People like us. We the people, the human beings, who regularly and commonly inhabit common spaces.

So yes, please excuse the moments in this book when it might sound like these things are taken personally. When your body is cited for illegally existing in a public space, it tends to feel fairly personal. Until you've been there, this might be something very difficult to grasp for some readers. For all who truly seek to understand, we're confident that you can empathize, if you pause for a moment and try. We also know that there are many people who couldn't care less and for whom compassion is a weakness to be mocked and exploited.

In an article titled "Here are 10 incredibly sh*tty things America does to homeless people," the number one sh*tty thing is:

Outlawing sitting down. People are allowed to exist in public, but sometimes the homeless make that civic rule inconvenient, like when their presence perturbs tourists or slows the spread of gentrification. One solution to this problem is the "sit-lie" law, a bizarrely authoritarian measure that bans sitting or resting in a public space. The law is clearly designed to empower police to chase homeless people out of nice neighborhoods, rather than protect cities from the blight of public sidewalk-sitting.

Supporters of sit-lie claim the law helps police deal with disruptive behavior like harassment and public drunkenness, and that getting people off the street will get them into shelters. Homelessness advocates counter that the disruptive behaviors associated with some homeless people are already against the law" (Ganeva).

As Theory of Everything physicist Thomas Campbell puts it, “Most everyone is doing the best they can ... with the tools and abilities we have ... everybody here is struggling with what they are, who they are, and how they are, and trying to get by.”

But this isn't good enough for the default consensus narrative framers of America. Poverty is considered a personal character flaw, a hard luck sob story not to be indulged, less society drift into a universal victim mentality. This persistent accusation emanates from the very plutocrats who bleat about shareholders being victims, receiving mere table scraps from Wall Street, as we covered earlier. This ephemeral specter of victimhood of the wealthy is so bizarre and pragmatically impossible that, if we pause for just one minute to really think about it, the magnitude of its sway over large swaths of the population becomes as absurdly impressive as it is indefensible and inexplicable.

While generally berating people experiencing homelessness, we have, as a society, become quite expert at using single isolate cases and feel-good stories to ease our consciousness and tell ourselves that somehow, we aren't horrible people for allowing poverty to become the widespread scourge that it's become today. Or, we find convoluted arguments to convince ourselves that it's really not that big of a deal. Only people who don't have the first clue of what poverty feels like could possibly ease their conscience with such flimsy fairy tales.

A timely example of feel-good stories that make us ignore the magnitude of the crisis is the headline, “Zach Galifianakis Bought A Homeless Woman An Apartment — And Took Her To 'The Hangover III' Premiere.” Aly Weisman, writing for Business Insider explains:

When Zach Galifianakis was just a struggling actor/comedian twenty years ago in Los Angeles, he made an unlikely friend at a laundromat.

Now-87-year-old Elizabeth "Mimi" Haist volunteered — and lived — at Fox Laundry in Santa Monica, surviving off tips from customers for 18 years.

One of those customers was Galifianakis, who, after the success of the original "Hangover" in 2009 stopped visiting the laundromat regularly, but always checked in on his old friend Mimi.

When the 43-year-old actor learned that Mimi had become homeless, he found her a one-bed, one-bath apartment in Santa Monica and started paying for her rent and utilities (Weisman).

This isn't at all to say that Zach isn't a great guy, or that what he did wasn't of supreme righteousness — both of which are manifestly true — it's only to illustrate that many readers then tend to use stories like this to convince themselves and others that enough is being done. That by some miracle, one good deed at a time, the entire crisis will all go away in short order; therefore, we need not contemplate systemic causes of

poverty. Which comes back to the earlier point. It's far easier for people to numb themselves to the overwhelming magnitude of systemic poverty if they believe poverty is a personal problem.

Journalist Noah Smith proclaims that transitory poverty is not a big deal. People can “just smooth their consumption.” Most Americans don't even know what that means, much less are they capable of doing so in a rational way, when the sheer panic of losing everything due to a medical emergency or factory closing takes hold. Not to mention that there is no possible way to know that one's poverty is transitory – or how long transitory will last (a month? a year? a decade? a human lifespan is 'transitory') – when you're in the midst of it. So, the distinction he makes between transitory and systemic poverty rings hollow at best and typical of the 1970's cult of objectivism, at worst. Smith writes:

So my main problem with Bruenig's argument is still that he seems to equate structural poverty with transitory poverty. Transitory poverty is not a big deal, because people can smooth their consumption. Intuitively, most liberals realize this – we worry about the poor people for whom poverty is not just a short-lived phase. We worry about the people who are mired in poverty. We don't worry about the entry-level worker who is just starting to climb the ladder. We don't worry about the well-off elderly couple who are spending their nest egg. If government poverty statistics call these people "poor", that's a problem with the government statistics, not with the structure of society. The people we want to help are the people who never (or almost never) manage to get ahead. I think Bruenig, in his zeal to demonstrate his idea, is in danger of forgetting that.¹⁷

While Smith's reasoning is internally coherent – a widespread practice among objectivist libertarians – it's detached from reality, it's just a theoretical model, it isn't an accurate description of the scope and impact of systemic poverty in the world that we inhabit each day. Not to mention that it's a mischaracterization of Bruenig's work. The difficulty is that the dominant narratives in American culture have gradually become more and more hostile toward people who either choose to live simply or who struggle to just get by. Americans say that all are created equal in dignity and respect, that we support equal opportunity, but the animosity and disdain directed at “the homeless” and “the poor” only seems to become more strident and uglier as the twenty-first century unfolds.

In her article “UN Official Slams American Response to Poverty: Homelessness on this Scale is Far from Inevitable” journalist Heidi Groover wrote:

Writing about people experiencing homelessness—an epidemic that is particularly acute on the West Coast— [Philip] Alston [United Nations Special Rapporteur on extreme poverty and human rights] concludes that the United

States relies on criminalizing homelessness in order to "conceal the underlying poverty problem." Cities enforce laws against sitting or sleeping in public places, panhandling, public urination, and other behaviors that can be difficult for people living outside to avoid. Infractions under these laws can spiral into misdemeanors, warrants, fines, and possible jail time."

In short, we criminalize the very existence of people. They have no permission to exist. We just want them gone, out of our sight, so that we don't have to contemplate our own common plight. That, dear reader, at risk of offense to some, is human ignorance of the highest order.

The good news is the current moment doesn't have to be permanent. In fact, it is never permanent. We can recover from our ignorance in an instant, through learning something new in this book, through self-reflection, through compassion. Especially, we can change by having compassion upon ourselves, because if we fell into the trap of hating poor people, it's because we were shaped and influenced by an environment that made it all too easy to fall into.

* * *

Permission to Exist

The simple permission to exist is first and most fundamental right in any human society is one that we don't typically think about, because it's just always been an invisible given for so many of us. It almost seems absurd to contemplate the concept that we would need permission to exist. After all, here we are, existing, permission or not, right? Permission from who? Them? That [insert pejorative label] guy over there? That [insert pejorative label] woman over there? Who are *they* to decide?

Especially when it comes to determining who is and isn't worthy of an income, and at what monetary level, emotional and social manipulation have always been highly determinative of who gets what, from where, for how long, and under what conditions? Politely coded corporate lingo has evolved along with technology, to keep legacy dominance hierarchies in place, regardless of merit. The dawn of the Post-Automation Era offers no immediate respite from billions of years of deprecated genetically coded behavior. Early 21st century corporations use lingo such as Learning and Development (L&D), apparently borrowed with artistic license from long-established Research and Development (R&D) nomenclature. In an article titled, "5 Skills for the post-automation work force," one such L&D software developer puts it like this:

It is [a] sort of paradox that in a time of AI, interpersonal capabilities will be held in higher regard than ever before. Emotional intelligence will be at least on the same level as IQ. With machines everywhere, the challenge will be dealing with people in a positive way.

Basically, play nice in the sandbox and always remember who's sandbox you're in, or you're out on the street. Literally. Without the social security of a guaranteed livable income, there is no in-between, no ability to voice meaningful dissent without the threat of the direst of consequences. Emotional Intelligence is key, but not the deep emotional intelligence that keenly recognized destructive and abusive power dynamics, narcissistic enabling, covert triangulation, gaslighting, and harassment. In corporate lingo, voicing covert ways that some people throw others "under the bus." No. Corporate "emotional intelligence" means the ability to play a grotesque kind of super polite passive-aggressive Hunger Games.

The question of who has permission to exist in the Post-Automation Era seems like an absurd question, and it is, except that this is precisely how a large proportion of employment works in twenty-first century America, and in much of the world. In society, there is a constant flow of micro impressions, fleeting perceptions (accurate or

not), and nonverbal transactions taking place, serving to orchestrate an infinitely complex and often utterly absurd dance between the deserving and undeserving. Who is deserving of my respect? Who deserves to be hired? Fired? Emulated? Ignored? Shamed? Blamed? Praised? Adored? Who deserves to take a nap on this beach, that bench, in this park, under that tree, and who does not deserve to exist in that space?

Who do we grant permission to exist in our world, and in what roles are they permitted to exist? We are not talking about the healthy boundaries between family, friends, and colleagues; where we seek to uphold and uplift mutually beneficial energies, while rightly protecting ourselves from emotionally over-depleting relationships. We are talking about the labels we slap on all other people. The snap judgments we make and the conclusions we reach, without even talking to the person or people we've already judged "don't belong here."

Most people tend to believe that we have free will to make these choices, and most tend to believe that we make our decisions based upon some immutable ethical framework. However, the past couple of decades of behavioral economic research has overwhelmingly demonstrated that we are – as the title of Dan Ariely's seminal work put it – Predictably Irrational.

We don't necessarily choose all our own preferences and priorities, or if we do, we don't always do so for some set of pristine rational reasons. The social pressures of status and station do a lot to convince us to believe what we must, to do what we must, so as to be validated as human beings, worthy of love and respect. However, if we are even the slightest bit curious about the nature of our lives and thought patterns, our relative lack of free will does gradually dawn upon us. That doesn't mean there is no way to change our thinking, of course there is; it only means that we recognize that others may not be "stuck" where they are entirely of their own doing, any more than we are stuck in our stuck places.

We will also realize that ultimately, we do have a choice; but only once we become conscious of the previously unconscious or automatic judgements that have defined our day-to-day life. In other cases, we make choices and then convince ourselves that we had no choice in the first place.

For example, if we choose that our ultimate self-worth is derived from our JOB-JOB, then when push comes to shove our relationships will suffer and the career will rule us. We tell ourselves, "well, I had no choice." If we choose relationship first, then we may not always be employed to the extent that we think we should be employed, but we can work at tasks we love, we can volunteer, and our relationships will flourish, because we have chosen love and relationship as our Justification Of Being, aka JOB.

Our current economic model is a bit of a Fear JOB vs Love JOB. We have to ask ourselves, what is our ultimate Justification Of Being? Love? Or fear? Fear of being

disliked, disrespected, mocked, rejected, marginalized, otherized, or the ultimate punishment, punished by poverty, homelessness, deemed unemployable for failure to obey the mandates of a dictatorial corporate structure, or dozens of other unacceptable moral convictions that people of conscience hold, in large numbers.

The only road back from this social exile consists of “re-training” to obey the structure again. No matter how much education, no matter the level of previous accomplishments, no matter the perfect credit rating, the only path “back to society” is through employment; aka, selling your life by the hour, initially to the lowest bidder; and then hopefully groveling part way back up the ladder, where you’ll never make the mistake of acting based on moral clarity ever again. This is why so many “re-entry” programs don’t work. Millions of people have exited that charade and don’t want to re-enter. They want to change it. And they are changing it, despite the most extreme and totalitarian tactics to slow or prevent this change.

Bill Hicks put it aptly, "The world is like a ride in an amusement park, and when you choose to go on it you think it's real, because that's how powerful our minds are. And we can change it anytime we want. It's only a choice. No effort, no work, no job, no savings of money. A choice, right now, between Fear and Love. The eyes of fear want you to put bigger locks on your door, buy guns, close yourself off. The eyes of love instead see all of us as one."

In general, capitalism hates oneness and worships the separateness of a hyper-insular individuality, as do many unmindful people who have been manipulated into relentless doing — out of fear of losing shelter, food, and the social approval of being seen by others as a doer. All too often, fear-driven people grow to distrust, or even hate people who choose love, autonomy, and simplicity over the eternal, frenetic, hypervigilance of perpetual over-achievement. Those who find total fulfillment in simply being are all too often ostracized and marginalized as lazy. You know the familiar, hateful labels already. Hippies. Gypsies. Drifters. Bums.

This is how the vicious game of berating and beating people into obedience goes on and on, generation after generation. The complicit decide that, “if I can't have happiness because of the way my career controlled me through fear of losing everything, then I'm going to control other people with my position of power, so the same thing happens to them.” What a miserable way to live. This is what America has come to deem “normalcy.”

What millennials are doing, and many others who share a different perspective, is not giving into the Fear JOB and instead going ahead and paying the price for a Love JOB. Growing millions worldwide would rather live in a tent and be content in their being, improving their art, their woodcraft, their music, their self-awareness, rather than run

around forever doing what they are told out of fear of how the richest society in history might punish them for living freely, or revoke their right to exist.

The ultimate truth of the matter is that there are probably times and seasons for both of these modes of existence and many modes in between. The suffering and conflict escalate when judging other people for living in one state or the other, or for transitioning through any of the infinite intermediate states that make up the complexity and richness of human social life.

So, here's the inside secret to all of this. When a person is empowered to choose the work she wants to do, when she can turn her passion into a career, then work becomes fun. In fact, there is an old adage of contested origin that says,

The master in the art of living makes little distinction between his work and his play, his labor and his leisure, his mind and his body, his education and his recreation, his love and his religion. He hardly knows which is which. He simply pursues his vision of excellence at whatever he does, leaving others to decide whether he is working or playing. To him he is always doing both.

An advanced post-automation economy does not need more human workers, it needs more masters in the art of living.

An unconditional basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, provides a citizen dividend that is comparable to a living wage. With this nominal living wage, people now have the income security to develop mastery of their inherent talents, to take entrepreneurial risk, or to find work that is meaningful for them.

Meaningful work ceases to be drudgery. For the master in the art of living, it becomes indistinguishable from play. There might be a reason that we are called human beings and not human doings. Maybe we should be focused on developing flourishing beings instead of robotically obedient doings.

How Much is a Human Being Worth, Exactly?

For analytically-minded, data-driven people, this may be the most interesting and most anticipated part of the book: hard numbers. On the other hand, for those of us for whom math is not our favorite sport, this section may feel a bit like heavy sledding, at times. We hope that we can brave these details, together, because within these potentially depressing numerical realities, also lie the very seeds of hope for a practical method of establishing an empirical monetary value foundation, from which to pragmatically construct a living wage level basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP.

In July 2018, Senator Bernie Sanders asked:

“The median salary of an Amazon worker last year was \$28,000, or, what Amazon CEO Jeff Bezos makes in just 10 seconds. Why on earth is that the case” (@OurRevolution)?

If you are like most human beings, we are confident that you will at least take pause at that kind of value skew. Forget about the personalities or politics. Just imagine you visited another planet, where all the creatures of a particular species look pretty much the same, with some diversity of color, gender, height, and weight, but otherwise biologically identical. Then you found that one of these beings was “worth” \$28,000 every 10 seconds while all of the rest were “worth” \$28,000 per year. Wouldn’t that spark your curiosity? What would be your thoughts about such a civilization?

People hold a lot of different beliefs about why this kind of value gap might be a good or bad thing. But let’s go beyond good or bad, wrong or right, and honestly ponder the question: here on Earth, how can any individual human being be “worth” that much more than any other individual human being? If we want to figure out how much humans are worth, as a commodity, markets are only one way of concocting a value. What other measures do we use to put price tags on human life?

The military puts a price tag on every meat robot asset it loses. They aren’t really appraised as human lives in that theater of operations, they are soldiers, assets, but for the purpose of keeping the machine running, the military is forced to concede some economic value to the body parts of a blown-up human being. So, this is another source of human value we can research as an objective measure of a human’s worth.

Insurance settlement actuarial tables are another resource. Whenever someone is killed in some act of negligence, insurance companies have algorithms to guide policyholders or courts in determining the dollar value of the human being in question. The fact that there can be different dollar amounts assigned to different human beings

is a complicated moral mystery that we may not have time to engage here, so let's move on.

Some readers may take umbrage at such crass accounting of human life by mere monetary measures. Many might believe that, in the words of author and teacher Steven Gray, "Each person and each being has an unspeakable value. I don't know how something could be more meaningful and beautiful [than a human life]." Even the unborn are regarded by many as priceless. Beyond economic measure. Yet, if this is the case, at what point in life does this small human being flip from being a priceless asset to an infinite liability? How does that sociological alchemy of turning gold into straw happen, exactly? What is the depreciation rate for baseline human blue book values?

If a child in the womb is priceless, how much less is a 3-month-old infant worth on that depreciation scale, gradually rendering her worthless by age eighteen if she doesn't comply to commands given to her by her parent programmers or society? How much less is a 3-year-old worth, compared to the 3-month-old infant? Where is the invisible depreciation schedule in the Bible that explains how the intrinsic human value of an individual gradually drops from priceless zygote of infinite worth to worthless human being, over an eighteen, or twenty-one, or thirty-four, or fifty-five, or eighty-nine-year life span? If our readers can help us find any of these resources, it would be a tremendous help to our research on intrinsic human value, or the lack thereof.

While some may guffaw, mock, or be triggered into tirades over this issue, this line of reasoning is not merely a churlish prank, it is as real as reality gets. Because, if we throw this question out as invalid, based upon our emotional reaction to it, that only proves its validity even more. All too often, when we don't have a good answer, we get upset that we don't have a good answer. Then, we seek to invalidate both the question and the questioner to cover up our own ignorance. Nevertheless, the question is inescapable. There is nowhere to hide from it. The only way to avoid it entirely is to use force, to use violence, to punish those who ask such questions. In the paternalistic case, this is generally followed by the demand for behavioral compliance to the world as it is.

When force is the only way to win an argument, that's the most damning definition possible for losing an argument. So, for readers who are angry about this line of inquiry: sorry not sorry. It's time to take on this hypocrisy once and for all. Capitalism has long depended on arbitrary distinctions between where economic value may be measured or assigned, and where it may not.

In its cancerous quest for infinite, uncontrolled growth, capitalism has developed all manner of ornate vocabularies for objectifying and marginalizing anything that it doesn't want to acknowledge as valuable to its own interests. Externalities. Off balance-sheet. Extenuating circumstances. The encyclopedic excuses go on and on, and new creative excuses are invented every day.

Can anyone tell us, exactly, how it is that humans go from hero (in the womb) to zero (at high school graduation, or there about), in terms of intrinsic worth, even as their capacity for expressing their individual, inherent, and unique value increases over time? We need to find an answer to this question before we get to the end of this story.

All economic value is ascribed. It's just a concept. It's completely subjective. And all too often it's entirely arbitrary, on top of that. While there are economic theories of value that hold together in the lab, very few, if any survive the real world. The one possible exception is the concept of a Mixed Economy,¹⁸ which is most like the evolutionary real world, a mixed-up hodgepodge of hacks and kludges that work in diverse environments and under widely varying and ever-changing conditions.

Like virtually all successful advanced economies, we already live in a mixed economy, with aspects of capitalism and socialism evident in our everyday lives. Some even argue that Wall Street and the Fed themselves exert a kind of communist central planning over the entire American economy. Misunderstanding of these various terms, all too often fostered intentionally, causes needless confusion and strife. We hope to provide much needed clarity and understanding of the interdependence of all these moving parts, as we move forward in later chapters.

Another fundamental question that must be answered is, on balance, are human beings assets, or liabilities? In general, most people will tend to quickly respond that it depends upon how any given human being is behaving, or upon the value of their balance sheet. At the extremes, people would generally say that a junkie is a liability and a CEO is an asset. However, only on the most superficial level is this even remotely true. What if the CEO is Bernie Madoff, one of the biggest con men in modern American history, and the junkie is the man who fell apart when his son was killed, and bounced back ten years later to create software that corrects the self-driving car algorithm that led to that loss?

Within the narrow context of a capitalist economy, which seeks maximum extraction of raw materials from the Earth and maximum behavioral compliance from humans, the superficial comparisons seem to make sense, but on just slightly closer examination, they fall apart. The fundamental error in this kind of valuation of humans is that we have no way of knowing if that CEO will experience a breakdown that makes him the "bum" next week and the "bum" experiences a breakthrough that leads him to found the next trillion-dollar global enterprise. Both scenarios have played out so many times over history, that they absolutely cannot be dismissed.

Everything is always changing. People are always changing. There is nothing that can possibly justify locking any human being into one asset class or another, for the entire duration of their lives. Nothing. Except, of course, something like a caste system,

which Americans reject with their words, but in many ways help to create and reinforce through their choices and default behavioral economics. More on this later.

For now, if we can calculate the economic intrinsic value of a human being, then when companies add humans to their balance sheets, we should be increasing assets, not liabilities. When we talk about “where does the money for unconditional basic income come from” it becomes obvious, it’s an asset backed by the most valuable commodity in all the world. Humans.

Now, maybe nobody ever told you that you are of any inherent worth and maybe some also believe that humans are not inherently valuable. Unsurprisingly, this destruction of individual value is all too often the case in societies that seek to extract maximum behavioral compliance over maximum individual liberty and therefore maximum societal flourishing. The message of all totalitarian societies is, “you are worthless unless you obey.” We’ll put these concepts to use in a bit, as we build our model of intrinsic human value, which we expect must exist somewhere in between zero and infinity.

From the corporate and religious perspectives, if people are our most valuable natural resource, and if they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable, universal human rights, then, if we are to locate an elemental human value within a capitalist system, we must begin with the monetary value of that human life. If we do not, then the entire capitalist system becomes invalid, because capitalism purports that markets define the correct value of everything within their sphere. Everything. That means human bodies, children, kittens, and you. So, like any other commodity, we must determine the intrinsic value, the blue book value of a typical human, just like any other natural resource. Your body is just a collection of natural resources that make up an integrated sentient natural resource cloud that we call human. What is the intrinsic economic value of the natural resource called “one unit of humanity?”

Referring to people as mere commodities when asking what a human life is worth may sound like a cold calculation, but that is indeed what people are, in the context of the present economic paradigm. Cold, raw commodities. So get over it, snowflake, you’re nothing special. Day to day, we just pretend that this isn’t the case. We pretend that we have some higher value by seeking out friends and relationships that will feed our ego and convince us that we aren’t what the market says we are: cheap interchangeable parts. And when push comes to shove, we very quickly find out that this is very much the case. Conform, or be cast out. There’s nothing theoretical or emotional about it, this is how our capitalist society treats humans.

For the privileged, this may bruise our little egos to think of ourselves as mere human chattel in this way, and it may conjure horrific thoughts of sharecropping, slavery, and all manner of human exploitation. Marginalized and colonized people will

all just recognize this as normal. For people used to think of themselves as middle class, this fundamental operational truth in all historical human economies, and particularly in a fiat currency issuing economy, may come as a rude awakening. When we've been sufficiently privileged for long enough, simple equality can feel like persecution. It's not. It's more like, welcome to the club.

Quite literally, the only thing backing the U.S. dollar is us. The people. So, what are we worth? What is your body and mind worth? What is the monetary value of your newborn baby? Of your grandmother? Your brothers and sisters? To capitalism, these are all just raw materials, whether we imbue them with transcendent meaning, or not. It's far too late to pretend like financial capital markets can't possibly invade and colonize these sacred spaces, they already have, and in a practical sense, always have from the beginning. However unpleasant it may seem to some, we must begin with some basics of human commodity pricing that are already common in our world, if we are to get to the bottom of the question of human value.

When calculating the costs of war, the U.S. government is forced to come up with a number that measures the loss of an asset (soldier, human body). The very nature of this number alone, should give us great pause about the true costs of war. Unsurprisingly, for this very reason, it is not at all simple to find such figures. So, we begin with figures provided by the RAND Corporation, self-described as "a nonprofit research organization providing objective analysis and effective solutions that address the challenges facing the public and private sectors around the world."

In "The Cost of a Military Person-Year: A Method for Computing Savings from Force Reductions," a project of the RAND Corporation for the National Defense Research Institute, there is a line item called "Death gratuities \$13,985."¹⁹ Soldiers are generally auto-enrolled in higher value life insurance; however, they do have the option to opt-out, and this figure is ostensibly the amount that will be paid out in the event that there is no other insurance available.

This gives us a baseline value of human life of \$13,985, as priced out by the Pentagon. To be fair, that is about five to seven times the price of a grass-fed beef steer, as a slab of meat.

As anyone who has ever lost a loved one in battle knows, finding numbers like this is only the tip of the iceberg when it comes to getting straight answers from the VA, once they've already taken the life of your loved one. The VA website is littered with links to "404 not found" errors, on questions as vital as "Where should I go for more information about the coverage increase or death gratuity?"²⁰ At the time of this writing, the answer to that question links to "Branch of Service Casualties HQ," which contains the following unhelpful text:

VA » Veterans Benefits Administration »
Life Insurance » 404 — Page Not Found
The requested page could not be found.

This is what a bereaved survivor can expect to encounter at a time when people are naturally at their most vulnerable and least resilient, desperately searching for accurate and timely information about the loss of their loved ones. Moreover, when looking elsewhere to find their answers, the misinformation and disinformation littering the internet on these topics only makes matters worse. But we've got other options to pursue, here.

In "Estimating the Costs of War: Methodological Issues, with Applications to Iraq and Afghanistan," economists Joseph E. Stiglitz and Linda J. Bilmes found that:

In the private sector, firms need accurate and comprehensive financial and cost accounting systems to make good decisions. This is also true in the public sector. Military decisions are affected by costs; (even though the military faces only a part of the costs) and other government agencies bear some of the budgetary costs, while other parts of society bear some of the economic costs. But from the sole perspective of military accounting, the cost of a life is equal to \$500,000, which includes [up to] \$400,000 in life insurance and \$100,000 in "death gratuity" payment.

This number does not reflect the fully loaded cost to the military of recruiting and training a troop to replace the one who is lost, and the impact on morale and mental health on the rest of the unit, which may result in higher medical costs. From an economic standpoint, the actual loss to the economy, not to mention the human loss, is closer to \$7 million, which is close to the "value of statistical life" used by civilian government agencies.²¹

Because that \$100,000 "death gratuity" differs significantly between Blimes and the RAND report, we looked to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs for clarification.

Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) coverage is available in \$50,000 increments up to the maximum of \$400,000.

Attempting to find more details about the death gratuity itself, the VA says:

Under what conditions will DoD pay the special death gratuity? (SGLI)

DoD will pay the special death gratuity to survivors of those who died in a designated combat operation or combat zone or occurred while training for combat or performing hazardous duty on or after October 7, 2001 and before September 1, 2005. The SGLI death gratuity of \$150,000 will be payable regardless of whether or not the member had SGLI coverage at the time of death. Published 08/10/2012 04:08 PM. Updated 12/19/2012 03:14 PM.

So, now we seem to have yet another distraction from the direct question at hand. This “special” death gratuity offers yet another number that, while higher than RAND’s dated report, only applies between the years 2001 and 2005. Can you imagine the torture this kind of system imposes upon a bereaved spouse or family member of a soldier who is attempting to find accurate answers to the most basic, straightforward questions? It’s difficult to stay focused on our task at hand in this chapter when we contemplate the millions of Americans who have suffered at the hands of this capitalist war machine; not just in the obvious and horrific headline-grabbing ways that we all see, but also by all the relentless, unseen administrative and bureaucratic micro-battering that almost seem designed to wear us down with a billion tiny intentional inconveniences that serve no purpose but to dissuade, delay, and demoralize.

Another measure of the price of human lives can be referenced in a 2012 estimate that found, “Keeping one American service member in Afghanistan costs between \$850,000 and \$1.4 million a year” and “one matter is clear, that cost is going up” (Shaughnessy). Using the midpoint of those two numbers, the retail economic value of each soldier is \$1.1M per year. How is it that their life is worth \$1.1M when their job is killing and effectively zero when they come home to build a better future? If improving life on Earth is our theater of operations, then how is it that we don’t value each human being at just 10% of the stormtrooper value? That makes you, and every American worth \$100,000 per year as a strategic domestic asset, “just” for taking care of the house and yard and raising a healthy, happy family.

However, if we want to continue to get closer to the value of a human life beyond the body-bag count, perhaps we need to look at private sector life insurance policies, actuarial tables, and settlements. What are the range of values that insurance companies put on a human life? These represent market-derived value that free marketeers can’t possibly argue with, because capitalists are the ones who did the math to create such valuations.

Playing the moral card that “you can’t put a monetary value on the sacredness of a human life” rings especially hollow at this point in human history. In the current market system, literally everything has a price tag, including you. If you find that thought distasteful, then, paradoxically and fortunately, maybe the ideas in this book aren’t quite as far-fetched as you thought they might be when you opened it.

Yet economists have an amazing way of twisting and turning value inside out and upside down, to meet the merciless demands of the orthodox capitalist church, by appraising and computing human value only as a cost, a liability, not as an asset. By definition, appraisals are highly subjective. Nevertheless, let’s take the example of an outdated 2008 Time Magazine article that reported, “Stanford economists have demonstrated that the average value of a year of quality human life is actually closer to about \$129,000” (Kingsbury).

That was ten years ago. According to Wolfram|Alpha, the core inflation rate from 2008 to 2018 was 21.05%, food and beverages 21.52%, energy 3.41%, for an average of 19.46%. Have your wages gone up that much in the past decade, much less the value of your life, as a commodity? If so, then the value of a year of quality human life today is closer to \$154,000. In August 2012, Business Insider reported that the statistical value of “a human life is worth \$7.4 million ... in 2006 dollars” yet goes on to add, “Importantly, this is not an estimate of how much money any single individual or group would be willing to pay to prevent the *certain* death of any particular person” (Wile). One would like to believe that the actual human life would be valued much higher than the theoretical human life.

So, if we interpret that to mean that the chattel value of a human being is \$7.4 million, then how much unearned, un-labored-for, dividend income would the owner of that property (your life) generate each year, at an absurdly low 1% APR? \$74,000. That’s right. If, at the moment of your birth, the balance sheet of humanity increased by \$7.4 million, due to the baseline value of your life as an asset, and that amount were put in a trust fund for you at a paltry interest rate of 1%, you would earn \$74,000 per year, every year, just for being alive. Yeah. Money just for being alive. That’s what trust-fund babies have lived from for generation after generation. So the idea of getting money “just for being alive” is not only an old idea, but also an old reality. Except, nobody ever let you in on their little secret. Your babies are called liabilities. Their babies are called assets.

Only plutocratic political inertia prevents us from transitioning to a Dividend State from a Welfare State. The Dividend State’s role is to manage these common resources and circulate Citizen Dividends on behalf of each member of the commonwealth; just as plutocrats have done for their families, for eons. This is beginning to hint at a Social Security Administration for the twenty-first century.

Of course, most human beings, when asked, say that life is priceless, of infinite worth. Compared to that, \$7.4 million is a drop in the bucket. And we could, as a people, pass a law that created that value with every child born, if we wanted to. Absolutely nothing prevents this other than the brainwashing that tells us that it’s impossible, or not right, or not the way the world works. Nothing is set in stone. The fact of the matter is that the world works however we decide it works, as a family, as a team, as a community, as nation.

Of course, to be thorough, we can and should conduct similar exercises with any number of other estimates of human value. Here are some additional values of human life, from the “Value of Life” Wikipedia page:

- ❖ \$129,000 per year of quality life (an update to the "dialysis standard")

- ❖ \$9.1 million (Environmental Protection Agency, 2010)
- ❖ \$7.9 million (Food and Drug Administration, 2010)
- ❖ \$9.4 million (Department of Transportation, 2015)
- ❖ \$9.6 million (Department of Transportation, Aug. 2016)

Remember, before we feel too depressed about merely slapping crass dollar figures on human lives, please keep in mind that these numbers simultaneously provide us the foundation from which to build a defensible level of income security, based upon these valuations. These are the very kinds of numbers that give direct credibility to setting up a new kind of Social Security trust fund, one that operates more like the trust funds that the plutocracy has enjoyed for centuries, rather than the dilapidated, means-tested, and often just plain mean and punitive, Welfare State model.

In honor of our American Veterans, let's return to a soldier's value though, to do just one more little thought exercise. Let's assume that a peaceful, semi-productive, average civilian is worth just 10% of a highly trained soldier deployed to hunt and kill perceived enemies somewhere out in the world. Using the net present soldier value of \$1.1M per year, above, our civilian human is worth about \$100,000 per year. An unconditional basic income indexed to 50% per capita GDP is currently about \$30,000 per year. At the \$100,000 per year valuation, it is a simple, hard, cold, economic fact that a 50% per capita GDP basic income is only one-third the current book value of the human asset backing that very modest citizen dividend. Like the way we used to back money with gold, in the past; today, our intrinsic human capital can be accounted as security against any kind of economic system that we can imagine. In fact, we already do this. It's called a fiat currency. We already back the dollar. Our bodies, minds, and lives are the only thing backing this thing we called money. It's time to stand up for the value that has been extracted from us by the orthodox capitalist church's deceptive and destructive doctrines. It's time for revival. The revival of human worth and value, not just in wishy-washy theoretical or other-worldly terms, but in sound, practical, intrinsic, hard cold cash terms that make the most sense in a hard-cold cash world.

So, when people troll you with, "where does the money come from" and "how are you going to pay for that?" You can point them to this section and reply, "Here's how. Next excuse camouflaged as a question?"

Moreover, if it were true that "people are our most valuable asset," then people must show up as assets on the balance sheet of corporations and governments. Instead, the cost of labor is always a liability. That means, we are not actually assets. We cannot be an asset if we are accounted for as liabilities. As employees, we are liabilities that are only tolerable so long as we create significant excess value for an employer; generally,

in the form of playing a part in the reality show mini-series called *Going To Work Each Day*.²² We are, as raw material humans, not assets at all, let alone a company's "most valuable asset." Labor is a cost, and we are accounted for as such. Calling people assets, while treating them as costly liabilities, is an ingenious and powerful behavioral control device to compel us to justify our own existence every day, forcing us to do precisely as we are told within the construct of a fundamentally dictatorial corporate hierarchy. Then and only then, if we fully comply with the regime, do we become useful tools. Tools to create value for shareholders, not tools to cultivate human values.

What workers get out of this deal is the very least amount that corporation can get away with in purchasing its tools. Just as we do with our construction or gardening tools, the goal is always to extract as much value from tools as possible. Use them up until they wear out. There's nothing inherently wrong with that – unless people are deceived into thinking they are something other than a tool, which, usually, they are – and that is the way the current game is played, and has been played, for the past few centuries. With increasing efficiency comes increasing disregard for humans as humans.

So, the universal corporate cliché about people being assets is either a complete lie, or we can turn it around and make it into the opportunity to reorganize our economy in a way that makes it true. Because, in the ultimate sense, of course the cliché is true. It's just not how it's practiced and accounted for, today. Humans are the most valuable natural resource on the planet, because only humans can even conceive of the concept of value, not to mention value creation. The challenge then, is to take ownership, to occupy the cliché and make it true for everyone.

Despite navigating mazes of smoke and mirrors, the inalienable fact is that people do indeed embody the intrinsic value of our nation and economy. People are the collateral for everything else. Our current fiat currency is backed only by the good faith and credit of the United States government, and that government is we the people. We are the commodity backing our current fiat currency. Like gold bullion before us, we can even get shipped to different countries to settle debts, in the form of what are called jobs, or wars. This is going to be a vital point as we build new models that amply securitize a meaningful basic income.

While we're clearing the smoke and smashing some mirrors to see things as they are, let's also remember that the red herring that we live on a finite planet with finite resources is entirely unrelated to the way currency is created and circulated in our post-automation society. Outside of the truly most dire and desolate regions on Earth, the economic concepts of scarcity and abundance have become crafty (yes, it's a word) abstractions, like computer code that once served a purpose, but now mostly just muddles the logic, causing constant crashes. Sound familiar?

In stark contrast, anyone who has directly tilled the land and lived directly from the abundance of the Earth knows this fact in their bones; but a century of living exclusively in cities has enabled the high priests and pharisees of the orthodox capitalist church to convince us that when we sow new seed, there will never be enough to reap. We are supposed to continue believing that there is never enough of anything to go around, while we, the janitors and security guards throw away tons of fresh food discarded by huge corporations and tech firms, every day, week, and year, know otherwise. We might be poor, but we're not stupid. We might have been tricked by a cheap-car salesman like the 45th president of the United States once, but as G.W. Bush famously said, "Fool me once, you won't fool me again."

Today, we realize that one of the key reasons we are experiencing astronomical wealth and income skews in America is because of centuries of extraction and appropriation of our human capital onto the balance sheets of these corporations, banks, and governments. Yet, people like to pit public sector against private sector, and vice versa, according to their preconceptions and team colors; as if "winning" will make all our problems disappear in an instant; but the fact of the matter is that both public and private sectors have been responsible for cultivating our current conditions, and have functioned as the left and right hand of the same brutish oligarchic ogre. We don't have to accept this brutish fate as inevitable, or permanent. We can change it.

As we've discussed, the mathematics of more adaptive and democratic forms of capital formation can be relatively simple and straightforward, in principle and practice. To make things as simple as possible, but no simpler is especially important today, because abuses of complexity as a means to befuddle and defraud people, rather than to improve people's lives, have ravaged our economy for far too long. It is the specific objective of this book to precisely demonstrate how the mechanics of significantly more equitable and resilient currency circulation methods can put these principles into practice, without the traditional means of adding even more layers of complexity in the form of either new government agencies or counterproductive business regulation.

First, we must understand more accurately where we are, right now. We cannot avoid facing the deeply discouraging social and economic conditions and metrics confronting us today, the result of decades and centuries of intrinsic human value extraction. While the complex, obfuscating, state, federal, international, and corporate banking interdependencies that created our current conditions are formidable, with some study, they are also ultimately understandable. They are understandable because they too are rooted in some very basic assumptions and notions about how the world should work. That is, "should," according to the current arbitrary rules of the game, as architected and interpreted by the current ruling class narrative. A narrative deeply entrenched by those who abide by its edicts, even against their own best interests, like

agents in the Matrix movie. Remember the character, Agent Smith? Do you remember the scene where we almost find sympathy for him when he pleads with Neo, “I’ve GOT to get out of here!” Yet, he is programmatically prohibited. Like millions of Americans locked into the Job Trance, Smith is unable to free his mind. As the audience, how can we not empathize?

However, this Matrix-like economic game is not set in stone and the rules change all the time. In recent times, the rules have increasingly changed to benefit the central planners and programmers of Wall Street. It doesn’t have to continue that way. Unlike Agent Smith, we can if we choose, free our minds. The first steps after that might not be very pretty, but at least they will be closer to truth.

In a democracy, we can change the rules of this game, or change to an entirely new game, when we see that the monopoly board of our nation and economy has once again ended in a predictable, winner take all outcome that only sociopaths and their sympathizers could possibly desire and enjoy.

So, what would an alternate version of the Economy Game look like?

Here’s an experiment to try. Pull out a Monopoly board and find some friends to play with. When they guffaw and groan at you, say, “no, no, we’re going to do an experiment. Every time anyone passes GO, you get \$2,000 instead of \$200. Everything else stays the same, only the basic income goes up.” Some might argue, “but then the game could possibly go on for days, or weeks, or months! It might never end because nobody would ever run out of money!”

Exactly.

The game of Monopoly was originally created to teach people just how horrible the Landowner’s Game is. Instead, people took the opposite message, thinking that whoever successfully hoards the most and bankrupts everyone else, “wins.” Ironically, the solution was built in as well, right under our noses, all that time. Every time a player passes GO, she gets a basic income. But wait, it even gets better. The game also proves that an inadequate basic income, a low round number basic income, just barely puts off the inevitable. It doesn’t change the nature of the game. Only an adequate basic income, “at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances,” extends the game into an endless process that, while boring in the case of a board game, certainly helps to illustrate the point that a sufficient basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, while by no means decadent, does have the ability to help everyone live sustainably decent lives.

So, when we think about designing a new economic game, what would it look like if we began with the inherent, inalienable premise that “people are indeed our most valuable natural resource,” and put a price on that, based upon some combination of the data we’ve looked at, so far?

How do we even begin to think about such a game? Do we have to throw out all that we have built to get more sustainable and healthy currency circulation flows? No, we do not have to throw out capitalism, although that is precisely what many of the current ruling stakeholders often want people to believe, for the purpose of discrediting any kind of deep, systemic reforms. For the one percent, the ten percent, things are just fine as they are. Don't change anything.

This is fine, because we do not need to throw out free markets and fair enterprise altogether, in order to define a better, more inclusive game, one founded on fundamentals that we already widely agree upon as a people, and as a planet. A level playing field and a fair shot for anyone who wants more, to be able to earn more.

So, to create our game, we need to begin with some fundamental primitives, basic building blocks, core values, upon which we can build one chunk of new code at a time. For the purposes of creating an economy that directly based upon humans as the ipso facto most vital and valuable asset, we can begin with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The UDHR states in plain language a set of internationally shared ambitions and objectives for advancing the cause of human dignity. Beginning with these shared definitions, we can enter a process of defining a system that achieves the ambitions of our common cause in a way that actualizes the potential of individuals by leveraging the intrinsic value of the maximum number of people possible, for the sake of the commonwealth, rather than for the primary, nearly exclusive sake of elite wealth.

We need to address one other lingering objection to valuing humans as assets. The concept of scarcity. Particularly, in the context of some imagined future overpopulation scenario, based upon unrealistic forecasts of endless growth in consumption, exceeding even its current pace. In this model, humans increasingly become liabilities as they grow up because they consume more and more scarce resources. Again, this complete negates the commensurate intrinsic value that adults add to the world, by being vastly more creative and capable than the infant versions of themselves. The finite Earth carrying capacity argument for making humans into liabilities is only valid in a world where we are unable to scale down consumption, and forever unable to gain access to extraterrestrial resources such as mining asteroids. Since neither of those two cases are true, we don't even want to waste the readers time contemplating this strawman argument against the asset view of humanity.

* * *

ENDING POVERTY DIRECTLY

“All stories have a curious and even dangerous power. They are manifestations of truth — yours and mine. And truth is all at once the most wonderful yet terrifying thing in the world, which makes it nearly impossible to handle. It is such a great responsibility that it's best not to tell a story at all unless you know you can do it right. You must be very careful, or without knowing it you can change the world.” – Vera Nazarian, Dreams of the Compass Rose.

What does it mean to “end poverty directly?” Hasn't it been proven repeatedly that this pipedream is just not possible? Didn't Jesus say the poor will always be with you? So why bother?

In the Post-Automation Anthropocene, ending poverty directly means to defend and advance the basic human rights of every human being on the planet. “Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control” (Article 25, Universal Declaration of Human Rights).

Nevertheless, the objection that ending poverty is unattainable cannot be avoided. Millions believe that it is impractical. Utopian. For academics who have made entire careers out of attending conferences to debate the recursive subjective minutia of the question, our answer may annoy and offend many; but what it means to end poverty, in practical terms of everyday people's lives, is simply circulating cash in a stable, sufficient, and sustainable way. It's as simple as introducing cash into the economic circulatory system from the bottom up, instead of the top down.

Whole books argue for endless complexity in the definition of poverty, but our position is that those books are all too often exercises for the writer's benefit, more than humanity's benefit. They are written to argue the PhD or to advance one's career as a writer on weighty topics. While there are sincere exceptions to this generalization, the characterization is true in far too many cases. As we've said, if we want to move toward an actionable program to attack poverty directly, we simply can't get afford to stay mired in endless academic navel gazing about the countless potential definitions of poverty.

People are perpetually strapped for cash because incomes are increasingly uncertain and volatile. That's it. That's the reality of the post-automation Anthropocene that must be addressed, directly and immediately.

As of mid-summer 2018, financial analysts were forced to recognize the reality "that much of the gains this year, both in the S&P 500 and the Nasdaq, are due to just three stocks" (Puplava). Such is the disconnect between post-automation, machine learning, artificial intelligence driven companies, and the rest of the old, twentieth century economy.

As another well-read stock-watcher on the website Seeking Alpha wrote:

But while I'd rather not have to document the daily trials and tribulations of Facebook (FB), Amazon (AMZN), Netflix (NFLX) and their ilk, I don't have a choice because these names have become synonymous with "the big picture." In fact, they are nearly the "whole picture" when it comes to explaining benchmark returns. In a note dated Friday, Goldman updated their analysis in terms of documenting just how hard the market is leaning on a handful of names. To wit:

The top 10 contributors have accounted for 62% of the S&P 500 7% YTD return [and] of these 10 stocks, nine are technology or internet firms, [with] the Technology sector alone accounting for 56% of the S&P 500 YTD return (76% including Consumer Discretionary members AMZN and NFLX) (Heisenberg).

The effects of this extraordinarily resource-skewed disruption are now miserably and immediately palpable and can only accelerate in the coming years and decades.

JOB-JOBs are simply no longer an effective paradigm for circulating liquidity in the post-automation Anthropocene. The World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released a video quantifying the insecurity of wage-dependent incomes. The WEF reports that, "The average US worker changes jobs around 12 times before they are 48." Moreover, "69% of workers between ages 18 and 24 leave their employer within one year." These are not the kind of metrics that build confidence in the current wage system's ability to provide stable, sufficient, or sustainable incomes.

Within the scope of these policies, the definition of *basic needs* is derived from the universally recognized pyramid known as the Maslow Needs Hierarchy. "Together, the safety and physiological levels of the hierarchy make up what is often referred to as the basic needs."²³ In this volume, we also refer to this as Maslow Safety, to indicate the second layer of the pyramid and to put an emphasis on that aspect of safety assured within the basic needs.

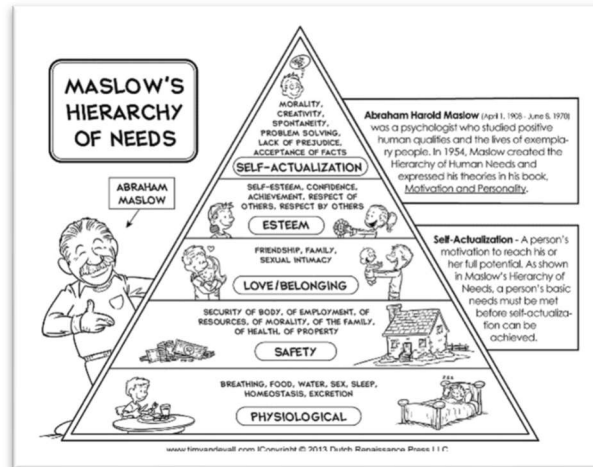


Figure 3 — Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

So that's it. The definition of ending poverty directly is *ensuring that basic human needs are met, for every human being on the planet*, simply because every human being has the right to exist, free from the coercive force of others.

The tragic reason we must use the term human being, rather than *every person* is that not all human beings are regarded as people. Even those who some might deem non-persons, are still human beings, and thusly endowed by their Creator with the inalienable right to exist.

Anyone born into the human condition is intrinsically entitled to the fundamental Maslow Safety required to become a fully functional and flourishing person.

Some will no doubt immediately seek to tear apart this direct definition a million ways, to split up academic paper attributions across a growing galaxy of PhD's, and by all means, that's one way to occupy one's time. We don't have that luxury, here. Toward the goal of ending poverty directly in our lifetime, we've got to relax theoretical and statistical tolerances and intolerances and relax measures of perfection just enough to effect meaningful and lasting change in the world. So, let's rap up this definition quickly so that we can move on to accomplishing the objective.

We've Been Here Before: The Two-Thirds Singularity of 1969

The goal of ending poverty directly has been fundamental to humanitarian minded people throughout history. Indigenous people worldwide have always practiced methods to ensure that everyone in the tribe was able to eat, and to sleep in a safe place. They still do. Taking care of one another isn't new. What's new, is the bizarre belief that some members of society are not entitled to the common, basic human needs, of food, shelter, healthcare, and in advanced contemporary societies, transportation and income have become essential to realizing the first three.

In the 1960's, the United States nearly completed a relatively simple three-point trifecta for an innovation-driven, sustainable, post-industrial, and post-automation civilization. Had we accomplished all three "when we were supposed to," we wouldn't be having to rehash all this territory today. In virtually every tradecraft, it's known that doing a thing right the first time, however seemingly difficult at the time, is orders of magnitude easier than having to go back and fix what was done in haste. So here we are, wasting hundreds or thousands of times the energy to do what should have been done at least fifty years ago.

According to Nixon, his generation would do two things deemed impossible by earlier generations: put a man on the moon (which had been accomplished the month before, on July 20, 1969) and eradicate poverty. Polls showed that 90 percent of US newspapers were enthusiastic about unconditional income for poor families. The Chicago Sun Times called it "A Giant Leap Forward," the Los Angeles Times "a bold new blueprint." The National Council of Churches, the labor unions, and even the corporate sector were also all in favor.

A telegram arrived at the White House declaring, "Two upper middle-class Republicans who will pay for the program say bravo." Pundits were going around quoting Victor Hugo: "Nothing is stronger than an idea whose time has come." In 1970 it seemed that the time for a basic income had well and truly arrived (Bregman).

Unlike the unjustified, yet eternally humorous internet shade cast at Vice President Al Gore, we must give Nixon a break on only seeing his two out of three. What's bizarre is that the internet happened instead of what was supposed to happen: the end of poverty as we know it, with a guaranteed annual income.

Below are the three accomplishments that *could have, should have* completely changed the fundamental nature of human civilization for the better, and it would have all been done in 1969.

The Two-Thirds Singularity of 1969:

1. *Land on the moon.*
2. *End poverty with Livable Basic Income.*
3. *Boot up the internet.*

The first man set foot on the moon on July 21, 1969. The legislation for ending poverty with an unconditional basic income, known as the FAP, was introduced in a nationally televised address on August 8, 1969. The first transmission between computers that would become the internet was made on October 29, 1969. That message? “Lo.”

It’s historical kitsch to say that the 1960’s were a tumultuous and transcendent decade; yet nothing quite measures the palpable impact that those years made upon the timeline of human existence like the three points, above. Imagine where we might be today, if all three had been successfully achieved, “on schedule.”

Unfortunately, we only accomplished two of these three steps to a happy, sustainable singularity. All three were obviously in play at the same time, and in both symbolic and non-symbolic ways, marked an inflection point on the timeline of human advancement uncommon across the ages. So why did we fail to accomplish all three when we were “supposed to?”

It’s likely that first and foremost among the reasons for failure of the second goal was fear. Plain old fear, fed by the timeless deep roots of all human suffering: hate, greed, and ignorance.

These are the same reasons that human rights, values, and goals; objectives that are for the most part universally agreed upon and enacted into law, still fall far short of their promise a century later. The Emancipation Proclamation still hasn’t fully freed black people in every corner of America, a full 150 years since its passage. Such is the case with ending poverty with universal basic income. Today, half a century later, we are left holding the bag of the failures of the late 1960’s and early 1970’s.

“In the course of the 91st Congress, the United States almost established a guaranteed income. The proposal, known as the Family Assistance Plan, was set forth by President Richard Nixon in a television address on August 8, 1969, not quite seven months after taking office.

Eight months later, on April 16, 1970, the House of Representatives approved the legislation by almost a two-to-one vote. It then faltered, only finally to fail in the Senate, albeit the debate went on to the very last moments of the 91st

Congress, which did not end until January 2, 1971, nineteen days before the 92nd Congress began” (Moynihan, 3).

So, why did the bold technological efforts of 1969 succeed, while the potentially even greater sociological breakthrough failed? Given the regressive inertial forces of race and gender that we still experience today, it's no wonder that Jill Quadagno called these out in her 1990 work, “The central arguments about the formation of the U.S. welfare state view it as a product of class struggle driven by conflicts between labor and capital over problems of production. The emphasis on class struggle as the central dynamic has led class analyses to ignore a defining feature of social provision: its organization around race and gender. If economic power gained through redistributive measures from the state creates political opportunities for the excluded, then social policy becomes a liberating force.”

Long story, short: ending poverty with unconditional basic income is a powerful liberating force. Ending poverty is a liberating force more powerful than all the armies, nukes, and idiotic smart bombs in the world; because, when the desperation of human need is addressed, all the most deeply rooted incentives for conflict disappear.

If history makes anything clear, it is the fact that the lower human biases with respect to race, gender, and class all present powerful inertial forces that serve to undermine progress with an indolence that seems to defy the very laws of physics. Yet gravity, electromagnetism, and the entire Standard Model of physics have all been resolved through our collective intelligence and scientific resolve. But still, not poverty.

How can that possibly be the case?

Humanity has managed to complete the incomprehensibly complex work of confirming the entire Standard Model of physics, establishing with sublime precision the mathematical predictions of the Higgs boson.²⁴ Arguably, an even greater and more incomprehensible mystery persists: while significant strides at the lowest end of the poverty spectrum have clearly been achieved in many contexts; overall, the plagues of absolute and relative poverty feel as unshakable as ever. How can that be the case, in the face of all our other technological advancements?

What is the nature of this millstone around humanity's collective neck that enables it to avoid extermination, particularly considering the obvious astronomical benefits for all humankind? How is it that we are capable of 3-D printing, self-driving cars and semi-trucks, vertical landing reusable rockets, mind-controlled bionic limbs, and all manner of emerging neuro-, bio-, info-, and nanotechnology wonders, yet seem powerless against this ancient foe of poverty?

“President Nixon's signature on H.R. 1, the social security amendments of 1972, ended 3 years of basic income consideration and deliberations, as proposals to improve

the social security program. When FAP failed, the President called this emasculated act "landmark legislation," and it became Public law 92-603 on October 30, 1972."²⁵

Emasculated, because by the time H.R.1 had become law, it had been stripped of its initial promise of a guaranteed annual income "at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances."²⁶ The pillar of this "landmark legislation" had been toppled. Campaign promises and principles, abandoned. The tragic trajectory of welfare policy was set for the next five decades. The intention to end poverty once and for all crashed and burned on the launch pad, but the public was sufficiently distracted by the glitz and hype of technological prowess, that almost nobody noticed the long-term consequences that become inevitable, in the same instant.

What might have begun as an accident of history has subsequently evolved into an ongoing techno-distraction strategy that has continued to be perfected. Getting the newest unaffordable gadget every year, paid for on time payments, of course, strongly helps to ensure obedience to the time clock. Increasingly intelligent gadgets, enticing and cultivating a larger-than-life, fake fame via social media 25 hours a day, 8 days a week, 366 days a year,²⁷ have become the most addictive and paralyzing opiates of the masses in history. So, this is certainly one way in which poverty continues its tightening death grip on our society.

Another reason was "discovered" in February 1996, while conducting the Social Security Administration's (SSA) Oral History Project. Historian Larry DeWitt "focused on the creation of the SSI program, and especially on the Family Assistance Plan (FAP), which was the precursor to SSI." Here, the long history and culture of suspicion and distrust of poor people – merely because they are poor – was clear to key staffers involved from 1969 to 1972.

A staffer at the time, Ms. Ross recounted, "I did discover a really strong note I wrote on his behalf (this would have been sometime in 1970) I wrote over my signature, telling John Montgomery that Tom Joe is really upset that a lot of the legislative planning (or the planning activity for administering FAP) seems to be going in the direction of re-imposing all the suspicions and anti-dignity." And so it did. And so it does. All the suspicions, stereotypes, projections, an anti-dignity sentiments and policies foisted upon people of lesser economic means than us have seemingly, ironically, tragically amplified at the same rate that our capability to end all of them has accelerated.

This makes no sense whatsoever.

Fast forward to 2018, San Francisco. "This is the wealthiest major city in the wealthiest state in the wealthiest major country in the world," [CEO of the San Francisco Convention & Visitors Bureau, Joe D'Alessandro] says. "And we can't live with the situation on the streets we find ourselves with right now. Walking each day in this neighborhood and seeing everybody sleeping in doorways," says Castro neighborhood

resident Linda Zaretsky. "It's just intolerable, painful and morally wrong." She has lived in San Francisco for about 30 years, and she sees poverty as the fundamental problem. And she says she'd pay more taxes to address it" (Shafer).

So, this is where we stand, today. Unconditional basic income nearly became law in 1969. It has been studied and tested for over 50 years at every conceivable scale – from neighborhoods, to cities, to provinces, to nation ²⁸ – and yet, there are people who still claim that universal basic income is a new, risky idea, and that economic poverty can only result from some kind of personal character defect, bad karma, or some just punishment from God.

Too risky compared to what? By far, the riskiest, most radical, and most irresponsible option is leaving things just as they are; or in the case of the most recent U.S. administration, making them markedly worse by slashing social investment. Leaving things the way they are, continuing in the direction that we've always gone, is what brought us to this very point. At what point does the current trajectory carry us to a place from which there may be no peaceful democratic return?

If we ask Reddit, we are also be reminded that quarterly capitalism is a huge part of the problem that can at least be partly mitigated by a modest, livable basic income that is indexed to 50% per capita GDP. One participant on the /r/BasicIncome Reddit shared a real-world example from her own technology company:

Quarterly Capitalism is the problem. The constant race to half-assing things to report bullshit to The Street. We have a brand-new product that does this ... We had 15 large orders before the end of the quarter. Look at us, we're great, our people worked 65 hours a week to get it done! Reality:

Barely half the feature set was implemented.

Everything from sales projections to configurations to fulfillment was completely hands on manual.

The product and supporting processes including accounting are not integrated into the enterprise infrastructure – no time or money to do that.

It'll take 500 orders a week for the next 3 years to break even, assuming the next big lie doesn't bump the focus on this product – and that's only IF automation and enterprise integration are done.

And that is why Americans work so much. Fantasy land. And maybe 5 people in that whole situation have an understanding of what profitability means (Groty).

In the face of exponentially accelerating technological advances, sociological change seems historically prone to significant lag. A significant lag that needlessly perpetuates merciless and crushing amounts of human suffering. Many of the reasons for this lag, and its effects were the thesis of Alvin Toffler's 1970 seminal work, *Future*

Shock. For those interested in digging deeper into this topic, the prescience of Toffler's work is more evident than ever. It's very much worth reading.

How Socialism Improves Capitalism

Eminent physicist and humanitarian F. Buckminster "Bucky" Fuller, a contemporary of Martin Luther King Jr., added his engineering insight and humanitarian foresight to Martin's clarion call for "a guaranteed annual income at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances," today referred to as UBI. King and Fuller, each in their own distinctive way, advocated for what Bucky called, "a world that works for everyone," more than half a century ago.

In the 1960's Bucky created the World Game with the objective to "Make the world work, for 100% of humanity, in the shortest possible time, through spontaneous cooperation, without ecological offense or the disadvantage of anyone." Fuller went on to explain that, in the most pragmatic terms, "This is the real news of our century. It is highly feasible to take care of all of humanity at a higher standard of living than anybody has ever experienced or dreamt of. To do so without having anybody profit at the expense of another so that everybody can enjoy the whole earth. And it can all be done by 1985."

When Fuller said, "our century," he of course meant his own century, which is our rapidly fading, bygone, twentieth century. So, this objective of fully eradicating poverty isn't new, and it certainly isn't utopian. For Bucky, as for us, it's basic mathematics and basic human decency. It isn't politically left or right. It is simply a shared human objective that has taken a very long time to attain, much like other human rights accomplishments.

Now here's the real news of this twenty-first century: we are living not just in a new century, but in the very decade in which we can make this universal human ambition to end poverty, real. We echo the voices that came before us, just as Bucky and Dr. King, echoed the words of those who came before them. One of the most visionary authors of the twentieth century, Arthur C. Clarke added, "The goal of the future is full unemployment, so we can play. That's why we have to destroy the present politico-economic system."

Yet, it was far lesser-known reformist minister Theodore Parker who "predicted the inevitable success of the abolitionist cause this way,"

I do not pretend to understand the moral universe; the arc is a long one, my eye reaches but little ways; I cannot calculate the curve and complete the figure by

*the experience of sight; I can divine it by conscience. And from what I see I am sure it bends towards justice.*²⁹

A century later, Martin Luther King, Jr. paraphrased Parker's words in a prepared statement he read in 1956 following the conclusion of the Montgomery bus boycott. King's 1956 version read,

But amid all of this we have kept going with the faith that as we struggle, God struggles with us, and that the arc of the moral universe, although long, is bending toward justice (King).

To remind us of what Sean Illing explained earlier in his article, *Why Capitalism Won't Survive Without Socialism*:

*We think of capitalism as being locked in an ideological battle with socialism, but we never really saw that capitalism might be defeated by its own child — technology. Which is another way of saying that **socialist principles might be the only thing that can save capitalism** (emphasis added).*

Just giving people money works and always has worked. In the form of Social Security, it has worked for over eighty years to virtually end poverty among the elderly. It has worked in the form of farm and other desirable industry subsidies; and it will work better than ever, once transfer payments are put on a slow drip from the grass roots, in the form of a livable basic income, indexed to the real economy, rather than just flooded into banks in massive transfusions that never trickle down, every time the boom/bust cycle goes bust. This is the reason some people refer to basic income as quantitative easing, QE for the people. Because that's effectively what it is. But, instead of consuming ourselves into a coma, followed by the inevitable heart attacks typical of industrial capitalism, a *sufficient basic income* provides a pacemaker that keeps our economic circulation system functioning properly, addressing the root cause of the heart attacks.³⁰

As the prolific and talented basic income activist and educator Scott Santens puts it:

By the way, this is pretty much how the board game Monopoly works. Everyone starts the game with some money, and then every time someone passes Go, they get more money. Try playing Monopoly without these rules, where no one gets any money to start with and no one gets money for passing Go. See how well that game works and how long you want to keep playing it.

That \$200 in Monopoly everyone gets for passing Go? That's unconditional basic income. If everyone received \$1,000 for passing the first of the month each and every month, the price mechanism would function better.³¹ Because everyone would be able to express demand, markets would function better, and what people actually want and need would be more accurately and efficiently allocated.

Concentration of money is just as big of problem for markets as lack of money. So not only does everyone need a minimum [number] of votes, but there should not be too large of concentration of votes in too few hands, lest our economy be oriented mostly around meeting the demands of a small percentage of people instead of everyone.

In a real democracy, all citizens have the right to vote, so why don't we have democracy in our economy?"

Santens's article is so well written that we highly recommend you take a break and go read it, then come back. Santens provides a brilliantly effective analogy of starting an ice cream shop, to illustrate the difference between zero demand and null demand, a distinction that is utterly impossible to make in the context of current markets. Go ahead, open a browser, and go check it out, we'll wait.

To date, Social Security is probably the best-known case of conditional basic income, to most Americans. Social Security is a *conditional* basic income, conditioned on age. It has been and continues to be one of the most wildly successful and popular poverty-ending policies in the history of U.S. politics. Why? Because giving people money works to end poverty. This isn't even debatable after more than eighty years of Social Security working to virtually eliminate poverty in old age. While there is no shortage of simpletons in America who think ending poverty constitutes "government takeover socialism," wisdom has never been beholden to ignorance. This message can't possibly be repeated enough, as legislation moves forward. Ensuring income security with a livable monthly basic income ends poverty. Period. It's not an untested theory, we don't need more trial programs, we can deploy the policy equivalent of a long overdue software upgrade patch to begin incrementally lowering the Social Security qualification age, in increments, at regular intervals, until everyone is covered. This is an immediate and direct way to implement unconditional basic income without any new bureaucracy involved, a method which we will describe in greater detail, shortly.

In a 2014 article on the TalkPoverty.org website, Stephen Pimpare wrote, "In 1959, official poverty rates among people over 65 were higher than for any other age group. Today, they are lower than for any other age group. What happened? Social Security, which became more generous and nearly universal over time. It turns out that if you send people money every month — wait for it — they will be less poor."³²

Just as some circles of anarcho-libertarian apologists claim that our current system “isn’t really capitalism” and can be reformed by rebranding it conscious capitalism or compassionate capitalism, so is the case for cries that socialism has been tried and hasn’t worked. There have been abuses of socialism and abuses in capitalism. None of these systems have been immune to human arrogance, greed, hate, and ignorance. Perhaps it isn’t the systems that are the problem, perhaps it is the humans.

Both sides of that argument are right. We will never live in a purely capitalist or socialist or communist or anarchist state. Puritanical thinking in any of these camps does not help us to define workable solutions for the global, and national Mixed Economies in which we live. In this book, we’ve used these labels in the popular polemical ways that they are mostly depicted in mainstream media. However, to get at real solutions, we need to go beyond all the name calling and bullying and posturing and get to engineering a Post-Automation Anthropocene that works for everyone.

Why People Will Keep Working

In addition to the millions of open-source software developers, small farmers, artists, writers, musicians, mathematicians, and others we’ve discussed, magician duo Penn and Teller’s career is another prime example of how, even if we have all of the money we need, people still want to improve, create better products, better services, better art, better science, better philosophy, a better world, for ourselves and thereby, others.

For 50 million years our biggest problems were too few calories, too little information. For about 50 years our biggest problem has been too many calories, too much information. We have to adjust, and I believe we will really fast. I also believe it will be wicked ugly while we’re adjusting,” says libertarian magician and cultural icon, Penn Jillette. “So the flaw in libertarianism is that maybe a small amount of coercion might be worth it. The other problem with libertarianism: it may not be modern enough. Libertarianism has to do with everyone being able to find meaningful work.

Doug Stanhope said, isn’t our goal 100 percent unemployment? Isn’t that a good thing? But if there aren’t meaningful jobs, is there any reason for libertarianism? I have been very seduced lately by the basic universal human income. But would we be able to find work that would fulfill us if we were on a basic universal income (Marchese)?

It bears repeating that humans are not inherently lazy by nature. We are creative, curious, industrious, and the long struggle of humanity is not to merely survive, but to

thrive, to unleash the maximum amount of that creativity into the universe while not only doing the least harm, but ideally, ending suffering in the process of expressing our true nature. As Penn tells it:

30 years ago, when Teller and I were in a room trying to figure what we were going to do, easy was a positive. Like, "Hey Teller, here's a funny idea, we can just do this really simply." Now if I say to Teller, "This might be too hard for us" he sits up straight and goes, "Okay, let's go! Let's do it!" Because [with no need for money,] at some level we are only doing things for ourselves now. We have enough old material to last the rest of our lives. Our career goes exactly the same if we do old material as if we do all new brilliant stuff; we've got a few tricks coming out that we've been working on for years, and they won't change how many people buy tickets to our show. But they're better tricks than we've done before. They just are. And that's beautiful."

So, we truly do not need deep longitudinal studies and sophisticated machine learning data analysis to understand that people will keep working, and working better, if their most rudimentary needs are met. Social Security recipients face an absurdly complex set of conditions and penalties for attempting to work in retirement, even if having a job significantly increases the happiness of many retirees. These policies are bombastic at best, and often destructive in practice. Social Security recipients receive a basic income and a very large number of them desire to keep working. Only conditionality prevents them doing so, within the confines of the current scheme.

Adjusting the conditionality of Social Security enables us to utilize the existing circulatory system to increase circulation to all unconditional basic income recipients without creating any new bureaucracies, while also cutting the Gordian Knot of the pejoratively labeled entitlement reform.

By framing policy changes as "the end of entitlements, once and for all," the cultish right and their trolls have nothing to complain about. By simultaneously affirming "income security as a human right," the cultish left can take up the cause as their own, as well. Plenty of people will attempt to repolarize around new terms, but with clarity of conviction, steadfastness of will, and consistency of effort, we can end poverty as we've known it, right now, in the first quarter of the twenty-first century. To us, that goal seems worth the sacrifices to make it happen.

It's true that the current rat's nest of tangled terms and conditions make Social Security needlessly complex and expensive to manage. By ending the tangled web of conditions and encumbrances placed upon Social Security recipients, this long-standing successful program can become universal and unconditional in its role of providing income security for all. We don't need any more complex government programs to implement basic income on a national scale. We have the infrastructure in

place, we simply need to issue a software upgrade patch to bring Social Security up to date. In that patch, we remove the most onerous conditions on receiving this income for those already qualified, and we gradually lower the qualifying age until everyone is covered. Obviously, simple doesn't mean easy, especially in the domain of public policy and administration; however, the difference between policies that do not work well, and those that succeed, very often comes down to the matter of conceptual complexity; or the lack thereof. How simple is it to state the primary goal in a way that is readily understood by people at a seventh grade, or even fifth grade, literacy level?

To provide a better sense of the scope of savings and operational efficiencies to be gained by implementing basic income through the Social Security system, the legal website Nolo.com describes some of the rat's nest of conditions, currently in place:

Until you reach full retirement age, Social Security will subtract money from your retirement check if you exceed a certain amount of earned income for the year. For the year 2018, this limit on earned income is \$17,040 (\$1,420 per month). The amount goes up each year. If you are collecting Social Security retirement benefits before full retirement age, your benefits are reduced by \$1 for every \$2 you earn over the limit. Once you reach full retirement age, there is no limit on the amount of money you may earn and still receive your full Social Security retirement benefit.

Example: Henry is considering claiming early retirement benefits this year, at age 64. Social Security calculates that if he does so, he'll receive \$866 a month (which is about 13% less than if he waited until his full retirement age of 66). But Henry also intends to continue working part-time, with an income that will be about \$5,000 over the yearly limit on earned income.

If he does claim the early benefits and makes that part-time income each month, Henry would lose one dollar out of two from the \$5,000 he earns over the limit, which means \$2,500 for the year. So, by claiming early retirement and continuing to earn over the limit, Henry incurs a double penalty: His retirement benefits are permanently reduced by 13%, and he loses an additional amount every month (until he reaches full retirement age) to the extent he earns over the income limit.

Social Security does not reduce each monthly check by a small amount, unfortunately. Instead, the agency may withhold several months' entire checks until the reduction is paid off. (The way Social Security reduces your benefits is actually very complicated. For the details, read Social Security's pamphlet on "How Work Affects Your Benefits." You can also use [the] Social Security earnings test calculator to see how much your reduction will be and when Social Security will withhold your benefits.)

Note that if you are working and you lose your job, you may collect unemployment benefits (assuming you otherwise qualify for them) even though you are also collecting your Social Security retirement benefits (Laurence).

Remember that comment earlier about a billion tiny impediments, designed to wear us down and give up? Such punitive conditions on the basic income provided by Social Security are what make the program loved in principle, yet often hated in practice. In colloquial terms, “It’s the conditionality, stupid.”

A new crop of Americans who have already provided a lifetime of service, enter this gauntlet every single year, as they enter into the so-called Golden Years, when people can finally look forward to participating in, and contributing to the community as an expression of gratitude and meaning, more so than for the chase of things that they now know (for the most part, hopefully) they can’t take with them. Ironically, just at this time, the absurd conditions attached to staying active in the labor force often present an insurmountable obstacle to ongoing community participation for seniors. For many, if not most Social Security recipients in this situation, as social participation declines, happiness declines, quality of life declines, and health declines to the point that we face the most dire crisis in elder care that the nation and maybe the world has ever seen.

So yes, unconditional basic income also greatly enhances the health and longevity of everyday people by not punishing them for wanting to stay engaged in their communities in the form of jobs. To become sustainable, Social Security must become a more universal and unconditional form of basic income.

But what about younger people, as the Social Security age drops to 55, 45, 35? Won’t they all stop working as if they won the lotto? According to multiple studies cited by The Atlantic, 85% of lotto winners keep working in jobs. So there’s that. If some feel the need to condescend and stigmatize the other 15%, well, knock yourself out, but that’s probably more jealousy than anything else, and possibly, at some subconscious level, a deep embarrassment at realizing we ourselves are really among the 15% of lazy people, so we resort to constantly ripping into everyone else as lazy, because we know that about ourselves. This is known in psychology as projecting.

In contrast to emotional projection, what research finds is that the myth that “people are just no damned good and basically lazy,” is simply untrue.

Kaplan did a bigger study in 1987 on 576 lottery winners and found that “popular myths and stereotypes about winners were inaccurate”—by which he meant that American lottery winners did not typically quit their jobs and spend lavishly.

That finding has been confirmed in more recent research. A 2004 study found that 85.5 percent of American winners continued to work after winning the lottery (with 63 percent working for the same employer as before), and that the

more important work was to a person, the more likely they were to keep working (Lam).

But perhaps the most straightforward reason that people will not only keep working but may even work more in the era of universal Social Security, or basic income, is the pervasiveness of consumer culture and plain old greed. Even with a fully livable basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, it will never be enough to satisfy human greed. Acquiring more is never enough. The human drive for more and more has largely driven inequality to present extremes in the first place, so to then claim that humans are intrinsically lazy simply doesn't pass the smirk test. Add to this the psychological exploitation of consumers implemented by platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and others, and there is almost no chance that people will be fully satisfied once their basic human needs for Maslow Safety are met. They will use that stable foundation to build more and do more.

On the Maslow Hierarchy of needs, the bottom three needs can be referred to as Deficit Needs, and the top two as Being Needs. The Deficit Needs are those which, when we are lacking, our lives are in net deficit, constantly in need. We have little to no chance of continuing to develop until we can rise out of the persistent deficit state. Safety is the second of three Deficit Needs, so Income Security in and of itself is still not sufficient to enable people to reach higher, in pursuit of Beings Needs. What this implies is that Income Security is essential, necessary, yet still insufficient to provide equal opportunity for everyone to become a fully developed human being. Does this mean that there's no reason to assure Income Security? Of course not. It means that we must, and we must still do more. Income Security isn't a magic elixir to end all of society's ills, but it is a non-negotiable prerequisite to the cultivation of better human beings; and better humans lead to better societies. Individual processes that cultivate human flourishing can hardly get more decentralized and libertarian than by way of universal Income Security.

Of course, not everyone is motivated to the same degree by insatiable consumption and acquisition games, but if behavioral economics, machine learning sales pipelines, and the explosive growth of gamer culture have made anything clear, it's that people are, by and large, scorekeepers. To that extent, people will absolutely continue to work – possibly even harder, longer hours – to achieve game high and personal-best scores that are only achievable by earning more income, beyond the livable basic income indexed to 50% per capita GDP.

Money Does Buy Happiness

Up to a point, money does indeed buy happiness, and that is a very important, empirical point. Shaming poor people for lack of character, and then scolding them that “money can't buy happiness; therefore, you shouldn't worry that you have no money” is as widespread a practice as climate change denial, and just as plainly wrong. Up to a point, money really does make all the difference between whether people can feel the sense of happiness enshrined in our most basic inalienable right to Maslow Safety. Income security is an integral dependency for the fulfillment of the promise of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

At the same time, people who complain that their happiness is under attack by adjusting tax structures to attain more sustainable liquidity circulation have some explaining to do. If we scold poor people that money can't buy happiness, then cry that higher tax rates harm our happiness, one or the other of our arguments must go. We can't have it both ways: claiming that money can't improve other people's happiness, but letting go of some of our money does affect happiness.

There are absolute, empirical levels of income, below which, people feel greater economic anxiety and less happiness. There are also absolute, empirical levels of income above which no meaningful gains in happiness are realized.

According to the researchers behind the original Princeton study, your emotional well-being – or the pleasure you derive from day-to-day experiences – doesn't get any better after your household is earning roughly \$75,000. That said, a term they call "life evaluation" – or how you feel about your life and accomplishments – can continue to rise with higher income and education levels.³³ A commenter further wrote, “No wonder so many people I know are unhappy, as the median household income in Missouri is only \$47,333 and 15% of the Missouri population lives BELOW the poverty line ... which for a family of 3 was \$19,050.

* * *

THE HUMAN RIGHT TO INCOME SECURITY

“A well-thought-out story doesn’t need to resemble real life. Life itself tries with all its might to resemble a well-crafted story.” – Isaac Babel.

As many scholars have pointed out over the years, The Enlightenment worked. Tremendous social progress has been made on many fronts, yet there still exist toxic veins of distorted moral philosophy and religion that advance the mistaken view that poverty is somehow always deserved, that it builds character, that it is somehow ultimately beneficial to human character. To this view, one of the most accomplished Buddhist scholars of our generation, Robert Thurman responds, “that is a mistake.”

It is a philosophical mistake, a religious mistake, and even a mistake of physics. Yes, physics. What could the standard model of physics and asteroid mining have to do with the human right to income security? Hold on to your jet pack, we're about to find out.

On March 14, 2003, the Organisation Européen pour la Recherche Nucléaire (CERN) Large Hadron Collider (LHC) confirmed the existence of the Higgs Boson at approximately the 125GeV energy level.³⁴ With that single, pivotal scientific observation, the most recent 500-year long chapter of a nearly 3 millennium long human quest for rational knowledge about the nature of creation came to a dramatic, and potentially absolute close.³⁵

When you listen to scientists, it doesn't take long to realize the greatest motivation to work so hard, for so long, against such odds is an intellectual curiosity and drive for solving life's biggest mysteries; a passion for problem solving that ultimately extends to engaging the world's most pernicious challenges. The quest for understanding how the universe works and how it came to be is an existential question fundamental to being human. It is a question of such transcendent importance as to have motivated some of, if not all the past 2,500 years of humanity's most rigorous and comprehensive thinkers and doers, be they religious, political, scientific, or humanitarian. Pause and think about that for just a moment. Jobs had less than nothing to do with most of humanity's most profound and consequential accomplishments.

Think about the central significance that these questions have played in the human drama for nearly three millennia. Think of the extent to which pursuing an understanding of the fundamental nature of physical reality has animated and organized human behavior. Not jobs, but innate human curiosity drove the chariot, all

the way to the present day. If you're not literally breath-taken at that prospect, perhaps you haven't thought about it quite long enough, yet. Go ahead, you're invited to close your eyes for thirty seconds and really soak in what you've just read.

So yes, we did it. As a species, we didn't blow ourselves up before getting here, to this moment in the history of the universe. Whether we make it much further than this point, of course, depends upon the choices we make amid the current crisis. We could still throw it all away.

Ironically, or perhaps with some sense of dark poetic symmetry between humanity's highest and basest impulses, as these very words are being written, there are Zionists seeking to purify their land in one of the most despicable displays of hypocrisy and hubris ever experienced in the past 3,000 years. To seek to exterminate another people, after having been victim to such extermination yourself, less than a century ago? It's as unthinkable as the accomplishments of modern physics are uplifting. So, our capacity for both transcendent good and deplorable evil, continues to beset us.

Yet, never in human history has our little species stood at such a grand threshold; the next such threshold could be yet hundreds or thousands of years ahead of us. While we witness the acceleration of machine learning and artificial intelligence problem solving at hallucinatory speeds, and while we might like to think that, given how far we've come, we'll illuminate the unexplored territories of dark matter and dark energy even quicker; the fact of the matter is that the distance ahead of physics is orders of magnitude greater than the distance covered in the past 3,000 years. Think about that. As advanced as we believe we have become today, we haven't even begun the journey ahead. More than 95% of whatever the universe is, is still inexplicable to modern physics. That's not a diminution of science at all, quite the contrary. It's the greatest opportunity for discovery in all human history.

Regardless of past and future, here we are, right now. The Standard Model of cosmology is complete. That's it. Puzzle solved. Game over. That's not a situation that any other generation before us ever faced.

With the completion of the standard model, the science of what used to be considered “woo” is pretty much the only science staring us in the face. What does it all mean? Now what? Where do we go from here?

Physics seeks to exactly explain the how, in mechanistic terms, physical existence works, while philosophy and ethics generally ring in with the ontological machinations of those mechanics. Whether our search for ultimate understanding of the universe is deduced, intuited, ascribed, or a little of each, is secondary to the inherent nature of human rights.

We all operate in, amongst, around, and between the empirical and the inexplicable; so spending time arguing over which approach is “more right” – science or spirituality

– in deriving a valid basis for human rights, appears relatively fruitless. What's fruitful is contemplating how this all works together, and how we can best take advantage of our limited, yet always growing understanding, to reduce suffering in the world, and cultivate flourishing.

So, the road ahead for human rights is about priorities. What are the priorities for humanity's most rigorous minds, at this transformative threshold? While the sirens of dark matter and dark energy surely captivate the best and brightest of humanity, this book would like to ask a potentially heretical question: perhaps what's next should go beyond physics as we've known it for the past five hundred years; at least for the comparatively short period of time it will take to apply the finished product of our current understanding to uplifting the human condition. What we're suggesting is, that the realm of human rights and public policy could sorely use the cognitive horsepower that has heretofore accomplished this great feat known as the Standard Model.

Prior to completion of the Standard Model, many scientists already empathized with colleagues such as Nikola Tesla, F. Buckminster Fuller, and Albert Einstein, each unapologetic humanitarians, without diverting much attention away from the theoretical mathematics and sophisticated experimentation at hand. However, as of 2018 and for the duration of this twenty-first century, we have a rare opportunity for theorists and experimentalist to take a bit of a working sabbatical to contribute to the current task of completing a Standard Model of Human Rights, within the field of everyday human affairs. The struggle for enough food, shelter, healthcare, income security, and safety. These will continue to be prerequisite for the emancipation of more minds to engage in the education and self-actualization required to run the next legs of the long relay toward fuller understanding of nature and of the predicament we find ourselves in, here on this tiny pale blue dot.³⁶

We don't have to start from scratch. We already have something akin to a Standard Model of Human Rights. It's called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. For physicists who have spent a lifetime filling gap in the Standard Model, the implementation of the UDHR today is as full of gaps as its physics counterpart was, fifty years ago. Perhaps this is what's next for many physicists who are ready to go beyond the intellectual satisfaction of understanding how things work to the existential satisfaction of creating a world that works for everyone.

In a recent interview with Abby Martin about his 2018 book, *The New Human Rights Movement: Reinventing the Economy to End Oppression*, Peter Joseph said that across history:

PETER JOSEPH: 99% of human society existed without money or markets. This isn't some inevitability, the way we [currently] live. What is the silver bullet that can possibly change this negative trajectory that we're on? That is structural

change of the economy. Morality is not going to do it. Our free will is not going to do it. Our rational sense is not going to do it, in and of itself because we are so inhibited and dominated by the structural psychology generated from our social system.

ABBY MARTIN: And reforms aren't going to do it, either, because twenty-first century activism has been far too localized."

PETER JOSEPH: If we don't focus on the root, and we keep sparsely drawing attention to this or that protest, or this or that activist initiative, to certain pockets of problems, [we] just end up running in place. The activist initiatives that are required now have to grasp that, and realize that now, it's time for galvanization towards removing the foundation of our social system, and that's the market. We have to start to move away from market economics as rapidly as we possibly can to save our ecology and to save the stability of our society in terms of group relationships. The antagonism that's created with our class system, builds into all the other antagonisms we see, whether it's gender, whether it's race, whether it's nationalistic. It's like that central kernel that keeps amplifying the worst of our group, or our anti-group associations.

We don't currently agree that we need to move away from all vestiges of markets. It seems to us that trade and barter have served humanity well, for eons. Whether or not Joseph is right, however, a livable, universal, unconditional basic income provides options to Americans who face rapidly dwindling options.

Insofar as the Standard Model of physics now contemplates a new horizon, so too does the new space race stand to entirely obviate the Standard Model of Economics that we've been working with for centuries.

As the infinite supply of raw materials present in the final frontier become increasingly accessible, "Experts have warned that [the mineral value of just one asteroid] would be large enough to destroy commodity prices and cause the world's economy to collapse." This is the point to which some of the greatest accomplishments of science and physics have led us. The end of both physics and economics, as we've known them for hundreds of years. It's breathtaking. It's awe inspiring. It can also be infinitely ego-inflating if twisted into some kind of sense of individual accomplishment, which it surely is not. Above all, it represents a key inflection point in the history of human capabilities and priorities; an inflection point that beckons changes that to many might have seemed unimaginable yesterday, yet are essential, today.

One example of a previously unimaginable disruption that is proving increasingly inevitable is the blockchain. Manna is a blockchain currency specifically created to

circulate liquidity in a more sensible and sustainable manner, and should Manna's valuation become meaningful, it could indeed play a big role in ending global poverty.³⁷

Far more ambitious are initiatives such as the distributed ledger called Mattereum, self-describe as, "the legal-technical interface connecting digital assets on the blockchain with goods and services in the material world."³⁸ An interface like Mattereum could, in practice, claim all outer space as public property for the benefit of all humanity in the fine print of its Terms and Conditions. This might sound outrageous, but there is nothing preventing it. So long as space entrepreneurs agree with the proposition, when selecting Mattereum as their distributed ledger of all the physical assets identified and managed in outer space, the interface will grow, and with it, an essentially infinite asset base from which humanity very easily allocates a modest, living wage level, basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP here on Earth.

The answer to the "how do you pay for it" question utterly transcends our historic conceptions of how economies operate, and how they circulate liquidity for the flourishing of all participants.

Considering these fundamental disruptions: essentially infinite supplies of raw materials from space, and asymptotic levels of efficiency gained through advances in machine learning and artificial intelligence, the fundamental raw resource challenge to humanity is no longer about acquisition, but rather circulation. Just as quantum theory disrupted Newtonian physics, without negating it, so too do the realizations of the super abundance of raw materials, machine labor, and synthetic intelligence disrupt economics today. These are just some of the more readily recognizable characteristics that demonstrate the reality that we do indeed live in a Post-Scarcity, Post-Automation Anthropocene. In many ways, it is the collective sense of anomie, sociological disorientation, induced by having already entered this entirely new kind of era, with no way of turning back, that is driving the tumult in our world, today. It will settle out, but wouldn't it be nice if it settled out in a way that minimized the suffering and maximized the flourishing of all sentient beings?

* * *

Simple Math of UBI

Simple doesn't mean easy, although it is easy for some people to fall into the trap of conflating those terms when considering the simplicity of basic income as a policy to eradicate poverty. In her article, "Why universal basic income costs far less than you

think,” University of Oxford Leverhulme Early Career Fellow, Elizaveta Fouksman wrote:

To calculate the cost, most people just multiply the size of the monthly income (say, \$1,000) by the population (it’s universal, after all) and – voilà – a number that seems impossibly expensive.

Any UBI estimate that just multiplies the size of the UBI by the population is a red flag that the cost has been over-inflated. A true cost estimate will always discuss who the net beneficiaries will be, who the net contributors will be, and the rate at which we gradually switch people over from being beneficiaries to being contributors as they get richer.

Here’s a simple example: imagine a room with 15 people who want to set up a UBI for the room of \$2 per person. The upfront cost of the policy would be \$30. The ten richest people in the room are asked to contribute \$3 each towards funding it. After they each put in \$3, raising the total \$30 needed, every person in the room gets their \$2 universal basic income. But because the ten richest people in the room contributed \$3, and then got \$2 back as the UBI, their real, net contribution is in fact \$1 each. So the real cost of the UBI is \$10.

This also resolves UBI’s “billionaire’s dilemma” – why give someone like Bill Gates a basic income? The answer is that Gates would simply return that UBI through his taxes – and help pay for others. But if Gates becomes suddenly destitute, the UBI will still be showing up for him to use every month. And since his tax bill will drop, he’ll become a net beneficiary rather than contributor.

In addition to logical errors about actual cash flows, many people fail to consider the enormous administrative cost savings realized by eliminating most of the current wasteful bureaucracy. A June 2018 interview with U.K. global innovation foundation, Nesta, Vinay Gupta explained:

We’re paying a stupendous amount of money for means testing so we can try and kick people off benefits. This is the kind of thinking that comes when you don’t really accept that your citizens have rights. We think of them as entitlements, not rights. In theory, we have a welfare state that’s supposed to take care of people. In practice, we’ve built a bureaucracy that denies people access to services.

You can create a better society by going in at the bottom and making a floor that people can’t fall beneath. That floor is not an expensive thing to maintain. We can introduce this nationally and globally.

So how do we decide how much basic income is basic enough and how do we pay for it? These are two common questions that, to some, sound like completely valid and

equally insurmountable obstacles. But in fact, these two questions serve quite nicely to focus us on the precise mechanics of the policy at hand. And for those inclined toward more thorough analysis, those questions provide ample opportunities for theorizing and modeling various means and methods for sustainable circulation of currency, often discussed on the /r/BasicIncome Reddit. If you haven't ever read the FAQ there, now is a good time to take another break and go check it out, either online, or here. Thanks again to the miracle of the open-source ethic that we've been talking about, we have formatted a print version for readers, here in the Appendix, under a Creative Commons license, with all credit to the community. If you'd like to look at that, we're happy to wait here for a few minutes.

Did you go read the FAQ? We hope so. Especially if you have never heard of Reddit before, or don't have easy access to this vital online community. Understanding the breadth and depth of the policy rigor of the /r/BasicIncome community will come in handy, later in the book. For now, let's move on.

In April 2017, The Atlantic magazine reminded us that:

[Martin Luther] King argued that the guaranteed income should be "pegged to the median of society," and rise automatically along with the U.S. standard of living. "To guarantee an income at the floor would simply perpetuate welfare standards and freeze into the society poverty conditions," he wrote. Was it feasible? Maybe. He noted an estimate by John Kenneth Galbraith that the government could create a generous guaranteed income with \$20 billion, which, as the economist put it, was "not much more than we will spend the next fiscal year to rescue freedom and democracy and religious liberty as these are defined by 'experts' in Vietnam" (Weissmann, emphasis added).

While median income is a reasonable index for the amount of basic income, today, we favor indexing to a dividend derived from GDP. This, because we live in a world that is rapidly evolving beyond usefulness of twentieth-century style wage negotiation as a market-derived value. Robots and software cannot negotiate for wages. As the need for wages decreases, the idea of wages becomes increasingly vestigial. Indexing to a defunct value makes little sense in the mid to long run. Any designer in any field will remind us of the primacy of early design.

In contrast to wages, productivity will only continue to increase and improve as AI and automation evolves. Productivity is a metric that will continue to be fundamentally relevant, measurable, and representational of aggregate labor output, even as the labor is increasingly performed by machines and artificial intelligence. This is why we strongly advocate indexing the amount of basic income to national per capita GDP. Specifically, 50% per capita GDP, as introduced in the opening paragraphs of this book.

According to a 2012 Cato Institute report, “In total, the United States spends nearly \$1 trillion every year to fight poverty. That amounts to \$20,610 for every poor person in America, or \$61,830 per poor family of three.”³⁹ This figure reveals that we are already spending two-thirds of a livable basic income – that 50% per capita GDP – in the most wasteful ways possible. So where does the money come from? If you’ve skipped ahead or need a refresher, feel free to page back to the section titled, “Ending Poverty Directly,” where we address that question in more detail. Here, the most immediate funding is realized by redirecting all that wasteful welfare state spending toward productive investment in the nearly immediate economic health and stability achieved through Universal Income Security.

This is the principal we are talking about, and which politicians of all stripes can get behind. Universal Income Security.

People can be against entitlements, people can be against welfare, even food stamps and housing subsidies, but who can possibly be against Universal Income Security? We can differ about how to achieve that objective, but anyone who says they want a society characterized by Universal Income Insecurity will not be regarded as credible. During our lifetimes, Income Security has been rigidly coupled to labor. However, life hasn’t always been that way and we are now in a time known as reversion to the mean. Society has flown so far off the charts, that gravity alone is forcing it back toward long-term equilibrium. In this case, that means decoupling income from wages, wage labor, aka jobs.

Let's get on with the math. As of Q1 2023 and as calculated by Wolfram|Alpha, 50% of U.S. per capita GDP is \$39,566, up an incredible 29.3% from Q1 2018’s \$30,476.00 at the publication of the first edition of this book, just five years ago. That means, based on the Cato Institute numbers on existing anti-poverty spending, we only need to fund a 30% gap to achieve a modest living wage level basic income “at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances” as MLK demanded in the Poor People's Campaign.

According to St. Louis Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED), the most recent 2021 Real Median Personal Income in the United States (MEPAINUSA672N) is \$37,522 (a stunning 20% increase over 2016’s \$31,099.00, published in the first edition). These figures illustrate how a real market indexed UBI automatically rebalances according to conditions, a very encouraging real-world cross check to our model.

In an economy that evolves beyond labor-driven wages as the sole source of income security, this provides an important timing signal to policymakers. It means that we are still, since 2018, solidly in this “Goldilocks” time frame where wages have not yet utterly collapsed, so the transition from wages to productivity-indexed universal income security will be the least disruptive to both the economy and to individual lifestyles and expectations.

The timing to implement this cutover is now.

In contrast, some pop-cultural “calculations” to determine the amount of basic income begin with the poverty line. This elusive and fickle metric, a derivative of the otherwise admirable GINI coefficient, is simply not the right benchmark for countless reasons that have been well understood for decades.

“The poverty line budget is based on the assumption that parents are good financial managers, and that both business and community facilities are adequate so that they can do a good job of rearing children with minimal income. Since these assumptions are known to be false for most ADC families, many groups have argued that the poverty line is not an adequate level of income to permit families to break out of the 'prison of poverty.’”⁴⁰

On the vital question of “how much is basic” we cannot possibly overstate or reiterate MLK’s sentiments loud enough or often enough, when he said, ***“To guarantee an income at the floor (poverty level) would simply perpetuate welfare standards and freeze into the society poverty conditions.”*** It will be the ultimate catastrophe if this happens, and an inexcusable repetition of history, for we know that this – setting the amount of basic income at, or just barely above the poverty level – is precisely what killed basic income in the early 1970.

Nevertheless, many back-of-the-envelope calculations begin with arbitrary round numbers, like Charles Murray’s infamous \$10,000 figure, which even Murray said was essentially pulled out of nowhere, only in order to advance a conversation; but it appears that as soon as any number is put into ink or pixels, there arises a vocal constituency to defend the ink blots and LCD dots as somehow sacrosanct. There is literally nothing but empty talk supporting any of these round numbers. No math, just feelings, rote repetition, and Twitter trolling.

Several well-meaning, yet still not fully informed politicians propose other round numbers for unconditional basic income. Most notably, 2020 U.S. Presidential candidate Andrew Yang proposes a Freedom Dividend of \$1,000 per month.

While we applaud the concept of the Freedom Dividend in principle, it certainly communicates the right rationale for achieving universal Income Security, the \$1,000 per month number only shares an accidental serendipity with the current Federal Poverty Level of \$12,000. Yet, many of the most vocal basic income activists to date, have championed and cheered for this non-mathematical sheer coincidence as lending credibility to yet another round number that was originally pulled completely out of thin air.

That said, Yang is right about other important consequences of the unconditional basic income as a Freedom Dividend. It will absolutely grow the economy, which is another reason why basic income must be flexible and indexed to collective growth. The

Yang2020.com website states that, “A Universal Basic Income at this (\$1000 per month) level would permanently grow the economy by 12.56 to 13.10 percent—or about \$2.5 trillion by 2025—and it would increase the labor force by 4.5 to 4.7 million people. Putting money into people’s hands and keeping it there would be a perpetual boost and support to job growth and the economy.”

Yet, despite this growth, Yang’s approach effectively freezes the basic income in carbonite, by requiring that, “Any change to the Freedom Dividend would require a constitutional amendment.” This is a terrible idea. This is like a poison pill in Yang’s proposal. We do not live in a static world, much less economy. Every part of any healthy and sustainable ecosystem or economy is dynamically interdependent in rational and mutually beneficial ways. Freezing overnight interest rates manipulates the economy in ways that seem great in the short term, but as we’ve seen time and time again, freezing key components of the system eventually blows up the entire economy. Such would be the case with Yang’s static, fixed basic income. We are grateful for his advocacy, and hope that minor course corrections can help us all reach the desired outcome of actionable public policy that establishes Income Security – as we’ve said repeatedly – as a fundamental Human Right, as articulated in UDHR Article 25.

In every generation, there are people passionate about reinventing the wheel or who, when a thought like basic income is presented or occurs to them, believe that they are the original thinker of that thought in the entire universe. For them, the idea is something unexpected and brand new, even if it has existed for millennia. The initial reaction for many people, when faced with new information like this, is to resist. To not change things too much, or too soon. This leads to the mainstay political tactic of incrementalism.

In the case of establishing universal Income Security, incrementalism suggests we, “just start with any small basic income amount; anything is better than nothing, then we can increase it over time.” This sounds reasonable at first blush but is extremely risky for several well-demonstrated historical reasons.

Legendary U.S. statesman Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote that, “The incrementalist hypothesis is not just descriptive, it is also normative: it asserts that change in a democratic society not only has to be incremental, but ought to be. Marginal reforms, it is held, by never altering too much, being always subject to relatively easy corrective measures, produce better decisions and pose less a threat to democratic consensus” (Moynihan, 551).

Moynihan goes on to explain how incrementalism may seem to work in theory, but all too often fails in practice. This is especially true in cases of utterly dilapidated public policy, such today’s welfare state. Just like dilapidated buildings, there is a point at

which repairs make no sense whatsoever and the old structure must be torn down to make way for a better structure, with better materials, better stability, better features.

Most Americans now share the opinion that the current welfare state is beyond repair. After decades and decades of failed “welfare reform” legislation, it is now abundantly clear that an ongoing strategy of incremental repairs will simply be too costly and the gains so infinitesimally small as to make no sense whatsoever. Most important of all, for our conversation, is the fact that it is incrementalism that literally killed basic income in the late 1960s and early 1970’s. Incrementalism in establishing a true living wage level basic income will kill the policy again if advocates cave into this doomed approach.

In his detailed book review of Moynihan’s, *The Politics of Guaranteed Income*, Martin Mayor wrote, “The problem, which Moynihan lays out very clearly and fairly, was circular and unresolvable. [Politically,] FAP had to be set low enough (\$1,600 per year for a family of four) to fit into a feasible federal budget and maintain a rational appetite for work. This works out to \$10,240 per year in 2018 dollars (see FAP in the glossary), essentially equivalent to the popular \$1,000 per month basic income meme propagated on social media in 2018; with a supposedly generous 20% waiter’s tip thrown in, to bring the figure up to the Federal Poverty Level. To set a basic income at this level, based upon the claim that people who make \$1 above FPL have escaped poverty, is ludicrous, to put it kindly.

Not surprisingly, the FAP figure was so low that supplements (most notably, food stamps, Medicaid, and public-housing subsidies) were required to keep alive those who were stuck with nothing else. Recipients who got jobs would at designated income points lose not only portions of their FAP grants, but also their eligibility for the supplements. At these points, the “notch effects,” as Moynihan calls them, would provide strong disincentives to work. Without the supplements, no liberal support at all—Moynihan himself wouldn’t have bought it. With the supplements, no conservative support at all—Moynihan himself was itchy about notches” (Mayer).

The undeniable, specific policy failure of fifty years ago – setting the basic income level too low; namely, at or near the federal poverty level – is precisely the obstacle that most threatens the efficacy and utility of unconditional basic income policy, today.

Underlying these decades of tactical debates about how to end poverty responsibly and effectively, is not a question of whether the math works; is not whether the economy grows or not; or whether the boogiemer of inflation might be perturbed, like Godzilla. It's not even the case that debate over the specific amount of UBI might be contentious, although each of those objections are too-often used like a zombie strawman army to derail productive legislation. At the end of the day, in the unavoidably devolutionary realm of herd-instinct political perceptions, the loudest shouting inevitably surrounds grandma and grandpa's number one trigger word when it comes to ending poverty: entitlement. Ever since Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, these are the exact same political posturing obstacles that most threaten unconditional basic income policy, today. Once a talking head spews that word like chaff into the discussion space, all coherence is hopelessly scattered. Unless we can develop a countermeasure to that crude and grossly outdated World War II anti-radar tactic.

What if we agreed to end all entitlements? That would, in one sentence, immediately vaporize the zombie strawman army. The cost of this method is, however, that policy makers must stand resolute on the 50% per capita GDP index as the baseline measure of Income Security. If policy makers cave in on this vital metric and strip all entitlements in exchange for a paltry basic income, the outcome will be beyond catastrophic; and may even prove the Bolsheviks right after all, in the end. Wouldn't it be nice to avoid that debacle, this time around? We think so.

The slogan "Basic Income isn't Left, or Right, it's Forward" has been a rallying cry for the movement over the past decade. However, to move forward successfully, will require unwavering commitment to a living wage level basic income. This commitment can't possibly be overstated. To achieve such a bold policy transition, to truly dismantle the welfare state as we've known it in a way that minimizes and even reduces harm as compared to the current regime, will require an unlikely Basic Income Alliance of bureaucracy-hating conservatives, libertarian socialists, techno progressives, compassionate anarchists, and many others, spanning the entire fragmented political spectrum. Only by standing as one, can we successfully insist upon fulfilling MLK's demand for, "a guaranteed annual income at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances."

The End of Entitlements: Social Security as Income Security

The industrialization principle of *Job Security* has long since evolved into the post-automation human right to *Income Security*,⁴¹ as articulated in Article 25 of the UDHR.

Yet, we cling to old beliefs and behaviors with all the conviction of a drowning person pushing her rescuer under the water, which will only kill both.

We suggested that one way to render the chaff of entitlements less effective is to reframe the conversation to completely do away with entitlements. Like the earlier analogy about buildings, the current welfare state is simply far too dilapidated to rebuild or reform, so we can dispense with the mummified, zombified concept of welfare reform, altogether.

Americans from across the entire twentieth-century political spectrum have the exceedingly rare opportunity to unite in the cause of ending entitlements and welfare as we've known it, once and for all. Ironically, the biggest pushback to this strategy is most likely to come from out of touch elders on both sides of the aisle.

Regardless of generational pushback, it's the end of their Welfare State and the rise of the Security State, like it or not. If there is any small consolation to be had in living in a surveillance capitalism security state, then let it be that a living wage level of basic income isn't about entitlement at all, it's about security. Income Security.

In the post 9/11 world, America has taken great pains to secure its airports, transportation systems, banking systems, computer networks, and public spaces. What remains to be done is the work of hardening our economic security system. After all, given all those other forms of structural security, without economic security, no society will be safe and secure for long. Throughout history, nothing leads to civil unrest quite as quickly as people whose basic human needs are not being met. It's the plot of countless video games, movies, paintings, and art since ancient times. It's a political historian's cliché. So, anyone who is committed to strengthening the security infrastructure of the United States cannot deny that robust, scalable, and decentralized Income Security is fundamental to achieving the objective of national security.

Another effective way to defuse the "entitlement bomb" in welfare reform and Income Security discussions is by constantly repeating the fact that basic income is not an entitlement, it is a dividend. A Citizen Dividend. This is a two-fer when it comes to dispelling old policy specters, as people who are obsessed with immigration policy can rest assured our national Income Security is not being wasted on non-citizens or visa holders. It's also a two-fer for pushback, because immigration advocates will doubtlessly defend the current system, as they ought, given their objectives.

The way to address this is to pressure neighbor countries to declare their own citizen dividends, so that the citizens of each nation will also participate proportionately in their local economies, dramatically alleviating, if not eliminating the fundamental drivers of large-scale immigration: economic desperation and the violence born of that desperation. As we end economic desperation in our own nation, and in the world, we will dramatically decrease the violence and unrest born of that desperation.

This part is not rocket science, Income Security is, in a very practical sense, the foundation for all national and global security. When people's basic needs are met, there is no desperation creating negative incentives to seek out the fulfillment of those needs by any means necessary. The only thing that is different today is that we are no longer living at the dawn of the industrial revolution and so the paths to prosperity of that era are not the paths to prosperity in the post-automation era.

Today, as we've begun to address here, the most vital infrastructure needed to end poverty as we've known it is a strong, coherent, and meta-partisan narrative framework that all advocates can adopt, left, right, center, and orthogonal. Income Security as a National Security priority is one such narrative frame. The end of the Welfare State and the rise of the Dividend State is another.

Without the stability of Income Security, there can be no resilient Social Security. Without resilient Social Security, there can be no robust and lasting National Security. We have always lived in a mixed economy, one in which free market stakeholders and participants are rewarded with dividends. As citizens, we are all stakeholders and participants in America, Inc., aka the United States of America, regardless of status or station, job or career title, work, or vocation. Stay at home parents and single parents contribute as much, often more, to the industrial production of new human components for America, Inc. We all have something to contribute, and we all contribute to the generation and growth of U.S. GDP, whether in a company or in the home, in both tangible and intangible ways, direct and indirect ways, and we are each rightly due a Citizen's Dividend share from America, Inc., just like any shareholder of any other business enterprise.

To re-frame the "e" word, entitlements, it is foundational to our market economy that shareholders are entitled dividends; so, whenever that word is brought up, bring up the entitlement of shareholders and remind listeners that we are all shareholders in America, Inc. So long as the citizen's dividend is indexed to the real economy, at 50% per capita GDP, a level sufficient to unambiguously and incontestably "sustain life in decent circumstances," so long as each citizen's Freedom Dividend is indexed to empirical market performance and not hastily hitched to some arbitrary feel-good number that "feels right" or "politically plausible" to this or that vocal minority, then we can do away with all other entitlements. All of them. Now that's a radical proposal from both sides of the aisle. It's radical to end the welfare state, and it's radical to end poverty while doing so. This is what adapting to a Post-Automation Anthropocene looks like.

Next, we must face what some might consider a rather inconvenient truth, the fact that, when pen meets paper to make Income Security a basic Human Right for all Americans, it won't be a purely unconditional basic income. There will be conditions. Conditions of age. Conditions of economic metrics (indexed to GDP). Many of us, as

long-time activists, will have to learn to live with some practical political realities that our pristine visions might prefer to eschew. While that idealism is fantastic to fuel a movement, transmuting that energy into concrete legislation is necessarily fraught with implementation constraints.

While many have spent time agonizing over how to achieve perfect universality and unconditionality, what we know is that when the incomes of parents are secure, the lives of children are secure. So, we need not and must not fret about the dollar amount of basic income allocated to children. This is a perfectionist's unnecessary layer of complexity. Also, without any economic benefit specifically attached to having children, those habituated to voicing consternation about so-called welfare queens will need to find some other mythological creature to dread. By eliminating even the appearance of an economic incentive to have children, however meager those incentives have been, we eliminate that fundamentally racist objection. In this case again, we must unrelentingly and unapologetically defend the living wage level basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP.

Only when potential parents are unambiguously able to "sustain life in decent circumstances," for themselves, can we then insist that they combine citizen dividends to constitute enough to raise children. This becomes a powerfully supportive pro-family policy, as people will benefit by staying together to raise children, versus the current system that punishes parents that stay together. This isn't an afterthought; this is another powerful talking point that needs to be prominent in any policy discussions of why UBI must, without compromise, must be indexed to 50% per capita GDP. If the amount of basic income is low balled, families are low balled. That's not the kind of Post-Automation Anthropocene anyone with a conscience wants to live in.

By reframing basic income within the principle of Income Security, we build upon centuries of established American progress. Income Security as a policy priority is nothing new to Americans. The people of the United States have long supported Income

Security as a fundamental human right, and in the proportional budget chart below, we see the ratio of the budget prioritized to Income Security in 2016.

It is worth noting that the top three line items demonstrate the longstanding top

Health Care		National Defense		Income Security	
Medicare	Medicaid and Childrens Health				
Social Security		Net Interest	Veterans Benefits	Transportation	

Figure 4 — U.S. 2016 Budget

priorities of the American people. Namely, Health Care, National Defense, and Income Security. These are the top three major principles that Americans have agreed upon, generation after generation, as the foremost concerns of our commonwealth. While accurate, the accounting subdivisions reflected in this chart may be a little visually diluted, as they do not entirely depict how fundamental Income Security really is, as an historical strategic domestic policy priority of the American people. The reason why the chart is a bit diluted is this: Social Security, Other Income Security, Veteran Income and Housing Support, and Educational Financial Aid are all direct forms of Income Security in and of themselves yet are allocated across several other programs.

When combined, these subcategories make obvious the fact that Income Security is the long-standing consensus policy priority of any advanced post-automation society. Income Security means Social Security, and Social Security means Income Security.

Particularly, for a society wherein only half or less of the population are required in the workforce, as measured by the Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate. This is a point that the United States has been steadily progressing toward for decades and toward which progress is accelerating.

So, here we see that, as Americans, we have long agreed that Income Security is not just a vital humanitarian priority, but it is vital to the national security of the United States. Detractors, driven by various forms of ideological intolerance and even hatred for the idea of mutual aid and interdependence, tend to rail against this situation as proof of some kind of horrible communist plot to create a permanent nanny state in which nobody ever lifts a finger to do meaningful work. This is a troll's ruse. It would be one thing if these detractors came from a place of genuine concern for people flourishing – because meaningful work, in the form of art, sport, science, craftsmanship, labor, etc., is still a common activity through which many, if not most humans gradually come to realize their true nature and full potential – but trolls do not come from that place. Many opponents of Income Security as a policy priority will backpedal and say that what they mean is, work provides dignity, therefore jobs must be required to receive a single penny of income, and that it is somehow character building for people to live under the existential threat of homelessness and hunger. Upon the slightest deeper cross-examination, it is clear that many come from a raw disdain for anyone else living a life characterized by sufficient leisure time for them to realize their own intrinsic interests, talents, and motivations in serving the community, and pursuing those self-actualized motivations, versus the dominant twentieth century paradigm of obeying the industrial capitalist regime and “paying the same dues I had to pay.” This is just plain jealousy and hatred, and it contributes no value to the discussion, whatsoever. As policy makers, we have an obligation to listen and empathize, but also to move forward with compassion and clarity of conviction.

Markets Support Income Security

When mainstream market publications like MarketWatch start giving a topic serious consideration, you know that an idea is ripe for implementation. Just as this book was going to print, MarketWatch Assistant Commentary Editor Jonathan Burton, penned “The case for paying every American a dividend on the nation’s wealth.” Addressing vestigial, skeptical public sentiments about so-called handouts, or free money, sentiments which are rapidly coming to an end, he wrote:

Ironically, this same public has no problem with such “handouts” as income-tax cuts and home-mortgage deductions. “We give money away for free to rich

people all the time,” said Rakeen Mabud, program director of the Roosevelt Institute’s 21st Century Economy and Economic Inclusion programs.

In fact, when proposed as a way to counter job losses to technology, basic income finds firmer support. A Northeastern University/Gallup poll taken in October 2017 shows Americans about evenly split on a guaranteed minimum income for workers whose jobs are replaced by artificial intelligence, with 48% in favor and 52% opposed. Additionally, 46% of respondents said that, under those circumstances, they would pay higher personal income taxes, while 80% agreed that companies profiting from AI should pay more taxes to help finance a national UBI program (emphasis added).

This corroborates the vast evidence that we’ve presented throughout this book, that public policy is far behind public sentiment about the principle of Income Security. The only remaining opposition is from the last vestiges of a generation that lived in a completely different world, the world of the 1920’s, while we are now moving directly into the 2020’s. Our strategy that LISA be legislated as an Automation Dividend, or Citizen Dividend, Data Dividend, Freedom Dividend, or Technology Dividend, as variously declared by those whom we’ve cited herein, is further bolstered by MarketWatch.

Perhaps the boldest plan yet to provide Americans with a universal basic income is the American Solidarity Fund (ASF), a dividend-paying social wealth fund for the U.S. that its creator, Matt Bruenig, founder of the People’s Policy Project, unveiled in August.

A one-time 3% tax on the market capitalization of U.S. public companies would seed the fund with around \$1 trillion in cash or stock. Then, an ongoing market-cap tax of 0.5% would keep money flowing into the ASF. The fund would also receive proceeds from a 5% tax on initial public stock offerings, and a 3% tax on mergers and acquisitions.

“This is a piece of the capital stock of the country that we all collectively own and collectively benefit from,” Bruenig said in an interview. “All 300 million of us are going to come together and collectively own 30% of the country’s wealth.”

This is a wonderfully detailed way of describing precisely how our existing Social Security Administration can be modified to operate, without the need for even more government agencies. If you’ve read this far, congratulations, you are about to learn exactly how the ASF, along with all the other brilliant, crowdsourced policy work that has transpired over the past decade, all fits together to complete the picture. The central ambition of this book is to help catalyze the synthesis of the best of our collective

intelligence into immediate and actionable legislation that finally manifests Franklin D. Roosevelt's inspired and inspiring goal – freedom from want – for all Americans.

Hawaiian Legislative Leadership

In June of 2017, the U.S. State of Hawai'i become the first state to establish a universal basic income task force, stating that “efforts to increase wages, benefits, and working conditions are important steps to assist local families in the short-term, but a paradigm shift in policy will soon be necessary as automation, innovation, and disruption begin to rapidly worsen economic inequality by displacing significant numbers of jobs,” and further that, “the Legislature declares that all families in Hawai'i deserve basic financial security and that it is in the public interest to ensure economic sustainability for our people” (HCR89).

In 2017, Ida Rademacher, Executive Director of the Aspen Institute's Financial Security Program wrote:

Historically, work has been a foundation of wealth. Work is a source of income, and if that income is sufficient and stable, working families can begin to save and develop a financial cushion that can build resilience in the face of economic shocks.” She adds, “But in today’s economy, long-standing bonds between work and wealth are wearing thin. Workers face anemic wage growth, unpredictable schedules, volatile incomes, growing debt, and limited assets. Moreover, the nature of work is changing dramatically, as businesses increasingly manage their own risks and costs by structuring employment in contractually different ways. Depending on the definition, as many as 40 percent of workers are now part of the contingent workforce, identifying primarily as “1099,” or “gig” workers (Rademacher).

The widening polarization and escalating rancor over this question of what it means to end poverty in an age when Industrial Era jobs become increasingly scarce and even irrelevant, has been sufficient to effectively derail all previous efforts to achieve this almost universally desirable end.

Our experience may differ, but when asked whether it's a common human aspiration to end poverty, virtually all the humans we've ever queried on this topic answer with an emphatic yes. They differ on how to achieve that outcome, but almost universally agree that ending poverty is a desirable outcome that will dramatically improve the human experience. Now, to say that ending poverty is a universally desired outcome, is not at all to say that it is a universally equal outcome. This is vitally

important, because trolls will jump on this sound bite like gremlins, from the movie, Gremlins.

Livable Income Security neither legislates nor guarantees equal outcomes.

Livable Income Security affirms that every individual is endowed with equal potential.

Livable Income Security establishes the definition of a level playing field, upon the bedrock of equal opportunity.

Livable Income Security is not equality of outcome, it is equality of foundation. Livable Income Security does not make sure that everyone crosses the finish line at the same time, or that all win first place participation trophies. It is equality at the starting line. The current system is like an oval running track that paints a straight starting line across all the lanes and then saying that each runner has “equal opportunity” to run the race, while staying strictly in their own lane. Livable Income Security means that everyone begins with the same starting blocks under their feet and with lines placed such that the same distance is to be run, as we each begin this all too brief of a sprint called life on Earth.

While we’re addressing a few key trolling tactics, some naysayers go so far as to claim that ending poverty with a livable basic income won’t end all human afflictions, therefore it’s not worth prioritizing or not worth doing at all. While it’s true that there are as many reasons for human suffering as there are human navels, this criticism deflects from the point by implying that basic income advocates claim that ending poverty will end all human suffering. That’s patently absurd, but the disingenuous, trolling, gas-lighting, dogpiling, sea-lioning, devil’s advocate zombie strawman hordes are not to be underestimated.

Regardless of the decades of inertia slowing the progress of basic income, and despite today’s obnoxious and regressive online troll armies, the timing for seriously crafting basic income policy couldn’t be better. Any lingering detractors of basic income amongst the democratic “resist” movement would be well advised to recall Victor Hugo, “One resists the invasion of armies; one does not resist the invasion of ideas.” This resistance is often paraphrased as, “There is one thing stronger than all the armies in the world, and that is an idea whose time has come.”

At the 2018 celebration to mark the centennial of Nelson Mandela's birth, held by the Nelson Mandela Foundation, former U.S. President Barack Obama delivered a speech titled, "Renewing the Mandela Legacy & Promoting Active Citizenship in a Changing World." President Obama said, "For all the magnificence of the global economy, all the shining skyscrapers that have transformed the landscape around the world, entire communities, entire neighborhoods, entire cities, entire regions have been bypassed," Obama declared. "For far too many people, the more things have changed, the more things stay the same. It's not just money that a job provides," Obama said. "It provides dignity and structure and a sense of place and a sense of purpose. So, we're gonna have to consider new ways of thinking about these problems, like a universal income" (Chutel).

We're gonna have to consider new ways of thinking about these problems, like a universal income." – President Barack Obama

Covering the Mandela Foundation event for Quartz, Lynsey Chutel added,

He supported the idea of universal basic income, a policy idea that has gathered support in recent years, to give all residents of a country an unconditional cash payment instead of tax benefits, grants, or other social-service program support.

Economics, he said, must work to protect democracy. In a world where objective facts and a common view of humanity are in dispute, Obama said, those who share his beliefs [are] going to have to work harder and smarter (emphasis added).

We can begin the work right here, right now, and the true American leaders of the twenty-first century have already begun the legislative efforts to make a living wage level basic income "at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances," an immediate priority. But to be successful in the long run, we can't go it alone. From Hawai'i's state leadership to federal leadership, the journey from chaos to community can only be made together.

A New LIFT and the Working Families Tax Credit

The serendipitous timing, and rapidly growing grass-roots strength of conviction in support of the scope of work outlined in this book, has continued to impress and amaze us right up to our publication date. In recent weeks, the open-source peer review of growing numbers of Basic Income advocates has become increasingly manifest, in the form of a rising chorus of voices in favor of the fundamental tactics we have built a case for, in this book. This is not by chance, mistake, coincidence, or random happenstance. We have spent years working tirelessly through various channels on social media to encourage independent thought and investigation of our specific approach, so that others would take the time to dig in deeper, and either debunk or verify our findings, according to their own direct analysis and experience. Accordingly, the practical wisdom of upgrading the existing Social Security system to achieve the specific domestic policy objective of unconditional, livable, Income Security is becoming independently verified and endorsed by rapidly growing numbers of the most well-informed and hardworking activists, thinkers, and policy makers in the field. The time for the approaches outlined in this book has truly arrived.

On October 19, 2018, Co-chair of the Economic Security Project and Advisor to the Aspen Institute Future of Work Initiative, Natalie Foster wrote:

Right now, at the richest time in history in the wealthiest country in the world, millions of Americans are teetering on the brink of financial collapse. They are only one car repair, one medical bill, one family illness away from potential homelessness. This is not an accident, it's a design feature—our economic system is built to benefit the very top, while everyone else is finding it harder and harder to make ends meet.

Fortunately, we have leaders already in office who recognize the struggle millions of Americans face in covering their basic expenses and are putting forward bold new legislation to provide financial relief to the working and middle class.

The most recent bill, the LIFT the Middle Class Act, was introduced yesterday by Senator Kamala Harris of California. It provides relief for low and middle-income families with a new tax credit that puts money back in working people's pockets—helping to lift them out of poverty or give them a buffer against unforeseen expenses. Covering households making less than \$100,000 a year, the bill provides up to \$500 a month as a regular drumbeat of financial security (Foster).

In a parallel effort, the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC) is a long overdue modernization of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). “\$500 per month is given to every working adult who lives in a household making less than \$50,000 per year. Anyone who qualifies for the current federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is eligible, as well as middle-class people, younger people, caregivers, and students. This proposal is designed to dramatically simplify the complexity of the federal EITC, making the benefit more predictable and easier to understand.”⁴²

Moving forward with such bold legislation will not be easy, but in September 2018, Rep. Bonnie Watson Coleman of New Jersey began laying important groundwork by introducing H.R. 6873, the EITC Modernization Act of 2018:

The bill is written to be an addition either to the current federal EITC or a much-expanded EITC like that envisioned in the GAIN Act, the legislation proposed by Rep. Ro Khanna (D-CA) and Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH). Together with the GAIN Act, it approximates pretty closely what a first version of a Working Families Tax Credit could look like at the federal level.

“We know that the economy isn’t working for people, we know that wages are stagnant, and we know that it’s getting harder and harder for average families to make ends meet. We also know that the EITC works to close those gaps, so expanding eligibility to those seeking better paychecks through higher education or working the equivalent of a part-time job to care for a family member just makes sense,” said Rep. Watson Coleman in a statement on the bill’s introduction. “These folks work long hours and multiple jobs to have enough income to cover day to day expenses. If we can cut taxes for billionaires and corporations, we should be chomping at the bit to help people striving for the middle class” (Ruben).

One potential disadvantage to tax credit-based programs is that you lose the credit, the moment you lose your “real job.” While WFTC appears to address that, the language must be indelible, allowing individuals to self-declare the work they do, without answering to any bureaucracy, old or new.

Nevertheless, given all the developments over the past several years, the Overton Window for a living wage level basic income, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, is wide open as of 2018. Although this opening is inexcusably late, more than fifty years after Martin Luther King’s question, “Where Do We Go from Here?” all the pieces of the puzzle are finally falling into place such that we now can know exactly *where we go from here*. The human and civil right to unconditional Income Security in a post-automation society is neither left or right, it is forward.

* * *

THE LIVABLE INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 2019

While this section can stand on its own, we believe that its value is greatly enhanced for those who have reviewed and understand the building blocks described throughout this book. Long-time researchers or students of basic income will likely understand the basis for our key tenants; however, we still encourage readers to take a look at the specifics in earlier chapters, because we believe that the deep groundwork laid in this book dramatically strengthens the case for the approach outlined here.

Over the past decade, we have witnessed significant, exciting, and extremely promising quantum leaps in the level of public awareness and serious discussion about basic income. We have even witnessed a whole new generation of policy makers and policy-minded citizens running new rounds of basic income trials, from neighborhood, to city, to nation-state scale, worldwide. However, to date, none of these efforts have risen much above the level of updated academic experiment or isolated initiative.

The bottom line is that if the American people want the ideas in this book to become reality, we are going to have to do it ourselves. Therefore, we propose a draft Livable Income Security Act of 2019 (LISA) be developed by the community of over 53,000 democratic participants at /r/BasicIncome on Reddit and any who choose to join us. If we can draft this legislation as a community and get it on the floor of the US Congress, LISA stands to become one of the first major P2P commons-developed pieces of legislation in U.S. history. This is just one of the ways that democracy can be upgraded for the twenty-first century, but it's an important one.

A Modest Proposal

In his article, "Policy Positions and Political Imaginaries: Framing Basic Income," self-described UK "independent researcher and writer, decentralist and post-libertarian," Chris Shaw, sagaciously wrote:

Basic income is far too often framed in a confusing manner, presented as both a simple policy proposal with particular effects and as a fully realisable political imaginary that encapsulates a development upon the existing political economy. It is also viewed as a tool for market equalisation, making the lone consumer just as powerful as the retail monopolist through the provision of voice in the form of a basic income. In this sense it's a compelling vision, being

compatible across multiple forms of economic or social arrangement and allowing for equality (both of opportunity and to a lesser extent of outcome) to be added onto the current political landscape.

However, this strength of vision is also a weakness of implementation. The attempt to eschew institutional foundations ignores the complexities of execution that would come with a radical political shift that basic income would potentially incur. It also suggests that the confusion between political imaginary and policy tool is inhibitory to actual socio-political developments, as basic income gets caught in an institutional freefall, with the experiments being conducted showing further confusion over the scale of basic income, the funding mechanisms, the territorial base, and the social concepts behind it.

Shaw's clear-eyed, perspicacious analysis is balanced and incisive. We could not agree more with both the strengths and weaknesses he observes in the current policy landscape. Shaw's precise and probing assessments brightly distill most of the assorted variables that we have explored in this work. Our modest proposal consists of an integrated set of crystal-clear strategies, precise tactics, and flexible, adaptive narrative tools for implementing the principles of a Living Wage level Basic Income indexed to 50% per capita GDP, as the most pragmatic way to implement the UDHR Article 25 human right to unconditional Income Security through universal Social Security.

Therefore, we propose LISA as a legislative vehicle to get us from where we are today, to where we want to be, as described from the earliest pages of this book. Among both active current legislative efforts, and historic efforts, including the FAP itself, may be found many worthwhile templates to build upon, without having to start entirely from scratch. Welfare Reform has been a perennially hot political talking point, and there are many good archival documents from which to draw inspiration and guidance in drafting LISA.

Accordingly, this is the time to transition the narrative from advocating for a "basic income" – which sounds like yet another complex government program – to realizing the vastly more pragmatic principle of unconditional Income Security for all Americans, through universal Social Security. Posing the question, "why are you opposed to universal Income Security for all Americans?" is much more difficult for politicians to answer negatively, than asking "are you in favor of basic income?"

With respect to narrative, we can make this transition by stating that what we mean by a *sufficient basic income*, is the obligation to actively defend the established American principle of equitable Income Security for all citizens; a principle which our own national budget has long reflected as absolutely vital to national security (as depicted in the chart in the previous section). Income Security is a principle that Americans have strongly supported and defended all across the political spectrum, specifically in the

form of Social Security. Social Security is simply a conditional basic income. A guaranteed income that is available to those who meet certain conditions of age, or disability. LISA is simply building upon that tradition to recognize that we have been so successful as a society that, we can and must circulate the dividends of our shared success in a manner that provides universal Income Security. The elderly are not the only class of people possessing the fundamental human rights to live a dignified existence. All people are afforded that right, as articulated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Therefore, now is the time for Congress to act and implement LISA, the Living Income Security Act of 2019, which guarantees every American adult, from the post-graduate age of 24, a 50% per capita GDP dividend, circulated monthly through the existing Social Security System. We will explain why we believe that the age of 24 is most appropriate, in this chapter.

Some long-time basic income proponents will argue that this is not a pure, unadulterated *unconditional* basic income; however, we hope that they will join us because what LISA is, is a guaranteed annual income, which is what Martin Luther King Jr., originally proposed. There may be other conditions that apply as well. If native-born citizens must wait until their 24th birthday to begin receiving their own income, shouldn't immigrants need to wait a similar amount of time? The answer is, yes. When a nation commits to providing universal Income Security to its citizens, it is not committing to the whole world. This is why some policy strategists feel strongly that universal Income Security cannot be achieved at the nation level and can only be done if all nations act in accord. We don't hold that view, as it is too convenient as a stall tactic. Of course, if several nations did act at once to implement LISA-equivalent legislation, the benefits would be tremendous. Perhaps the other shoe from the 2008 global meltdown will have dropped by the time you read this book, making this scenario more likely; maybe even inevitable.

However, at the time of this writing, short of a truly profound global crisis – which is not at all out of the question, of course – that level of regional cooperation, let alone global coordination seems unlikely. Therefore, we believe that LISA can and must become the law of the land in the United States of America, as a model for others to follow, as soon as possible. This is American leadership, it's just what we do.

New American citizens will need to pass some other threshold in order to qualify to begin receiving their own dividend share under LISA. Whether that threshold is ultimately the same 24 years that native-born Americans must wait, or an adjusted scale of perhaps half that time, based upon a consistent contribution to per capita GDP, is a debate we will have during the drafting of this landmark civil rights and human rights legislation. Yes, LISA is a nation exercising its prerogative to place the interests and Income Security of its own native-born citizens ahead of those who come later. We can and must remain more open to immigration than ever; however, as a simple

practical matter, one nation cannot end the entire world's poverty, unilaterally, in one fell swoop. These are the principles that demonstrate that UBI is not utopian in the pejorative sense, it is utterly practical. We in the advanced nations can, and must, set a moral example of fair play and a level playing field, the things that certainly made America great, in the first place.

Establishing the principle of Income Security as a human right raises several other interdependent issues that remain unresolved in our society. Ideally, the age of majority, adulthood, should be converged. Age of majority convergence means that all the legal rights and responsibilities of adulthood are conferred by society at the same age. Today, children are allowed to drive at 16 and deemed fit to go fight and die in wars at 18; both before they can legally use cannabis or drink alcohol at the age of 21. We tell people that they are old enough to be trained to fight and possibly be killed in a war, but not to have a drink or take a toke to relieve just a small portion of the astronomical stress involved in shouldering such a responsibility. This is absurd. We hand over the car keys at 16, then we wonder why teen accident rates are so much higher than the rest of the population. This age of majority divergence is an inherited norm with no rational basis other than "the way it's always been." It causes scores of social problems that others have written on, far more extensively than we can address here. While driving age may be an exception (although we argue that it ought not be), anyone who can be granted the ultimate responsibility of a warfighter must also be trusted with all the other rights of adulthood.

Among the reasons that we recruit 18-year-old people into the armed forces are the facts that they are nearing the peak of physical strength in their lives, and not yet fully independent, much less fully developed, mentally and emotionally. That makes them primed for conditioning to engage in horrible, murderous behaviors that many, if not most, go on to regret, after the machismo wears off and the horrors of war are experienced first-hand. As a bit of an aside, a truly volunteer armed forces requires a universal option to opt-out. Yet, statistically, virtually no American 18-year-old possesses the most basic economic right to say no. Millions only choose the military out of economic necessity. That does not make for a voluntary warfighting force and makes a strong case for the age at which universal basic income ought to be instituted. Particularly when the right to say no applies to the work of killing human beings. While it's not news that the poor fight the plutocrat's wars, a living wage level basic income, for the first time in history, can finally begin to challenge this dark alchemy.

The National Minimum Drinking Age Act of 1984, which effectively set the drinking age at 21, demonstrates that we can converge the age of majority on issues that matter most to the American people. There are strong reasons to revisit the age of majority as a sociocultural rite of passage in the twenty-first century. Voting age, consent age, smoking age, marriage age, gambling age, drinking age, driving age, military age, and

livable basic income age are all aspects of adulthood that should only be conferred upon adults.

In the current system, we treat each of these responsibilities differently, both federally and by state. There are no sound moral or scientific reasons for this piecemeal adulthood tradition to continue into the twenty-second century. Our understanding of human development is orders of magnitude better today than it was just fifty years ago. In many countries, people are not granted the rights nor expected to shoulder the responsibilities of adulthood until they are 20 or 21 years of age. From Puerto Rico to New Zealand, Japan, Taiwan, Singapore, and as far flung as Zambia, many other countries recognize the fact that, in an increasingly complex post-automation world, young adults need time and experience to help them to be successfully prepared to shoulder the burdens and enjoy the benefits of adulthood. Why should the United States keep lagging in the 21st century?

According to the University of Rochester Medical School, “The rational part of a teen’s brain isn’t fully developed and won’t be until age 25 or so” (URMC). Other scientific measures suggest that an adult brain is not fully formed until age 30. While specifics are far beyond the scope of our work here, there is a sound, evidence-based argument that the age of majority should probably converge at 26; which is the current age at which children are allowed to remain on a parent’s health insurance policy. In the short term, regardless of a preponderance of data supporting a later age of maturity, due to historical inertia and precedence, it is far more likely that the current age of majority could possibly be converged at 21. Nevertheless, as a matter of anthropological principal, we do believe that 24 is a better choice for a converged age of majority, in human development terms. Of course, we also understand that, in the current anti-scientific environment, nuanced and sophisticated reasoning is likely a non-starter, for many. So, we also concede the practical fact that the community may force the age of basic income qualification toward 21, or even 18, since that lowest age represents the age of mandatory military service registration; and we would not strongly oppose those efforts, as a practical matter. The model we developed in this book is flexible, adaptable, and scalable, for this very reason.

We can now address the 800-pound gorilla in the room — the lack of both strict unconditionality and universality, when it comes down to real world legislation. While the principles of unconditionality and universality in UBI have been vital to raising public awareness about the urgent need for Income Security in recent decades, we must now face some of the practical legislative conditions that necessarily apply to LISA. For example, as we’ve said, it is utterly impractical that infants receive guaranteed income from the day of birth, therefore, Income Security cannot be perfectly universal or unconditional. When it comes to the practical matter of drafting and passing legislation, there must be parameters and guidelines that define the program. Because children

benefit most when parents are lifted out of poverty, Income Security is a right best held by adults, who bear the full responsibility of raising healthy, happy children up until the age of majority, when those children can then continue the cycle of biological, social, and economic life.

Finally, we can return to our pledge to seek simplicity amidst the complexity we've explored together, by offering a handful of core principles for the consideration of readers, activists, citizen-legislators, public policy geeks, hacks, wonks; and ultimately, for all the hardworking administrative staff, who, working alongside our esteemed local, regional, and national legislators, are indispensable to accomplishing such a monumental task. That mission, should we choose to accept, is to make the Livable Income Security Act into an effective and timely vehicle for converting the ever-expanding energy and momentum of the grass-roots basic income movement, into the kind of historic landmark legislation required to translate our nation's long-established principles of Income Security, and Social Security, into a broadly shared prosperity for the twenty-first century, igniting a revival of equal opportunity for all.

***Income Security** is an individual human right of adults at the age of majority.*

***Livable Income Security** means monthly individual income at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances.*

***Sufficient Income Security** means a measurable standard that is indexed to, and automatically adapts to, the empirical economy as a whole.*

***Upgrading Social Security** means to circulate basic income as an economic dividend to every adult citizen, indexed to 50% per capita GDP, to fulfill the above criteria.*

In this book, we have discussed a number of ways in which these principles can be encoded in policy and enacted into law in a timely manner, with no need for new bureaucracy. In fact, by dramatically reducing bureaucracy. The ultimate outcome remains to be determined through our ongoing collective efforts. While many of the ideas in this book may strike some readers as new, far-fetched, or even absurd, they are

essential and fundamental upgrades to the ideas and ideals that have forged all nations, from the beginning; but particularly, the United States of America. From the very birth of nations as a concept, national security has always been the central role of the nation-state, to enhance and defend the physical, economic, and social security of citizens. Martin Luther King Jr. rightly said that it was incontestable that this work could be completed in 1968. F. Buckminster Fuller said it could all be done by 1985. In 2018, we are both out of time and out of excuses.

To those readers who have shared this journey with us, thank you for braving the in-flight turbulence. We know you have a choice when flying, and far more so, when reading. The privilege of your valuable time and attention is by far the greatest reward for which any author can ever hope. Thank you, mahalo nui loa. In exchange, we hope to have provided a measure of data-driven confidence, along with a dash of strategic and tactical inspiration for the journey ahead, by equipping you with conviction that, as a nation and as people, *we do in fact know how to end poverty*; and have the means to do so at our very fingertips, in this very generation. Together, let's make it so.

* * *

POSTSCRIPT

“No word matters. But man forgets reality and remembers words.” – Roger Zelazny, Lord of Light.

In the words of REM's Michael Stipe, “Oh no, I've said too much. I haven't said enough.” Between those two emotions, our hope is that we've somehow managed to find a middle way, to have covered a complex and at times emotionally charged public policy priority in sufficient detail, without completely overwhelming the average reader. We hope that we have addressed questions posed by the interested, the curious, the skeptic, the cynic, and even those who view themselves as opponents.

If just one opponent becomes a cynic, one cynic become a skeptic, one skeptic becomes curious, or one curious soul develops an active interest in ending poverty as we've known it, immediately, in the next couple of years, we will feel that we've done our duty. We even dare to hope that we might have provided policy makers and especially hard-working staff, to whom the vast majority of the work falls in actually making our cities, states, and nation work at all; with a working document that they can reference and rely upon for guidance on the challenging, but entirely navigable road ahead.

* * *

APPENDIX

Contents of this Appendix are published under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) License
creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/.

Historical Quotations About Basic Income

A brief history of thought on basic income via quotations by some of America's and history's greatest thinkers.

"I'm now convinced that the simplest approach will prove to be the most effective—the solution to poverty is to abolish it directly by a now widely discussed measure: the guaranteed income." – Martin Luther King, Jr.

"Two conditions are indispensable if we are to ensure that the guaranteed [basic] income operates as a consistently progressive measure. First, it must be pegged to the median income of society, not at the lowest levels of income. To guarantee an income at the floor would simply perpetuate welfare standards and freeze into the society poverty conditions. Second, the guaranteed income must be dynamic; it must automatically increase as the total social income grows. Were it permitted to remain static under growth conditions, the recipients would suffer a relative decline. If periodic reviews disclose that the whole national income has arisen, then the guaranteed income would have to be adjusted upward by the same percentage. Without these safeguards a creeping retrogression would occur, nullifying the gains of security and stability." – Martin Luther King, Jr.

"We are demanding ... a guaranteed annual income at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances. It is now incontestable that the wealth and resources of the United States make the elimination of poverty absolutely practical." – Martin Luther King, Jr.

"We should do away with the absolutely specious notion that everybody has to earn a living. It is a fact today that one in ten thousand of us can make a technological breakthrough capable of supporting all the rest. The youth of today are absolutely right in recognizing this nonsense of earning a living. We keep inventing jobs because of this false idea that everybody has to be employed at some kind of drudgery because, according to Malthusian Darwinian

theory he must justify his right to exist. So we have inspectors of inspectors and people making instruments for inspectors to inspect inspectors. The true business of people should be to go back to school and think about whatever it was they were thinking about before somebody came along and told them they had to earn a living.” – F. Buckminster “Bucky” Fuller.

“The goal of the future is full unemployment, so we can play.” – Arthur C. Clarke.

The worker must work for the glory of his handiwork, not simply for pay; the thinker must think for truth, not for fame. The return from your work must be the satisfaction which that work brings you and the world's need of that work. With this, life is heaven, or as near heaven as you can get. Without this — with work which you despise, which bores you, and which the world does not need — this life is hell.” – W.E.B. DuBois.

“I fundamentally disagree with those who think that people must be “forced” to work, or that government should “guarantee” a job. In my view breaking the link between paid work and survival would be a good thing. If people are intrinsically of value, then they have the right to survive with or without working. I therefore think we should guarantee basic income, rather than jobs. Or, to put it another way (and root this argument firmly in human rights), we should guarantee people’s unconditional right to “life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness”: after all, people who are forced to do physically debilitating and mentally unstimulating jobs in order to survive are effectively denied the second and third of these rights. If people don’t have to work to survive, most will find or create work that fulfills themselves and benefits others, and we will all be richer for it.” – Frances Coppola.

“It is a position not to be controverted, he writes, that the earth, in its natural, uncultivated state was, and ever would have continued to be, the common property of the human race.” As the land gets cultivated, “it is the value of the improvement, only, and not the earth itself, that is in individual property. Every proprietor, therefore, of cultivated lands, owes to the community a ground-rent (for I know of no better term to express the idea) for the land which he holds; and it is from this ground-rent that the fund proposed in this plan is to issue.” Out of this fund, “there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property. And also, the sum of ten pounds per annum, during life, to every person now living, of the age of fifty years, and to all others as they shall arrive at that age”. Payments, Paine insists, should be made “to every person, rich or poor”, “because it is in lieu of the natural inheritance,

which, as a right, belongs to every man, over and above the property he may have created, or inherited from those who did." – Thomas Paine.

"The most skillfully combined, and with the greatest foresight of objections, of all the forms of Socialism, is that commonly known as Fourierism. This System does not contemplate the abolition of private property, nor even of inheritance; on the contrary, it avowedly takes into consideration, as elements in the distribution of the produce, capital as well as labour. [...] In the distribution, a certain minimum is first assigned for the subsistence of every member of the community, whether capable or not of labour. The remainder of the produce is shared in certain proportions, to be determined beforehand, among the three elements, Labour, Capital, and Talent." – John Stuart Mill.

"A certain small income, sufficient for necessities, should be secured for all, whether they work or not." – Bertrand Russell.

"Guaranteed income would not only establish freedom as a reality rather than a slogan, it would also establish a principle deeply rooted in Western religious and humanist tradition. Man has the right to live, regardless!" – Erich Fromm.

"Out of this war, the greatest since the beginning of history, a new world must be born, a world that would justify the sacrifices offered by humanity. This new world must be a world in which there shall be no exploitation of the weak by the strong, of the good by the evil; where there will be no humiliation of the poor by the violence of the rich; where the products of intellect, science and art will serve society for the betterment and beautification of life, and not the individuals for achieving wealth. This new world shall not be a world of the downtrodden and humiliated, but of free men and free nations, equal in dignity and respect for man." – Nikola Tesla.

"Everyone can enjoy a life of luxurious leisure if the machine-produced wealth is shared, or most people can end up miserably poor if the machine-owners successfully lobby against wealth redistribution," Hawking answered. "So far, the trend seems to be toward the second option, with technology driving ever-increasing inequality." – Stephen Hawking.

"The assurance of a certain minimum income for everyone, or a sort of floor below which nobody need fall even when he is unable to provide for himself, appears not only to be a wholly legitimate protection against a risk common to all, but a necessary part of the Great

The Post-Automation Era

Society in which the individual no longer has specific claims on the members of the particular small group into which he was born" – Friedrich Hayek.

"If you provide a basic income, you send a powerful message: nobody wants to just sit there and do nothing, we trust you to find a valuable occupation. The idea of morality of work is one of the most insidious tools in the hands of power and increases the bullshit jobs phenomenon." – David Graeber, Anthropologist.

"Society as a whole benefits from a risk-positive environment, and if you can provide a mechanism where anybody can try any stupid commercial idea without risking becoming homeless and indebted, more people will innovate and take risks — and the society using this mechanism will get a competitive edge." – Rick Falkvinge, Founder of the Swedish Pirate Party.

"There is no more urgent economic discussion today than the relationship between income inequality, technology, and the future of work." – Tim O'Reilly, CEO, O'Reilly Media

"Ultimately, we'll need a guaranteed minimum basic income." – Former Secretary of State, Robert Reich.

* * *

Basic Income FAQ

For readers who may not have internet access, or have not heard about Reddit, we are including this open source, community-developed resource from the /r/BasicIncome Reddit for your reference, with the deepest gratitude for all those who have worked with us over the years, completely unpaid, on a volunteer basis, to improve the content of this document for the benefit of others.

Please keep in mind that this is an internet resource, and as such, much of the wording is geared toward the assumption of embedded hyperlinks. This version of the document contains 193 links to additional information – 187 endnotes, 6 inline references – in many respects, the most valuable part of the document. In order to attempt to provide access to the same information for readers, we've extracted the links and provide them at the end of this document. While this print method is nowhere near as useful as hyperlinks, we wanted to do our best to give as many people access to the full information available, as possible, in the open-source spirit with which it was created.

Therefore, the contents of this Appendix are published under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC BY-SA 4.0) License creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/. Details are printed in the front matter of the book.

What is basic income?

"A basic income is an income unconditionally granted to all on an individual basis, without means test or work requirement."¹

What are the benefits of basic income?

In no particular order:

Eliminates the "unemployment trap". Under current systems, when someone gets a job they lose most of their welfare payments. This means they can go from not working at all to working a full week without significantly increasing their income. This is a disincentive to work. Under basic income, when people got a job they would retain the same basic income payment, with their salary added to it, so the disincentive no longer exists.

Reduces government bureaucracy. A lot of government workers are required to ensure that welfare recipients are not claiming their benefits fraudulently, and to administer

the complicated system of welfare payments and tax credits. The increased need for personal tax advisers also sucks skilled workers out of the productive sector. A basic income would hugely simplify the welfare system by replacing most of these bureaucracies, which would reduce its administrative cost significantly.

Clarifies the tax code. Taxes are way too complicated, and everything we can do to simplify them would be --all things equal-- a net gain in the value of human society. A basic income, coupled with a flat tax, is capable of mimicking all aspects of our current progressive (bracketed) taxation scheme, but without brackets. Everyone will, at the start of each year, know precisely what their taxes will look like; "predicting what tax bracket you'll be in" will no longer be necessary. All marginal tax rates will be identical, while the basic income ensures that net-taxes follow a progressive-tax structure. Also: a basic income, in the form of a "basic deduction", can replace and improve upon the "standard deduction" used by the IRS, which itself is problematic.

Exemplifies and emphasizes single-class policymaking. It is not structurally optimal to produce policies that explicitly divide people up into classes and then apply different laws to each class, as our bracketed tax code does (and as our welfare structure does). It is better to form a single law that applies to every individual: "Everyone gets \$x in basic income, funded by a y% flat tax". When we are all in the same 'group', class divisions become less divisive, and we reinforce the principles of liberty and equality.

Greatly reduces fraud/waste/abuse. When welfare subsidies are contingent on conditions like employment, income level, number of hours worked, family status, etc., there are opportunities to game the system, either by illegally lying (fraud) or by simply obeying the economic incentives put in front of you (waste/abuse). These cause losses of real economic value, which are paid for by every taxpayer. Removing this incentive structure allows confidence in the welfare system's ability to reach people exactly as intended.

Guarantees a minimum living standard. Though it's subjective/politicized, people may be entitled to a certain basic standard of living, regardless of whether they are momentarily able to participate in the labor market. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 25, states, "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control" (United Nations).²

Increases bargaining power for workers. Workers will be able to afford to refuse a job if the employer abuses its oligopoly or the workspace has poor conditions, so firms will be forced to improve the employment conditions and wages for their workers. This will

happen as a natural result of negotiation between firms and workers and will not require government intervention or unionization.

Lowers need for government regulations on the labor market. Policies such as the minimum wage will become less necessary with the basic income, as people will already get enough money to live on from the basic income. And negotiating power for workers will increase. This will allow the government to remove some of the regulations on the labor market, creating a freer market and providing benefits for both employers and employees.

Impacts immigration. With the minimum wage obsolete, manual labor can be priced at its fair-market value, meaning undocumented immigrants will have to accept even lower wages to compensate for their legal risks, potentially putting the standard of life lower than if they stay at where they were.

Reduces Gentrification. When only the residents of an area receive that area's Basic Income, housing and consumer goods prices are thus inflated, making it hard for other social groups to swoop in with a bunch of money and inadvertently pick apart the community. The BI gives a relative advantage to established residents, thus protecting the community structure.

Reduces the gender "pay gap." Women, on average, make less money than men, and debaters of this issue fall into two camps: (1) those who want to reduce that gap to help women achieve financial freedom, and (2) those who want to prevent the harmful effects of government pay-mandates and micromanagement. Basic Income is capable of satisfying both camps by giving all citizens a base income, making women (and people in general) less dependent on their work-income. And it does so without removing any of the beneficial capitalistic incentives to work and provide value. Furthermore, the gender pay gap is reduced for precisely those women who most need it: low-income women. It makes them less dependent on a potentially abusive spouse and less sensitive to pregnancy-based work issues, without unjustly interfering with the market's ability to set salaries for upper- and middle-class workers.

Improves mental health through income security. Mental health is one of the largest public health problems in most developed countries. The knowledge that the basic income will ensure a basic standard of living in any circumstances will provide a sense of mental security, especially when the economy is performing poorly. The removal of various dehumanizing tests and stigmatization of anyone who receives welfare payments will also serve to improve mental health. There is also evidence that poverty itself reduces cognitive capacity, comparable to a loss of 13 IQ points, or chronic alcoholism as compared to sobriety.³ A basic income would remove this cognitive impairment.

Increases physical health. The rising cost of healthcare is a cause of great long-term concern, and basic income could lower this cost. In the Dauphin, Manitoba pilot experiment in Canada, an 8.5% reduction in hospitalization was found to be a direct result of the minimum income.⁴ This was attributed to the reduction in workplace injuries and family violence resulting from the rise in incomes.

Stabilizes costs over time. Current welfare schemes have costs that fluctuate significantly with the performance of the economy, and are increasing as populations age and more people leave the workforce. The costs of basic income schemes would not see this fluctuation, as the basic income is paid to all adults regardless of whether they are in the labor force or not.

Simplifies implementation of progressive taxation. There's no need for "tax brackets" having different tax rates when people receive a basic income, since the BI effectively causes the same tax rate structure, only requiring two numbers to be chosen: the value of the BI allowance, and the flat tax rate. With less thresholds and tax rates to play around with, taxation becomes less politicized and less used as a weapon of class warfare. This also simplifies your IRS paperwork and makes the tax structure smoother and thus non-susceptible to income-shifting.

Deals better with widespread unemployment. Some people argue that⁵ with the development of new automation technology and the increase in the labour force due to globalization, rates of unemployment in developed countries are likely to stay high and increase in coming years. This would impose a significant increased cost on current schemes, but as spending from the basic income would not increase, this system would be more able to cope with the change.

Recirculates money from capital to labor. Even if technology doesn't lead to high unemployment, it may well lead to lower wages and greater inequality. Capital - equipment and machinery that helps to produce things - is now creating a greater share of output compared to labour - human workers. This allows business owners, who own the capital, to pay workers the same or less while more is produced, so they make more profit for themselves. We are already seeing that output per worker is increasing,⁶ while workers' wages are not. In the long term, this will mean that business owners make more and more money, while those who don't own capital will make less and less. Basic income alleviates this by taxing the rich (who will probably own capital) and giving money to the poor (who probably won't), even if they can't find a job.

Increases number of small businesses. Many people may currently be discouraged from leaving their job to start their own business for if the venture fails, they will have no source of income. The basic income would provide income to these people, so more people would feel able to start businesses, which could only increase innovation and competition in the economy. Evidence of this effect can be found in the Namibia basic

income experiment, where those receiving it showed increased entrepreneurship with a 29% increase in average earned income, excluding the basic income.⁷

Increases charitable work and academic research. Much work in the charitable sector and other vocations (e.g., open-source programming, academia, or the arts) is socially beneficial but not profitable, so people have to do it in their spare time, along with a traditional job. A basic income would allow these people to spend more time on work that is socially beneficial but unprofitable for the individual.

Increases number of people in jobs they enjoy. As people will not be forced to take on a job, they will be more able to find a job that they enjoy (or that pays well enough to offset their lack of enjoyment). Having people in jobs that suit them better will help to improve mental health, as well as leading to an improved quality of goods and services.

Gives financial independence to all adults. Every adult will be entitled to the basic income independently of any other people. This means they cannot be controlled or manipulated by someone through control of their finances, allowing people in abusive relationships to escape them more easily.⁸

Prevents generational theft. Most western countries already provide basic income to people of retired age. But, if a nation or its socialized retirement program goes bankrupt, or the socialized retirement program otherwise becomes unaffordable, in 20 or 30 years (due to fiscal mismanagement or simple birth rate demographics) then it is to the great advantage of current benefit recipients, and at the total cost to those who pay into the benefits today with the false promise of receiving them in the future. If entitlements are unaffordable/unsustainable, then the only fair solution is to provide the funds equally today.

Reduces the intensity of certain perverse economic incentives. When a person serves on jury duty, they face a situation with perverse economic incentives: low-wage-earners are incentivized to drag out the case to continue receiving any jury-duty stipend, while high-wage-earners are incentivized to bring the case to a swift conclusion, so they can get back to work. Companies are incentivized to punish any salaried workers who sit on juries for a long time. All of these incentives lead to injustice within the judicial system and would be reduced if a person's income came less from their work and more from a basic income. More specifically, if a person currently makes a \$20/hr. wage, sitting in a jury box is costing him \$20/hr.; but after implementing a basic income, as funded by a 10% flat tax (for example), his after-tax wage is only \$18/hr. (a loss which is offset by his basic income), so by sitting in a jury box he stands to lose less money than before. In general, any unpaid civic duty, such as jury duty, voting, democratic involvement, civil service, charity work, blood donation, etc., is supported by a basic income.

Leverages the multiplier effect.⁹ "The mechanism that can give rise to a multiplier effect is that an initial incremental amount of spending can lead to increased

consumption spending, increasing income further and hence further increasing consumption, etc., resulting in an overall increase in national income greater than the initial incremental amount of spending." It is this same effect that is seen in the differences to the economy the effects of \$1 being spent by high income earners versus low-income earners have. As published in a recent report, "All those dollars low-wage workers spend create an economic ripple effect. Every extra dollar going into the pockets of low-wage workers, standard economic multiplier models tell us, adds about \$1.21 to the national economy. Every extra dollar going into the pockets of a high-income American, by contrast, only adds about 39 cents to the GDP."¹⁰ This means a basic income could show this same multiplier effect on the entire economy by redistributing money from high earners to low and middle earners, where spending is amplified.

How much would the basic income be?

While many scholars argue that the basic income should be slightly below the minimum income needed to survive, many argue that a basic income must constitute a livable income in a viable post-automation society, on the grounds that a poverty level income is just that: still poverty. Such subjective guidelines have warranted a multitude of quantifications:

In 1969, the United States President's Commission on Income Maintenance Programs report, *Poverty Amid Plenty: The American Paradox* detailed a 1969 Basic Income Proposal¹¹ stated, "the Committee proposes providing a basic income of around \$4,700 per adult and around \$2,900 per child. So, for a family of four, it would be around \$15,200 per year."¹² In 2014 US dollars, this equates to a basic income of \$30,430¹³ per adult U.S. citizen, \$49,200¹⁴ for a single parent, and \$98,400¹⁵ for a family of four.

The 2018 Alaska Permanent Fund amount is \$1,600 per eligible citizen.¹⁶ "To be eligible for a PFD, you must have been an Alaska resident for the entire calendar year preceding the date you apply for a dividend and intend to remain an Alaska resident indefinitely at the time you apply for a dividend."

Charles Murray in *Guaranteed Income as a Replacement for the Welfare State* introduced the figure of \$10,000, "as a place to begin discussion,"¹⁷ never really intending for it to be taken as a serious final number. "In the United States, a GI of \$10,000 per year for all adults aged twenty-one years and older will cost no more than the projected cost of the current system as of 2011. By 2028, it will cost more than a trillion dollars less per year than the projected costs of the current system." Similarly, numbers just at or below the antiquated federal poverty level are generally considered illustrative rather than practical for legislative purposes.

Mark Walker in the February 2014 issue of the *Journal of Evolution & Technology* describes a plan for a \$11,400 BIG paid to everyone ages 18 through 64 through the adoption of a 14% VAT (Value Added Tax).¹⁸ According to Walker, "The vast majority would do better under this proposal even though it includes a large new tax: anyone making between \$0 and \$80,000 a year would be monetarily better off. About 90% of the population has a net personal income that falls below the crossover point (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2014). So, the vast majority of the population would be better off financially under the 14% VAT and BIG proposal.

Ed Dolan has calculated that the US could afford a basic income of \$5,850¹⁹ (paid to everyone, including children) if it got rid of most means tested benefits and tax exemptions for the middle classes. If children were excluded, this figure would rise to \$7647.

In 2005, the BIG Pilot Project in Namibia began as the result of the proposal that, "A monthly cash grant of not less than N\$100 (~13 US\$) should be paid to every Namibian."²⁰ Here we begin to see the concept of local context emerge. Indexing basic income to the real economy is vital to its credibility and viability.

The 2013 Swiss basic income guarantee referendum, the first of its scale and kind in the twenty-first century, was for CHF F2,500 francs (approximately USD \$2,800/mo.)²¹ equivalent to \$33,600 USD per year.²² Albert Jorimann (president of BIEN Switzerland) says about that: "We refer in the collection of signatures to effectively 2500 CHF per adult, which could actually be something like a little over 2000 euros. However, one must consider the cost of living, which are significantly higher in Switzerland than in the EU. Here (in Switzerland) a 4-room apartment quickly ends up costing 2500 francs, and not only in the big cities. So, I would equate the amount in euros rather with about 1000 euros" Dutch Basic Income Website.²³

In the United States, using the 2014 Federal Poverty Guidelines as a guide,²⁴ to universally prevent poverty would require a basic income level of \$12,000 (also considered an appropriate amount using a ground up analysis)²⁵ for everyone over the age of 18, along with a partial basic income of \$4,000 for everyone under the age of 18. According to /u/2noame,²⁶ this particular plan would require \$2.98 trillion in total revenue (\$2.7 trillion for 18+ and \$276 billion for 18-) to cover all U.S. citizens, or after the elimination of current government pensions and welfare programs, \$1.28 trillion USD.

As of August 2014, Cato Institute's Michael Tanner (PDF),²⁷ calculates that adding "another \$284 of welfare spending [to existing federal welfare alone] at the state and local level, and you've got almost \$1 trillion dollars of government spending on welfare - over \$20,000 for every poor person in the United States (Zwolinski, Matt. The Pragmatic Libertarian Case for a Basic Income Guarantee).²⁸

The Socialist Alternative 2014 party platform includes, "A minimum guaranteed weekly income of \$600/week (~\$28,800/yr.) for the unemployed, disabled, stay-at-home parents, the elderly, and others unable to work."²⁹

Any meaningful basic income figure must respond to changes in livable incomes for the locale in which it is instituted. It should not be an arbitrarily decided static number which fails to be revisited and updated over time. One alternative is to set the basic income level as a fixed percentage of median income (for the five years 2009–2013, 50% of US median income average is \$26,523)³⁰ or of per capita GDP (in 2014, 50% of US GDP/capita is \$27,650)³¹. Another idea is to have congress periodically vote on the basic income: each congressman proposes a desired value, and the median proposal is used for the next year. If implemented by the states, state congresses would vote.

Higher levels of basic income than discussed above are possible; for a discussion of how additional revenue could be raised, see the "How Would You Pay For It" section.

If you want to play with the numbers yourself, /u/JayDurst made a calculator,³² that would allow you to look at different tax rates and the basic income rate that you could afford with it (discussion here).³³

The "law of rent" says that more money in the hands of the people causes inflation in natural resource leasing costs (rent, resource extraction (mining), wireless communication frequencies, geosynchronous orbits, etc.), which could entirely eliminate the original benefit of a basic income for non-land-owners. But if basic income is partially funded with a Georgist land value tax (LVT), those rent increases get returned right back to the basic-income recipients who boosted the value of the land in the first place. A socialist system like this, or a capitalist system in which citizens typically hold diversified land portfolios, can mitigate the harmful effects of rent inflation.

Is this similar to a negative income tax?

A negative income tax is a proposal to include negative rates of income tax for people earning below a certain level.³⁴ A level of income would be set at which you pay zero tax; if you earn more than this you pay tax, but if you earned less you would receive payments. Like basic income, this would not have any conditions (e.g., having to work to get the payment) but unlike basic income, the payments are dependent on income. However, a negative income tax can be set up so that it provides the same amount of money as a basic income. This is because a basic income scheme would require higher tax rates than a negative income tax, as it involves paying every citizen. A NIT would have lower tax rates but provide less money, so these two could balance out in such a way that every citizen has the same amount of money that they would with a basic

income. There are pros and cons to both approaches:³⁵ a basic income would involve giving money to people who don't need it, which people might consider unfair even though they are repaying the money through their tax, while a negative income tax could lead to stigmatization of people who receive payments, as the payments would not be universal. A negative income tax also appeals to those who care more about negative liberty (freedom from others),³⁶ while unconditional basic income appeals to those care more about positive liberty (freedom to do what you want).³⁷

That's all very well, but where's the evidence?

Experiments with unconditional cash benefits around the world have often proven to be one of the most successful ways of reducing poverty, and in the vast majority of cases, the fear that people would waste their money on drugs or alcohol, become lazy, or have more kids were not realized,³⁸ and were even reduced.³⁹ Experimental studies and wider programs and pilots have taken place in:

- Manitoba, Canada (The "Mincome" Experiment)⁴⁰
- Seattle and Denver (SIME & DIME)⁴¹
- North Carolina and rural Iowa (RIME)⁴²
- Gary, Indiana (GIME)⁴³
- New Jersey (NJIME)⁴⁴
- Alaska (Alaskan PFD)⁴⁵ with (2018 study showing 17% increase in PT employment)⁴⁶
- Namibia (BIG Pilot Project)⁴⁷ (link to full report)⁴⁸
- Namibia (Emergency Cash Grant)⁴⁹
- India (Madhya Pradesh Pilots)⁵⁰ (link to full report)⁵¹
- Win for Life lottery winners (€1,000/month)⁵²
- Bomi County, Liberia (SCT Programme)⁵³
- Lebanon (WCAP)⁵⁴
- Brazil (Bolsa Familia)⁵⁵
- Brazil (Quatinga Velho)⁵⁶
- Kenya (GiveDirectly)⁵⁷
- Kenya (Hunger Safety Net Program)⁵⁸
- Uganda (WINGS)⁵⁹
- Uganda (NUSAF's Youth Opportunities Program (YOP))⁶⁰

- Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians in North Carolina (Casino revenue)⁶¹
- London,⁶² *Hough, Juliette, and Becky Rice. "Providing personalized support to rough sleepers."⁶³ York, JRF (2010).
- New York City⁶⁴
- Iran,⁶⁵ (link to 2017 study on labor supply effects)⁶⁶ (link to 2018 study on labor supply effects)⁶⁷ (note: increased employment for women and self-employment for men)
- Berkshire, UK (in 1795)⁶⁸
- Liberia slums (drug users and criminals)⁶⁹
- Mexico's Programa de Apoyo Alimentario (note: no observed inflation)⁷⁰ (link to paper)⁷¹
- Canada's Healthy Baby Prenatal Benefit (note: no strings cash resulted in babies born healthier)⁷²
- Democratic Republic of Congo.⁷³
- Malawi (note: decreased pregnancy rates)⁷⁴
- Kuwait in 2011 (note: increased non-oil GDP through higher consumer spending)⁷⁵
- Zambia (note: after 3 yrs. households had 59% more to spend than amount received)⁷⁶
- US Social Security natural experiment (note: more money caused increased cognitive function)⁷⁷ (link to paper)⁷⁸
- Longitudinal study of 1,000 people for 35 years (note: childhood impoverishment leads to greater addictions, worse health, and more crimes as adults)⁷⁹
- Mothers' Pension program (US 1911-1935) (note: longer life, more education, healthier weights, earned more income)⁸⁰
- Pakistan's Citizens Damage Compensation Program ("Watan Card") (note: lower declines in aspirations for the future)⁸¹
- Dolly Parton's My People Fund (note: \$1,000 per month considered more helpful than any other form of support by those displaced by Gatlinburg fires)⁸²
- An easy-to-read summary of these studies is included,⁸³ in addition to more Experimental Summary Papers:
- Basic Income Programs and Pilots.⁸⁴

- Universal Basic Income: A New Tool for Development Policy.⁸⁵

Who supports the basic income guarantee?

Basic income, and the similar proposal of a negative income tax, have a range of supporters from across the political spectrum.⁸⁶ Some of these supporters and links to their arguments in favor of basic income are given below. A growing number of today's best thinkers are rapidly joining the long history of leading thinkers in advocating this policy.

Nobel prize winning economists:

- Paul Krugman,⁸⁷ @NYTimeskrugman.⁸⁸
- Milton Friedman.⁸⁹
- F. A. Hayek.⁹⁰
- Herbert A. Simon.⁹¹
- James Meade.⁹²
- Robert Solow.⁹³
- James Mirrlees.⁹⁴
- Christopher Pissarides.⁹⁵

Other economists:

- Yanis Varoufakis (Former Greek Minister of Finance)⁹⁶
- Umair Haque,⁹⁷ @umairh,⁹⁸ (Harvard Business School Economist)
- Recent Mentions: "it's a no-brainer"⁹⁹ | "the next big social issue"¹⁰⁰ | "but it'll never happen"¹⁰¹ | if WE don't make it happen.
- Erik Brynjolfsson, @erikbryn,¹⁰² (MIT Economist, Author, "Race Against the Machine")
- J. K. Galbraith (American economist)¹⁰³
- Robert Skidelsky (Skip to the section "Working Less") (Economic historian and professor emeritus of political economy)¹⁰⁴
- Guy Standing,¹⁰⁵ (video: Why the Precariat Requires a Basic Income)¹⁰⁶ (British economist)
- Daniel Raventos (Spanish economist)¹⁰⁷
- Ed Dolan.¹⁰⁸

Philosophers:

- Bertrand Russell (see the last paragraph of chapter IV for a summary)¹⁰⁹
- John Stuart Mill (Chapter I: Of Property § 4) (British philosopher)¹¹⁰
- Thomas Paine.¹¹¹
- Philippe Van Parijs (Philosopher and left-libertarian economist)¹¹²
- Alan Watts.¹¹³

Politicians and Activists:

- Martin Luther King Jr. (American pastor, activist, and leader in the African American Civil Rights Movement)¹¹⁴ (also video)¹¹⁵
- Desmond Tutu (former Archbishop of Cape Town, South Africa, and anti-apartheid activist; winner of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984)¹¹⁶
- Robert Reich (former United States Secretary of Labor)¹¹⁷
- Charles Murray [PDF] (American libertarian political scientist)¹¹⁸
- Hugh Segal (Canadian political commentator and former senator)¹¹⁹
- Charles Eisenstein,¹²⁰ (video: "A BI gives us the freedom to act on our desire to give")¹²¹
- Edward Snowden (former NSA contractor who leaked information about their overbearing surveillance practices)¹²²
- Peter Joseph, founder of the Zeitgeist Movement,¹²³ (video interview about UBI)¹²⁴
- Ralph Nader (Green Party and Independent presidential candidate)¹²⁵
- Federico Pistono (author of Robots Will Steal Your Job, But That's OK)¹²⁶
- Bernie Sanders (Junior US Senator D-VT)¹²⁷

Health professionals:

- The Canadian Medical Association (Delegates' Motion 5-16, page 11, or pdf page 18)¹²⁸
- 194 Ontario physicians.¹²⁹

You can read more about basic income supporters from the past 240 years, on the European Unconditional Basic Income website, UBIE.ORG.¹³⁰

I believe in [insert ideology]. Why should I support a basic income guarantee?

The following brief arguments are taken verbatim from this article,¹³¹ which provides various arguments from different political perspectives.

Fairness

Property is a social construct legally enforced by the government. If all people are considered equal, then absent any other considerations, each person should have an equal amount of property. So, material equality should be the default. In a free market economy with a basic income at or below the highest sustainable rate, those who choose to live off of the basic income are not living off of the work of others. Rather, they are living off of less than their “fair share” of property and allowing the extra to be used by those who choose to work.

Utilitarianism

The free market is the greatest generator of wealth ever devised. Money is the most effective means of socially producing utility, as it allows each individual to obtain whatever needs and wants they subjectively require. However, one dollar in the hands of a poorer person produces greater utility than a dollar in the hands of a richer person, because the richer person can fulfill more of their more important needs and wants with the rest of their money than the poorer person can. So, the transfer of money from a richer person to a poorer person increases overall utility. The government is incompetent at running people’s lives or regulating the economy, but the one thing it can do effectively is mail out checks. A basic income is most effective means of transferring money from the richer to the poorer with the least government interference and the least work disincentive. The natural limit on the amount of the basic income is the point where the work disincentive from the required taxes reduces wealth the point where the basic income would have to be reduced.

Keynesianism

Keynesian economics works when implemented correctly. But properly implementing Keynesian economics is politically very difficult. It requires politicians who are willing to spend a lot of money on stimulus when the government appears broke, and then turn around and become deficit hawks when the government is rolling in cash and everyone wants a piece of the pie. A basic income funded primarily from an income tax would become a massive, institutionalized entitlement expected by the population whose cost would automatically increase and decrease in direct opposition

to the economy. As unemployment rises, the number of net receivers goes up, and as unemployment falls, so will the number of net receivers. Keynes once famously said that the government should pay people to dig holes and fill them back up again. But why waste people's time? Anyone who sits on the couch and watches TV while living off of a basic income will contribute as much to society as the hole diggers. And anyone who does anything more productive will create a net good for society.

Human Rights

Poverty is not a natural tragedy like cancer or earthquakes. Poverty is a human caused tragedy like slavery or government oppression. Slavery is caused by societal recognition of humans as property. Government oppression is caused by governments punishing people for their beliefs or characteristics, and without due process of law. Poverty is caused by property laws that deny some people access to necessities. These types of tragedies can be ended by recognizing that humans have the right not to be subjected to tortuous conditions imposed by other humans. Humans have a right not to live in slavery. Humans have a right to be free of government oppression. And humans have a right not to live in poverty. A basic income is not a strategy for dealing with poverty; it is the elimination of poverty. The campaign for a basic income is a campaign for the abolition of poverty. It is the abolitionist movement of the 21st century.

Georgism/Geolibertarianism

Property is a product of creation, not of mere use. "I made this." confers property rights, "Tag! It's mine!" does not. Things that exist as a product of your labor must be yours, and for anyone else to appropriate them is to make you their slave. Land and natural resources, however, are not the products of people, but of nature or God. They are gifts to all of humanity. Individual property in land and natural resources may be practical or useful, but it is still theft. Utility might justify this theft, but compensation is still required. As the appropriation was done without consent, the compensation must be in the form that offers the greatest choice of use to the victims. That form is cash. The most efficient arrangement for payment is for the takers to pay the full rental or use value to a single entity which can then divide the proceeds equally among the population. Taxes are the tribute I pay to you for displacing you from land, the basic income is your dividend.

Transhumanism/Futurology

Two hundred thousand years ago humans lived in hunter-gatherer societies. About 10 thousand years ago, humans began to live in agricultural societies, and then about 300 years ago, humans began to live in industrial societies. Since 30 to 50 years ago, we

have lived in a service society. Theoretically, the last economic stage of society is a leisure society, where most people either work in the artistic or scientific fields, or do not work at all. So far, each phase has lasted only a small fraction of the time of the previous phase. If that pattern holds, service societies should last less than two generations, a time period nearing its end. Right now, worker productivity is advancing faster than the need for workers, and robots are inhabiting labs in research hospitals and at DARPA. It is time to prepare for a society in which we simply do not need everyone to work. A basic income will be needed to provide a living for people, and to provide customers for business.

Conservatism

The welfare state may not be the society we would have created, but it has been here for 4 generations, people have come to expect and rely on it, and it would be extremely disruptive to society to get rid of it. But while we may not be able to get rid of the welfare state, we can reform it. The current welfare state necessitates an immense and expensive bureaucracy, it is prohibitively complicated for some of its intended beneficiaries to navigate, it puts bureaucrats in charge of the lives of the poor, it creates perverse incentives for people to avoid work and to remain poor, and it arbitrarily allows some people to fall through the cracks. A basic income would correct all of these problems. A basic income is simple to administer, treats all people equally, retains all rewards for hard work, savings, and entrepreneurship, and trusts the poor to make their own decisions about what to do with their money, taking these decisions out of the hands of paternalistic elitist politicians.

Socialism

While a UBI won't lead us straight into a worker-owned, democratic economy like what a socialist would advocate for, you would find that many socialists advocate for a UBI because it satisfies one of the biggest tenets of socialism; collective efforts from society that would benefit all of society, which by any means could mean heavier taxation that goes right back to the community equally. This is why Marx was such a heavy advocate for the public-school system, and prominent socialists like MLK supported a movement that would limit the socio-economic disparity between Whites and Blacks. While Public Schools and Equality aren't socialism (since they don't lead us to worker-owned cooperatives), they are definitely socialist, and intrinsically socialist, because they are all necessary to socialism. It also becomes evident that a UBI would guarantee that people wouldn't be tied down to profit for their entire lives. In his "Base and Superstructure" Theory, Marx mentioned how it was the "Base" (the economic means and distribution of production) that affected the "Superstructure" (the relationship between people and the economy and general mindset of it, etc.). With a

UBI, an artist or a scientist wouldn't have to be tied down by profit in order to innovate or express themselves, individuals would be given the time and opportunity to do as they please, and in turn give back to the community not for the purpose of profit, but for the purpose of contribution in the field they feel they have an interest in be it sports, physical work, art, etc.

Feminism

Patriarchy has put the world's wealth in the hands of men, prevented women from being professionals and entrepreneurs, forced poor women into dead-end second-class labor jobs, and forced all women to become unpaid domestic servants and caretakers of the young, elderly, and disabled of their families. Women have been forced to be financially dependent on fathers or husbands who are often abusive. A basic income would change all of this. A basic income would be a massive transfer of wealth from men to women. Women would be free of financial dependence on any man, and the young, elderly, and disabled would all be fully supported. Women could afford to leave abusive husbands, those who chose to be caretakers would be fully compensated, and no woman would be forced into a dead-end job and would instead be able to pursue her own financial goals as she saw fit.

Libertarianism

The most common form of government oppression in practice today is obfuscation of the law through complexity. The tax code is needlessly complex. Social Security, Medicaid, Welfare and Medicare are massive bureaucracies that not only coerce citizens out of their money but can make it difficult for anyone but bureaucrats to retrieve the proper benefits guaranteed them. In most cases, citizens simply have to live with whatever payments the government decides is proper, whether it be from entitlement programs or via tax refunds.

A Basic Income program would eliminate massive bureaucracies. Most Basic Income proposals come coupled with a restructuring of the tax code to simplify it - most often in the form of a flat tax. Basic Income proposals also usually call for the replacement of existing entitlement programs. Government entities running means-tested programs will vanish. The government will no longer have a need to look into the bank accounts of private citizens or check their medical records before making payments. Every citizen simply gets a check in the mail once a month.

While a Basic Income calls for an increase in taxes and spending, it also comes with a massive reduction in the size of government, which means more liberty for everyone. Basic Income is one of the rare government social programs that actually decreases the influence of government and furthers the cause of liberty.

Liberalism/Social Democracy

A basic income would correct or ameliorate many inequities and inefficiencies inherent in market capitalism. The wages of unskilled and semi-skilled workers would rise as those who enjoy and are good at such work will no longer have to compete against those who are forced to seek such work out of financial necessity. The wages of highly skilled workers will fall as more people are able to take the time necessary to gain the skills to compete for those jobs, lowering the cost of legal, financial, and health care services. A guaranteed income will soften the blow to workers displaced by advancing technology and the creative destruction of the market. Job seekers will be able to take the time necessary to find work that is the best fit for them, increasing efficiency in the distribution of labor. And entrepreneurship will flourish as those wanting to start their own businesses will have an income to survive on during the long lean times that typically come when building a new enterprise.

Environmentalism

Technological unemployment is often described as the result of an inexorable march toward further sophistication, but perhaps it can be better understood as being the result of high labor costs combined with minimal penalties for damaging the environment.

Economists have long advocated reducing carbon emissions and other environmental damage by simply levying taxes (or penalties) upon such activities. As of now, this approach has largely been rejected by the political establishment due to the regressive economic effects of increased living costs. However, these effects could be eliminated if the proceeds from taxation of environmental damage were used to increase the UBI.

Workers may be willing to work for lower wages if the UBI already provides them enough to live on. This effect will be particularly amplified for rewarding, self-actualizing professions. Conversely, high labor costs encourage more automation and electricity consumption, as well as favoring further resource extraction over recycling, reuse, and repair. This results in significant environmental externalities. Cheap labor, especially when combined with consumption taxes, will reduce our economic dependency upon continued environmental exploitation.

What are the arguments against basic income?

There is an ongoing collection of articles and blogs against the idea available in this subreddit for study, which can be accessed by using the "Anti-UBI"¹³² search filter in the sidebar. Most arguments tend to come down to: "Taxation is theft" (even though

taxation isn't required), "Everyone will stop working" (even though all data points to the contrary), and "By replacing all government services, basic income will leave people worse off" (even though basic income is only intended to replace many -- not all -- government programs and services).

How would you pay for it?

First and foremost, the basic income is paid for by direct savings of eliminating the waste, fraud, and abuse of the Welfare State. Charles Murray writes, "After a process that has taken decades, the welfare state has severely degraded the traditions of work, thrift, and neighborliness which enabled the system to work at the outset. It is now spawning social and economic problems that it is powerless to solve."¹³³

By completely ending welfare as we know it, "In the United States, a GI (guaranteed income) for all adults aged twenty-one years and older will cost no more than the projected cost of the current system as of 2011. By 2028, [the guaranteed income] will cost a trillion dollars less per year than the projected costs of the current system." Not all would like to go so far as Charles Murray however, and instead believe it would make more sense to keep certain universal government services, like healthcare and education for example.

Secondly, the complete elimination of the Minimum Wage and all associated payroll overhead for businesses. The reason for a basic income that is a fully guaranteed, realistic, living income (see 'How much would the basic income be?') indexed to the real economy is so that these cost savings can all be fully realized and redeployed toward empowering innovation (Christensen).

Of course, taxes on high-end consumption and financial transactions are currently two of the leading methods proposed to make up any gap between the savings gained in completely dismantling the current means-tested welfare state, and a sustainable basic income. Means-testing is a breeding ground for fraud and abuse in any program, and welfare is not immune.¹³⁴ Some argue that waste, fraud, and abuse is so understated and invisible, that the gap between savings in total welfare elimination and basic income could be much smaller than presently calculated.

The general idea of fundraising is via taxation. Just as current welfare systems use tax revenue to fund subsidies, the basic income would as well. A simple setup is just a flat tax on income,¹³⁵ and/or a flat sales tax. There are a variety of other taxes that could help to fund basic income, depending on the desired secondary effects of the tax. Many European countries use a value added tax (VAT)¹³⁶ to positive effect without materially harming consumption. A carbon tax would help to combat global warming as well as providing a new revenue source for basic income. A tax on High Frequency Traders

("Robin Hood tax")¹³⁷ would reduce market "flash crashes" without materially harming market efficiency, and a transaction tax on all electronic transactions (APT tax)¹³⁸ would tiny per transaction but massive in aggregate. A wealth tax could be more effective in reducing inequality than a traditional income tax. A land value tax (LVT)¹³⁹ – taxing the owners of land for its value, excluding any man-made developments on it – would cause very little economic distortion while raising revenue. Many wealthy people earn more from capital gains than income, so raising the level of capital gains tax is likely to produce a lot of revenue. Inheritance tax helps to fight the unfairness of people born to rich parents having a head start in life. And of course, simply raising income tax is always an option.

Recognizing the existence of our commonwealth – the property that no one ever made, or we all make together – and charging for its use is another method. This is what's known as the "Alaska Model,"¹⁴⁰ because it would be similar to how Alaska funds its dividends for all residents, but it would be extended to all the many other common resources like water, air, the electromagnetic spectrum, Big Data, etc. It has been estimated by Peter Barnes that this method can alone provide everyone in the US \$5,000 per year.¹⁴¹

One other possibility is to include the funding of basic income with citizen centered monetary policy.¹⁴² In a recession, if interest rates are very low and inflation is not too high, but the economy is not growing, the central bank will essentially print money to help increase demand. This has happened in the current crisis; the US Federal Reserve between 2009 and 2014 added \$5 trillion to the money supply in quantitative easing (QE)¹⁴³. So, in certain circumstances, the central bank could print money and cover some of the cost of the basic income for the government, meaning that the government will be free to either cut taxes or increase spending to stimulate the economy without adding to its deficit.

Basically, there are all sorts of underused ways to raise revenue for basic income. No one tax would be able to completely pay for it, but a combination of the different taxes discussed above, as well as the savings from dismantling the current welfare bureaucracy, make it more affordable than it appears. There are a number of studies which have proposed more detailed costed proposals for basic income in the United States,¹⁴⁴ UK,¹⁴⁵ Ireland,¹⁴⁶ among others.

No matter how the revenue is raised however, the origin of its surplus ultimately comes from one place, and that place is the same reason the majority of our efforts no longer goes into food production, but into the 98% of our economic activity that now involves everything else. And that is the machine. The machine pays for it.¹⁴⁷

Exactly which government programs could be cut with basic income in place?

Some examples of programs that become obsolete/optional depending on the amount of UBI, once implemented:

- ❖ welfare/workfare
- ❖ tax deductions/credits/subsidies
- ❖ unemployment insurance
- ❖ government pensions
- ❖ disability benefits
- ❖ national minimum wage laws

The beneficiaries of these programs would receive their UBI cash in place of the above benefits. This has the advantage of increasing beneficiaries' liberty and eliminating most bureaucratic overhead.

Note: The above programs need not be all or nothing. For example, disability and pensions can exist in smaller forms on top of UBI and still reduce overhead costs.

Allan Sheahen's proposal for a basic income in the United States includes in its appendix a list of 138 tax loopholes that could be closed to help pay for the UBI,¹⁴⁸ as well as over 100 federal programs that could be eliminated as being unnecessary with basic income. For a list of all federal government funded programs in the United States, see this collection of 1,607 programs dated 2005,¹⁴⁹ many of which could be seen as redundant or unnecessary after introduction of basic income.

Wouldn't basic income just cause inflation?

This question arises so much, this article,¹⁵⁰ by Scott Santens has been written to answer it from a variety of perspectives. If you want a much greater understanding of basic income and inflation, please read it in its entirety.

There is no current consensus on just to what degree a basic income would impact prices. The ongoing concern from detractors that inflation would reduce the effectiveness of any BI payment, delivering less net benefit than intended, exists despite the lack of evidence to support this concern. Assuming the BI is funded by taxes, and not monetary policy (printing money), the inflationary impact should be short-term and limited to where supply is sticky.

Monetary Economics

The quantity theory of money links long-term inflation tightly with the money supply,¹⁵¹ of which the basic income has no direct impact (assuming the BI is not funded via monetary means). This could suggest that, in the long-term, the BI would have no real impact on inflation.

Alaska Permanent Fund

Alaska has operated what is essentially a miniature Basic Income program that has paid out annually since 1982,¹⁵² where the only restrictions on receivers are residency requirements and various ineligibility rules for criminal actions. Alaska has experienced lower levels of inflation compared to the U.S. average since the inception of the program.¹⁵³

Other Thoughts

Basic income may impact inflation via a rise in compensation costs for businesses. If the labor force shrinks after the introduction of a basic income businesses may have to bid up compensation in order to attract and retain workers or make capital investments in order to automate work previously done by people.

An increase in aggregate demand as a result of the basic income could impact short-term prices of goods and services when productive capacity is at 100% and where the supply is sticky as a result of spending patterns (XLS spreadsheet)¹⁵⁴ of lower income households. Since lower income households tend to spend the majority of their income a large portion of the Basic Income going to low-income households would be spent. However, since the Basic Income is designed to replace most current government transfers, the increase in demand may be muted.

For more discussion, here are some threads from this subreddit talking about basic income's effect on prices:

- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1r8nbz/question_from_an_outside_who_just_stumbled_upon/
- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1sicrc/how_could_inflation_caused_by_implementation_of/
- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1qlo3e/how_will_basic_income_affect_inflation_any/
- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1petz4/wouldnt_basic_income_crash_a_countries_economy/

- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1t4fol/ubis_effect_on_housing_market/
- ❖ www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1mvqfl/econ_101_and_basic_income/

What's the point of giving money to the high earners? Why not target it only at the poor?

Giving money to all people equally completely removes the problematic unemployment/poverty trap (see list of benefits above). Another benefit of this is that if everyone receives the payment, cutting the basic income will reduce everyone's income; thus, changes to the UBI amount would be far less politicized. Giving money to everyone also greatly reduces administration costs and simplifies the scheme, as you don't have to check someone's income to determine their UBI allowance. Finally, high earners would be paying more in taxes than they were getting from their basic income, so in net terms the rich are still paying while the poor benefit.

What about variations in the cost of living? Wouldn't major cities need much more money than rural areas?

Most discussions about basic income and the cost of living (for example this one)¹⁵⁵ favor making no adjustments. With a basic income people will be more able to move to cheaper areas, as they don't have to worry about having a job immediately when they get there. Adjusting for the cost of living would greatly increase the administration required for basic income (how do you determine where people are living, or the exact amount that you should adjust the basic income by?), which negates one of the main benefits of it. Of course, local governments would be free to introduce additional welfare that would lower the cost of living for the poor, but this would be separate from any national basic income scheme.

Isn't this communism?

No. Have a look at the list of supporters, for one thing – Milton Friedman and F. A. Hayek would not support communism! Communism, by definition, is a revolutionary socialist movement to create a classless, moneyless, and stateless social order

structured upon common ownership of the means of production. Basic income is not revolutionary (in that it doesn't need a revolution to happen), does not require the eradication of classes, does not require the eradication of the state, and doesn't require common ownership of the means of production. So, it is not communism; it is merely a socialist correction to capitalism, thus allowing capitalism to continue to prevail over the domains in which it excels (finding appropriate prices and quantities of tangible and some intangible goods/services).

This sounds interesting. Where can I find out more?

Reddit-style FAQ

- Comprehensive list of Basic Income questions, and discussion.¹⁵⁶

Mainstream media coverage

- The Economist.¹⁵⁷
- BBC.¹⁵⁸
- New York Times.¹⁵⁹
- Financial Times (mirror of paywalled article).¹⁶⁰
- USA Today.¹⁶¹
- Fox News.¹⁶²
- Washington Post,¹⁶³ (an abridged reprint of this excellent article from De Correspondent).¹⁶⁴
- CNN.¹⁶⁵
- PBS.¹⁶⁶
- Huffington Post.¹⁶⁷
- Newsweek.¹⁶⁸
- Scientific American.¹⁶⁹

Extended audio/video discussions

- Milton Friedman talking about negative income tax.¹⁷⁰
- Guy Standing giving a lecture about basic income.¹⁷¹
- Philippe van Parijs giving a lecture about basic income.¹⁷²

- David Graeber and Barbara Jacobson discussing basic income.¹⁷³
- A documentary created for the Swiss basic income initiative, in German with English subtitles.¹⁷⁴

Blog posts

- FiveThirtyEight (article).¹⁷⁵
- A series of posts from Economonitor: What are the economic arguments for basic income,¹⁷⁶ could we afford it,¹⁷⁷ different political perspectives on it.¹⁷⁸
- Various posts from Pieria: Creative destruction, basic income, and the jobs of the future.¹⁷⁹

Books

- Amazon Listmania list by /u/2noame,¹⁸⁰ of 40 books to read about or involving a basic income guarantee.¹⁸¹

Academic Papers

- Basic Income Earth Network's list of Papers and Resources.¹⁸²

This sounds great! What can I do to make it happen?

- See the What can I do to support basic income?¹⁸³
- Another good place to start would be to join one of the many advocacy groups around the world,¹⁸⁴ or join a city-level meetup group.¹⁸⁵
- It's also very simple to contact your local politician or local newspaper, to press the case for Basic Income or an article on the subject.¹⁸⁶
- You can also advocate for Basic Income online by using the #BasicIncome hashtag and sharing updates from these social media accounts.¹⁸⁷
- It's been shown that ideas spread most effectively from family members and friends, so start talking about Basic Income to everyone you know!

FAQ References

1. www.basicincome.org/bien/aboutbasicincome.html
2. www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/index.html
3. www.sciencemag.org/content/341/6149/976.abstract
4. basicincome.org.uk/interview/2013/08/health-forget-mincome-poverty/
5. [1.] www.nytimes.com/2013/06/14/opinion/krugman-sympathy-for-the-luddites.html?hpw&_r=1& [2.] www.technologyreview.com/featuredstory/515926/how-technology-is-destroying-jobs/
6. thecurrentmoment.files.wordpress.com/2011/08/productivity-and-real-wages.jpg
7. www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/briefings/data/000163
8. www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2778257?uid=3739736&uid=2&uid=4&uid=3739256&sid=21104536671703
9. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fiscal_multiplier
10. www.ips-dc.org/reports/wall_street_bonuses_and_the_minimum_wage
11. www.demos.org/blog/2/3/14/poverty-amid-plenty-1969-basic-income-proposal
12. books.google.com/books/about/Poverty_amid_plenty_the_American_paradox.html?id=T9AtAAAAMAAJ&redir_esc=y
13. wolfr.am/1alx3qz
14. wolfr.am/1f14pzc
15. wolfr.am/1inEqhq
16. pfd.alaska.gov/
17. www.fljs.org/sites/www.fljs.org/files/publications/Murray.pdf
18. jetpress.org/v24/walker.htm
19. www.economonitor.com/dolanecon/2014/01/13/could-we-afford-a-universal-basic-income/
20. bignam.org/BIG_pilot.html
21. wolfr.am/1e3k7TV
22. www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-25415501

23. basisinkomen.nl/wp/2500-zwitserse-frank-is-hier-maar-1000-euro-waard-en-geen-2080/
24. familiesusa.org/product/federal-poverty-guidelines
25. hawkins.ventures/post/85265679392/what-is-an-appropriate-level-of-basic-income
26. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/25g34u/cmv_we_cannot_afford_ubi/chh3s5n
27. www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/PA694.pdf
28. www.cato-unbound.org/2014/08/04/matt-zwolinski/pragmatic-libertarian-case-basic-income-guarantee
29. www.socialistalternative.org/about/
30. www.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=50%25+of+US+median+income
31. As of 2018, this figure has risen to \$31,129, further proving efficacy of this indexing principle.
www.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=united+states+gdp+per+capita+*+.5
32. [1.] www.reddit.com/u/JayDurst [2.] jsfiddle.net/9nRZK/153/
33. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1nzi9x/updated_basic_income_calculator_jsfiddle/
34. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negative_income_tax
35. mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/7016/1/MPRA_paper_7016.pdf
36. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Negative_liberty
37. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Positive_liberty
38. blogs.worldbank.org/impactevaluations/do-poor-waste-transfers-booze-and-cigarettes-no
39. www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/689575
40. basicincome.org.uk/interview/2013/08/health-forget-mincome-poverty/
41. www.bostonfed.org/economic/conf/conf30/conf30a.pdf
42. irp.wisc.edu/publications/sr/pdfs/sr10.pdf
43. www.chicagomag.com/city-life/October-2014/Want-to-Help-Gary-Indiana-Why-Not-Just-Give-Them-Money/
44. irp.wisc.edu/research/nit/NIT_index.htm#New%20Jersey
45. www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/bien_xiii_ak_pfd_lessons.pdf

46. papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3118343
47. www.policyinnovations.org/ideas/briefings/data/000163
48. www.bignam.org/Publications/BIG_Assessment_report_08b.pdf
49. www.bignam.org/Publications/Relief_through_cash_Impact_assessment_of_the_emergency_cash_grant_in_Namibia.pdf
50. www.developmentpathways.co.uk/resources/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Indias-Basic-Income-Experiment-PP21.pdf
51. sewabharat.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Report-on-Unconditional-Cash-Transfer-Pilot-Project-in-Madhya-Pradesh.pdf
52. www.basicincome.org/bien/pdf/2004MarxPeeters.pdf
53. www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Final_Evaluation_of_SCT_Pilot_Program_Liberia.pdf
54. www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/Emergency%20Economies%20Evaluation%20Report%20FINAL%2009.09.14%20%282%29.pdf
55. motherboard.vice.com/blog/how-giving-cash-directly-to-the-poor-paid-off-in-brazil
56. binews.org/2012/06/brazil-basic-income-in-quatinga-velho-celebrates-3-years-of-operation/
57. www.givedirectly.org/blog_post.php?id=7156273363730338864
58. www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-aid-idUSKBN0NW0C120150511
59. www.logica-wb.org/PDFs/LOGICA_StudySeriesNo1_Uganda_hr.pdf
60. cega.berkeley.edu/assets/cega_events/53/WGAPE_Sp2013_Blattman.pdf
61. opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2014/01/18/what-happens-when-the-poor-receive-a-stipend/?_r=0
62. www.economist.com/node/17420321
63. www.housingeurope.eu/file/261/download
64. www.mdrc.org/news/press-release/new-findings-show-new-york-city's-conditional-cash-transfer-initiative-reduced
65. www.bien2012.org/sites/default/files/paper_156_en.pdf
66. erf.org.eg/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/1090.pdf
67. www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0304387818306084
68. www.pieria.co.uk/articles/an_experiment_with_basic_income

69. zunia.org/post/show-them-the-money-why-giving-cash-helps-alleviate-poverty
70. www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/9/20/16256240/mexico-cash-transfer-inflation-basic-income
71. www.povertyactionlab.org/sites/default/files/publications/467_The-Price-Effect-of-Cash-versus-In-kind-Transfers_July%202017.pdf
72. www.cbc.ca/beta/news/health/healthy-baby-prenatal-income-benefit-1.3578029
73. www.cgdev.org/publication/cash-or-coupons-testing-impacts-cash-versus-vouchers-democratic-republic-congo-working
74. web.archive.org/web/20100612133719/irps.ucsd.edu/assets/037/11365.pdf
75. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/2ioovd/kuwait_gave_almost_4000_to_every_citizen_in_2011
76. www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/IWP_2016_21.pdf
77. wkms.org/post/senior-citizens-study-how-money-makes-better-brain-functioning#stream/0
78. www.nber.org/programs/ag/rrc/rrc2015/papers/3.3%20-%20Ayyagari,%20Frisvold.pdf
79. onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/jcpp.12621/full
80. www.econ.ucla.edu/alleras/research/papers/MP%20final.pdf
81. www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0305750X17301092
82. tntoday.utk.edu/2017/11/16/ut-releases-preliminary-findings-people-fund-evaluation/
83. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/wiki/studies
84. thepod.cfccanada.ca/sites/thepod.cfccanada.ca/files/BICN%20-%20Basic%20income%20programs%20and%20pilots%20-%202014_1.pdf
85. sange.fi/kvsolidaarisuusty/wp-content/uploads/Universal-Basic-Income-A-New-Tool-for-Development-Policy.pdf
86. docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Y1ahKuNd8abBgLRU5jmqWi_ewCoHdHZ8rjDfx7LYiOc/edit#gid=0
87. www.nytimes.com/2013/06/14/opinion/krugman-sympathy-for-the-luddites.html?_r=0
88. twitter.com/NYTimesKrugman

89. www.adamsmith.org/blog/welfare-pensions/milton-friedman-on-the-negative-income-tax
90. bleedingheartlibertarians.com/2012/05/hayek-enemy-of-social-justice-and-friend-of-a-universal-basic-income/
91. digitalcollections.library.cmu.edu/awweb/awarchive?type=file&item=34315
92. www.basicincome.org/bien/pdf/2000BassoCostantin.pdf
93. www.bos.frb.org/economic/conf/conf30/conf30i.pdf
94. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/3rruew/during_the_nobel_prize_series_event_in_singapore/
95. www.basicincome.org/news/2016/02/international-christopher-pissarides-a-nobel-economist-argues-for-ubi-at-a-debate-in-davos/
96. www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1eOVU61mZE
97. twitter.com/umairh/status/366800162376519680
98. twitter.com/umairh
99. twitter.com/umairh/status/327845209226481664
100. twitter.com/umairh/status/334750695007875072
101. twitter.com/umairh/status/337910847743606787
102. twitter.com/erikbryn
103. www.citizensincome.org/resources/Newsletter19993body.htm#Partnerships
104. www.skidelskyr.com/site/article/too-much-faith-in-markets-denies-us-the-good-life/
105. boilingfrogs.info/2012/11/08/guy-standing-precariat-angry/
106. www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WaA8zqjBSk
107. www.opendemocracy.net/ourkingdom/daniel-raventos-julie-wark/republican-call-for-basic-income
108. www.economonitor.com/dolanecon/2014/01/03/the-economic-case-for-a-universal-basic-income/
109. www.zpub.com/notes/rfree10-b.html
110. www.egs.edu/library/john-stuart-mill/articles/principles-of-political-economy-abridged-with-critical-bibliographical-and-explanatory-notes-and-a-sketch-of-the-history-of-political-economy/book-ii-distribution/chapter-i-of-property/

111. www.academia.edu/2698139/Two_arguments_for_Basic_Income_Thomas_Paine_1737-1809_and_Thomas_Spence_1750-1814_
112. blogs.lse.ac.uk/euoppblog/2013/07/24/the-eurodividend-why-the-eu-should-introduce-a-basic-income-for-all-philippe-van-parijs/
113. www.scottisantens.com/yeah-but-who-is-going-to-pay-for-it-basic-income-alan-watts
114. www.altruists.org/static/files/Martin%20Luther%20King%20on%20Citizen's%20Dividend.htm
115. j.mp/MLK4BasicIncome
116. www.youtube.com/watch?v=gf3n-L5FDy0
117. www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImXjgdIVsWE
118. www.fljs.org/sites/www.fljs.org/files/publications/Murray.pdf
119. www.huffingtonpost.ca/hugh-segal/guaranteed-annual-income_b_3037347.html
120. transitionculture.org/2012/08/21/an-interview-with-charles-eisenstein-something-in-your-heart-knows-that-this-is-what-life-is-supposed-to-be-about/
121. www.youtube.com/watch?v=d5WRGvfw_70
122. www.thenation.com/article/186129/snowden-exile-exclusive-interview
123. www.facebook.com/peterjosephofficial/posts/583702995000193
124. www.youtube.com/watch?v=fto7Bn7m6dg
125. binews.org/2014/10/united-states-five-time-presidential-candidate-ralph-nader-supports-a-basic-income
126. www.youtube.com/watch?v=-vnB16E36EQ
127. www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZFnE94ni9I
128. www.cma.ca/Assets/assets-library/document/en/about-us/gc2015/delegates-motions-en.pdf
129. [d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/bicn/pages/151/attachments/original/1439928444/Ontario_physicians_letter_to_Hon__Eric_Hoskins_\(FINAL_August_17_2015\).pdf?1439928444](http://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/bicn/pages/151/attachments/original/1439928444/Ontario_physicians_letter_to_Hon__Eric_Hoskins_(FINAL_August_17_2015).pdf?1439928444)
130. ubie.org/brief-history-basic-income-ideas/
131. binews.org/2013/02/opinion-the-one-minute-case-for-a-basic-income

132. goo.gl/e8rZzI
133. www.fljs.org/sites/www.fljs.org/files/publications/Murray.pdf
134. www.scottisantens.com/tanf-is-terrible
135. basicincomenow.wordpress.com/2014/12/15/how-to-fund-a-universal-basic-income-in-the-usa/
136. jetpress.org/v24/walker.htm
137. www.robinhoodtax.org/how/everything-you-need-to-know
138. www.academia.edu/5305083/The_Automated_Payment_Transaction_APT_Tax
139. www.salon.com/2013/11/22/end_the_1_percents_free_ride_how_taxing_land_would_solve_americas_biggest_problems/
140. www.uvm.edu/giee/pubpdfs/Flomenhoft_2012_Exploring_the_Alaska_Model.pdf
141. www.yesmagazine.org/issues/cities-are-now/in-alaska-everyone-gets-paid-thousands-in-oil-dividends-per-year/
142. www.bien2012.de/sites/default/files/paper_170_en.pdf
143. www.nytimes.com/2014/10/30/upshot/quantitative-easing-is-about-to-end-heres-what-it-did-in-seven-charts.html
144. www.usbig.net/papers/144-Sheahen-RefundableTaxCredit.pdf
145. www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/working-papers/euromod/em17-14
146. www.academia.edu/3278736/Report_for_Working_Group_on_Basic_Income
147. www.scottisantens.com/yeah-but-who-is-going-to-pay-for-it-basic-income-alan-watts
148. www.usbig.net/papers/144-Sheahen-RefundableTaxCredit.pdf
149. funding-programs.idilogic.aidpage.com/
150. medium.com/basic-income/wouldnt-unconditional-basic-income-just-cause-massive-inflation-fe71d69f15e7
151. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quantity_theory_of_money
152. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alaska_Permanent_Fund
153. laborstats.alaska.gov/cpi/cpi.htm
154. www.bls.gov/cex/2012/combined/income.xls

155. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/1syjw1/what_would_you_do_about_local_variations_in_the/
156. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/20wz6e/i_think_we_should_have_one_thread_with_all_the/
157. www.economist.com/blogs/democracyinamerica/2013/11/government-guaranteed-basic-income
158. www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-25415501
159. www.nytimes.com/2013/11/17/magazine/switzerlands-proposal-to-pay-people-for-being-alive.html?_r=0&pagewanted=all
160. timharford.com/2013/11/a-universal-income-is-not-such-a-silly-idea/
161. www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/10/10/swiss-referendum-minimum-income-column/2945657/
162. youtu.be/07F1b3uPoGs
163. www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/free-money-might-be-the-best-way-to-end-poverty/2013/12/29/679c8344-5ec8-11e3-95c2-13623eb2b0e1_story.html
164. decorrespondent.nl/541/why-we-should-give-free-money-to-everyone/20798745-cb9fbb39
165. www.cnn.com/2014/04/14/opinion/wheeler-minimum-income/
166. www.pbs.org/newshour/making-sense/whats-welfare-initiative-uniting-liberals-conservatives/
167. www.huffingtonpost.com/carl-gibson/the-case-for-a-basic-guar_b_5311330.html
168. www.newsweek.com/how-fix-poverty-write-every-family-basic-income-check-291583
169. www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-to-prevent-the-end-of-economic-growth/
170. www.youtube.com/watch?v=xtpgkX588nM
171. www.youtube.com/watch?v=4WaA8zqjBSk
172. www.youtube.com/watch?v=c7nYoUWrSIA
173. www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pd-gBlKE8c
174. www.youtube.com/watch?v=ViywrpAyVdY
175. fivethirtyeight.com/features/universal-basic-income/

176. www.economonitor.com/dolanecon/2014/01/03/the-economic-case-for-a-universal-basic-income/
177. www.economonitor.com/dolanecon/2014/01/13/could-we-afford-a-universal-basic-income/
178. www.economonitor.com/dolanecon/2014/01/27/a-universal-basic-income-conservative-progressive-and-libertarian-perspectives-part-3-of-a-series/
179. www.pieria.co.uk/articles/creative_destruction_basic_income_and_the_jobs_of_the_future
180. www.reddit.com/u/2noame
181. amzn.com/lm/RWMEMI9G196XT
182. www.basicincome.org/research/
183. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/wiki/support
184. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/wiki/support
185. www.meetup.com/BasicIncome/
186. www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/wiki/support
187. ubie.org/overview-established-facebook-pages-basic-income/

* * *

ENDNOTES

1. As President Richard Nixon's 1969 Family Assistance Program.
2. "Maslow's hierarchy of needs." Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Maslow%27s_hierarchy_of_needs#Safety_needs.
3. King, Martin L. *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* New York: Harper & Row, 1967. Print.
4. As well as its social impacts: high poverty rates, rising infant mortality, increased social alienation, etc.
5. Johnson, Stacy.
6. Bliss, Laura, and CityLab.
7. CNN, www.cnn.com/2013/08/02/tech/da-vinci-robot-surgery/index.html.
8. Of technium, Kelly writes, "I dislike inventing words that no one else uses, but in this case, all known alternatives fail to convey the required scope. So I've somewhat reluctantly coined a word to designate the greater, global, massively interconnected system of technology vibrating around us. I call it the technium. The technium extends beyond shiny hardware to include culture, art, social institutions, and intellectual creation of all types" (Kelly, 11).
9. Kelly, Kevin. *What technology wants*. New York: Viking, 2010. Print.
10. A neologism of techno-libertarian and utopian. An interesting definition of terms and trends on this topic can be found at technolibertarian.wikia.com/wiki/TechnoLibertarian_Wiki.
11. CNN Money, money.cnn.com/2018/05/22/pf/emergency-expenses-household-finances/index.html.
12. See note 2.
13. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistic, *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey*, data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS11300000.
14. The Guardian, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/17/self-driving-car-crash-proves-nothing-tesla-autopilot.
15. Bourree Lam.
16. "Thousand Trails is the largest and most successful provider of RV resorts and campgrounds in North America," www.thousandtrails.com/about-us.
17. Noah Smith. "Holey poverty, Batman!" noahpinionblog.blogspot.jp/2014/07/holey-poverty-batman.html.

18. "A mixed economy is variously defined as an economic system blending elements of market economies with elements of planned economies, free markets with state interventionism, or private enterprise with public enterprise. There is not only one definition of a mixed economy, but there are two major definitions recognized for "mixed economy". The first refers to a mixture of markets with state interventionism, referring to capitalist market economies with strong regulatory oversight, interventionist policies and governmental provision of public services. The second definition is apolitical in nature and strictly refers to an economy containing a mixture of private enterprise with public enterprise." Wikipedia, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mixed_economy.
19. Dahlman, Carl J.
20. VA Web Solutions Office, iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/2674.
21. Stiglitz, Joseph E., and Linda J. Bilmes.
22. See Graeber, David, "Bullshit Jobs."
23. Cherry, Kendra. Maslow's Needs Hierarchy, 12 Aug. 2014, psychology.about.com/od/theoriesofpersonality/ss/maslows-needs-hierarchy_3.htm.
24. "On 4 July 2012, the ATLAS and CMS experiments at CERN's Large Hadron Collider announced they had each observed a new particle in the mass region around 126 GeV. This particle is consistent with the Higgs boson, but it will take further work to determine whether or not it is the Higgs boson predicted by the Standard Model. The Higgs boson, as proposed within the Standard Model, is the simplest manifestation of the Brout-Englert-Higgs mechanism. Other types of Higgs bosons are predicted by other theories that go beyond the Standard Model" (CERN).
25. Ball, Robert M. Social Security Amendments of 1972: Summary and Legislative History, 13 Aug. 2014, www.socialsecurity.gov/history/1972amend.html.
26. King, Martin Luther Jr., in Orfalea, Matt.
27. It doesn't matter that we only have 24-hour days, 7-day weeks, and 365-day years. We are intentionally and algorithmically encouraged to filter, fake, embellish, and squeeze just a little bit more reality out of reality, as if our direct experience can never be enough. Yet, there is simply no "tiny bit more" that can ever make our lives better, if we can't find meaning in our lives, right here, right now.
28. Haarmann, Dirk.

29. Theodore Parker, Legacy and Honors, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theodore_Parker#Legacy_and_honors.
30. Indexed to 50% per capita GDP.
31. We, of course, strongly propose indexing the amount of basic income to a dividend derived from the real economy. Namely, 50% per capita GDP, while Santens uses the pop-cultural ballpark round number of \$1,000 per month. Apart from that, we are generally in broad agreement with Santens's entire body of work and believe that your market-indexed figure *strengthens* all of his arguments. While basic income is proven to work at many scales and in many contexts, like QE, it must be *sufficient*, or it risks making matters much worse, for reasons explained elsewhere in the text.
32. Pimpare, Stephen. The Three False Premises of the Ryan Poverty Plan, talkpoverty.org/2014/07/30/three-false-premises-ryan-poverty-plan/.
33. Short, Kevin. Here Is The Income Level At Which Money Won't Make You Any Happier In Each State. The Huffington Post, www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/07/17/map-happiness-benchmark_n_5592194.html.
34. Wikipedia contributors. "Higgs boson." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 3 Aug. 2014. Web. 5 Aug. 2014.
35. Wikipedia contributors. "History of physics." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia. Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, 3 Aug. 2014. Web. 5 Aug. 2014.
36. Sagan, Carl. Pale Blue Dot: A Vision of the Human Future in Space. New York: Random House, Inc., 1994.
37. Mannabase.com, mannabase.com/.
38. Mattereum.com, mattereum.com/.
39. Tanner, Michael. The American Welfare State: How We Spend Nearly \$1 Trillion a Year Fighting Poverty—and Fail. CATO, www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/PA694.pdf.
40. Meranto, Philip J.. The Kerner report revisited; final report and background papers.. Urbana: Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of Illinois, 1970, archive.org/details/kerreportrevio0asse.
41. Wikipedia contributors. "Job security." Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Job_security&oldid=614197308.
42. Working Families Tax Credit. Federal Overview, www.workingfamielstaxcredit.org/working-families-tax-credit-federal/.

GLOSSARY

Article 25, UDHR: Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that:

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age, or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Basic Income (BI): Commonly referred to as UBI, Unconditional Basic Income, or Universal Basic Income, or Basic Income Guarantee (BIG). A sum of money circulated through individual distributions on a recurring, usually monthly, basis. To be basic, in the words of MLK is to be “sufficient to sustain life in decent circumstances.” And to meet this sufficiency criteria, MLK very specifically said that the amount “must be pegged to the median income of society, not at the lowest levels of income.”

Blockchain: “A digital database containing information (such as records of financial transactions) that can be simultaneously used and shared within a large decentralized, publicly accessible network” (Merriam-Webster).

Citizen Dividend: Like shareholder dividends, it is an amount of money earned by virtue of being an active stakeholder in society. Every citizen contributes to GDP, whether employed or not. Domestic and caregiving work are among the most common types of off-balance-sheet labor contributions that are not widely recognized or proportionately compensated.

Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate (CIVPART): U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Civilian Labor Force Participation Rate. “The labor force as a percent of the civilian noninstitutional population. The civilian noninstitutional population includes “persons 16 years of age and older residing in the 50 states and the District of Columbia who do not live in institutions (for example, correctional facilities, long-term care hospitals, and nursing homes) and who are not on active duty in the Armed Forces” (BLS Glossary).

Digital Dividend and Data Dividend: These recognize and reward the massive amounts of content and consumer data that we each contribute toward the construction of the

internet as a digital data repository, all day, every day, across all connected apps and services.

Dog-Piling: A type of trolling that takes place online, in mainstream media, and even in contemporary spoken political speech. Often combined with other forms of trolling, like Gas-Lighting and Sea-Lioning, Dog-Piling is essentially ganging up on someone. In social media and online networks, it is when multiple users or accounts overwhelm a target person or topic with so many messages – often purporting to be innocent high levels of interest – that coherent conversation is impossible (Ibid.).

Family Assistance Plan (FAP): A welfare reform proposal first introduced by President Richard Nixon in 1969 that would have guaranteed a minimum income for poor families. The idea of a guaranteed minimum income gained acceptability in conservative circles in the mid-1960s when libertarian economist Milton Friedman suggested adopting a negative income tax to provide a safety net for the poor while also rewarding work. President Nixon liked the boldness of a proposal that would abolish the current welfare system, and he presented the Family Assistance Plan (FAP) in a nationally televised address on August 8, 1969 (Staisil). Current 2018-dollar equivalent of the 1969 annual \$1,600 FAP amount for an individual, is \$10,930, as calculated by Wolfram|Alpha at m.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=1600+in+1969+USD.

Federal Poverty Level (FPL): “Following the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) Statistical Policy Directive 14, the Census Bureau uses a set of money income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every individual in it is considered in poverty” (US Census).

Gas-Lighting: A type of trolling that takes place online, in mainstream media, and even in contemporary spoken political speech. “A psychological definition of gaslighting is “an increasing frequency of systematically withholding factual information from, and/or providing false information to, the victim - having the gradual effect of making them anxious, confused, and less able to trust their own memory and perception” (UrbanDictionary.com).

Great Society: “The Great Society was a set of domestic programs in the United States launched by Democratic President Lyndon B. Johnson in 1964–65. The main goal was the elimination of poverty and racial injustice. President Johnson first used the term “Great Society” during a speech at Ohio University, then unveiled the program in greater detail at an appearance at University of Michigan” (Wikipedia).

Guaranteed Annual Income (GAI): The terminology used by Martin Luther King, Jr. when launching the Poor People's Campaign. In his words, “a guaranteed minimum income for all people, and for all families of our country.”

Income Security: The principle of economic security in the form of a consistent, reliable income, sufficient to maintain life in decent circumstances. The amount of income that supports and sustains Maslow Safety, generally 50% per capita GDP in any given national economy.

Livable Income Security Act (LISA): A crowd-sourced bill and legislative vehicle to implement what has historically been referred to as an automation dividend, citizen dividend, digital dividend, freedom dividend, guaranteed annual income, negative income tax, unconditional basic income, universal basic income, among other names, each expressing one common objective: to articulate the principles and methods required to permanently end poverty, by decoupling income from direct labor and circulating income “at levels that sustain life in decent circumstances” (MLK).

Maslow Safety: The level of basic human needs required to fulfill the two lowest foundational levels of the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs, consisting of both Physiological Needs and Safety and Security Needs. Combined, these include: “homeostasis, food, water, sleep, shelter, personal security, financial security, health and well-being, [as well as] safety against accidents, illness, and their adverse impacts” (Wikipedia).

Mixed Economy: A mixed economy is variously defined as an economic system blending elements of market economies with elements of planned economies, free markets with state interventionism, or private enterprise with public enterprise. There is not only one definition of a mixed economy, but there are two major definitions recognized for "mixed economy". The first of these definitions refers to a mixture of markets with state interventionism, referring to capitalist market economies with strong regulatory oversight, interventionist policies and governmental provision of public services. The second definition is apolitical in nature and strictly refers to an economy containing a mixture of private enterprise with public enterprise.

Post-Automation Society: Any society that has transitioned from a service-based post-industrial economy to an information, data, machine learning, AI, and automation-based economy; with attendant economic and societal restructuring. Post-automation is the evolutionary transition beyond a service-based society, marked by an era in which dominant global influences, institutions, alliances, and even reserve currencies can experience significant and dramatic shifts toward hyper-integration.

Sea-Lioning: A type of trolling that takes place online, in mainstream media, and even in contemporary spoken political speech. “Sea-Lioning is an Internet slang term

referring to intrusive attempts at engaging an unwilling debate opponent by feigning civility and incessantly requesting evidence to back up their claims. The term was coined in September 2014 by anti-GamerGate Internet users to mock perceived online discussion tactics employed by GamerGate supporters” (KnowYourMeme.com).

Social Security: “The principle or practice or a program of public provision (as through social insurance or assistance) for the economic security and social welfare of the individual and his or her family” (Webster).

Singularity, aka Technological Singularity: 1.) The hypothesis that the invention of artificial superintelligence (ASI) will abruptly trigger runaway technological growth, resulting in unfathomable changes to human civilization. 2.) According to this hypothesis, an upgradable intelligent agent (such as a computer running software-based artificial general intelligence) would enter a "runaway reaction" of self-improvement cycles, with each new and more intelligent generation appearing more and more rapidly, causing an intelligence explosion, and resulting in a powerful superintelligence that would, qualitatively, far surpass all human intelligence (Wikipedia).

Trolling: Playing an intentionally disingenuous, divisive, derisive, deceptive, “devil’s advocate.” Types of trolling can include, but are not limited to: Gas-Lighting, Dog-Piling, and Sea-Lioning. “Trolling is an Internet slang term used to describe any Internet user behavior that is meant to intentionally anger or frustrate someone else” (KnowYourMeme.com).

UBI: Acronym use interchangeably to mean either basic income or universal basic income.

UDHR: Universal Declaration of Human Rights. “Translated into hundreds of languages and dialects from Abkhaz to Zulu, the UDHR set a world record in 1999 for being *the most translated document in the world*. At present, there are 512 different translations available in HTML and/or PDF format” (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, United Nations, emphasis added).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- @BenEltham. "Morgan: 'there Is This Enormous Betrayal - Dropping People off a Cliff.'" *Twitter*, 25 June 2018, twitter.com/beneltham/status/1011064664124317696.
- @BenEltham. "Morgan: 'there Was an Enormous Sense of Disappointment from the Young People.'" *Twitter*, 25 June 2018, twitter.com/beneltham/status/1011064964751114240.
- @OurRevolution. *Twitter*, *Twitter*, 16 July 2018, twitter.com/OurRevolution/status/1018960966426427392.
- @AndrewYangVFA. "If We Were to Include Care Work." *Twitter*, *Twitter*, 05 Aug. 2018, twitter.com/AndrewYangVFA/status/1026184931268091904.
- "A Break for Hard-Working Americans Instead of More Corporate Welfare." *Working Families Tax Credit*, 15 Aug. 2018, www.workingfamiлиestaxcredit.org/blog/2018/9/7/a-break-for-hard-working-americans-instead-of-more-corporate-welfare.
- "A Quest for Meaning - Discussion and Q&A with Dr. James Doty and Co-director Marc De La Menardiere." *YouTube*, 11 June 2018, youtu.be/kbKyq7wfaBk.
- "About Fuller." R. Buckminster Fuller, 1895 - 1983. *The Buckminster Fuller Institute*, 1 Jan. 1970, www.bfi.org/about-fuller/big-ideas/world-game.
- Amodei, Dario, and Danny Hernandez. "AI and Compute." *OpenAI Blog*, 20 June, 2018, blog.openai.com/ai-and-compute/.
- Anderson, Chris. "The Mind behind Linux | Linus Torvalds." Interview. *YouTube*, 3 May 2016, youtu.be/o8NPlIzkFhE.
- Arai, Noriko. "Can a robot pass a university entrance exam?" *YouTube*, 13 Sept. 2017, youtu.be/BXcFEhl7ynM.
- Associated Press. "30-year-old Leaves Parents' Home with Help from Alex Jones." *The Garden Island*, 1 June 2018, www.thegardenisland.com/2018/06/01/news/30-year-old-leaves-parents-home-with-help-from-alex-jones/.
- Avent, Ryan. "Why Do We Work so Hard?" *1843*, 04 Apr. 2016, www.1843magazine.com/features/why-do-we-work-so-hard.
- Ball, Robert M. Social Security Amendments of 1972: Summary and Legislative History, *The United States Social Security Administration*, 13 Aug. 2014, www.socialsecurity.gov/history/1972amend.html.
- Barnes, Peter. With Liberty And Dividends For All: How to Save Our Middle Class When Jobs Don't Pay Enough. Readhowyouwant.Com Ltd, 2014.

Basic Income, A Cultural Impulse. "Grundeinkommen – ein Kulturimpuls." *YouTube*, 3 Feb. 2011, youtu.be/ExRs75isitw.

Bergstein, Brian. "Basic Income Could Work—if You Do It Canada-style." *MIT Technology Review*. MIT Technology Review, 20 June 2018, www.technologyreview.com/s/611418/universal-basic-income-works-if-you-do-it-canada-style/.

"Billion Dollar Listing: The New Real Estate Unicorns." *Angellist Talent Newsletter*. July 5, 2018.

Bliss, Laura, and CityLab. "There's a Bus Driver Shortage. And No Wonder." *CityLab*, CityLab, 29 June 2018, www.citylab.com/transportation/2018/06/why-wont-anyone-drive-the-bus/563555/.

"BLS Glossary." U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 7 June 2016, www.bls.gov/bls/glossary.htm.

Bregman, Rutger. "Nixon's Basic Income Plan." *Jacobin*, Jacobin, 5 May 2016, www.jacobinmag.com/2016/05/richard-nixon-ubi-basic-income-welfare/.

Brynjolfsson, Erik, and Andrew McAfee. *Race against the Machine: How the Digital Revolution Is Accelerating Innovation, Driving Productivity, and Irreversibly Transforming Employment and the Economy*. Digital Frontier Press, 2012.

"Bullshit Jobs: A Theory by David Graeber." *Goodreads*, Goodreads, 15 May 2018, www.goodreads.com/book/show/34466958-bullshit-jobs.

"Bureau of Labor Statistics Data." *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics*, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS11300000.

Burton, Jonathan. "The Case for Paying Every American a Dividend on the Nation's Wealth." *MarketWatch*, MarketWatch, 02 Oct. 2018, www.marketwatch.com/story/the-case-for-paying-every-american-a-dividend-on-the-nations-wealth-2018-10-02.

C, Raluca. "5 Skills for the post-automation workforce." *Matrix LMS Blog*, 2 Dec 2021, <https://blog.matrixlms.com/5-skills-for-the-post-automation-workforce/>

Campbell, Colin Dearborn. *Income Redistribution*. 1st ed., American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research, 1977.

Campbell, Thomas. "Tom Campbell: 15 Key Discoveries That Led to My Big TOE." *YouTube*, 1 July 2015, youtu.be/5fcKezLW__Q?t=35m45s.

"CCARE Personnel." *The Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education*, 15 Mar. 2016, ccare.stanford.edu/about/people/ccare-staff/.

"Census.gov." *US Census Bureau*, Census Bureau QuickFacts, www.census.gov/.

Chutel, Lynsey. "Barack Obama Says the Rich Owe the World a Huge Debt." *Quartz*, 17 July 2018, qz.com/1330077/barack-obama-mandela-lecture-on-universal-basic-income-inequality/.

CityLab, and University of Toronto's School of Cities and Rotman School of Management. "America's Worsening Geographic Inequality." CityLab, 16 Oct. 2018, www.citylab.com/equity/2018/10/americas-worsening-geographic-inequality/573061/.

Clifford, Catherine. "Billionaire Richard Branson: America Should Give out Free Cash to Fix Income Inequality." *CNBC*, CNBC, 2 July 2018, www.cnbc.com/amp/2018/07/02/virgin-groups-richard-branson-on-universal-basic-income.html.

Columbus, Louis. "How To Get An Open-source Developer Job In 2018." *Forbes*, Forbes Magazine, 21 Aug. 2018, www.forbes.com/sites/louiscolumbus/2018/08/14/how-to-get-an-open-source-developer-job-in-2018/#1fa54f145b85.

Coppola, Frances. "The Changing Nature of Work." *Piera*, Piera.co.uk, 26 Oct 2016, Internet Archive, Wayback Machine, 13 Aug 2018, web.archive.org/web/20171026155042/www.piera.co.uk/articles/the_changing_nature_of_work.

Coyle, Dennis, and Aaron Wildavsky. "Social Experimentation in the Face of Formidable Fables." *Lessons from the Income Maintenance Experiments, Federal Reserve Bank of Boston*, Sept. 1986, www.bostonfed.org/news-and-events/events/economic-research-conference-series/lessons-from-the-income-maintenance-experiments.aspx.

Dahlman, Carl J. "The Cost of a Military Person-Year: A Method for Computing Savings from Force Reductions." *RAND Corporation*, 22 July 2007, www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG598.html.

Danaylov, Nikola (aka Socrates). "Futurist David Wood on Transcending Politics." *Singularity Weblog*, 16 Mar. 2018, www.singularityweblog.com/transcending-politics/.

"David Wood." *Institute for Ethics and Emerging Technologies*, ieet.org/index.php/IEET2/bio/wood.

Delventhal, Shoshanna. "Why Bridgewater Calls 2019 a 'Dangerous Year'." *Investopedia*, Investopedia, 6 June 2018, www.investopedia.com/news/why-bridgewater-calls-2019-dangerous-year/.

Department of Veterans Affairs, et al. "Life Insurance." *Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) - Life Insurance*, benefits.va.gov/insurance/sgli.asp

Department of Veterans Affairs, Veterans Benefits Administration, and Insurance Service. "Life Insurance." *Veterans Benefits Association*, Claims Inventory – Veterans Benefits Administration Reports, broken link as referenced in the text, www.insurance.va.gov/sgliSite/popups/CasualtyBOS.htm, corrected, www.benefits.va.gov/INSURANCE/resources_handbook_ins_handbook_append.asp#app_b.

Dividend Sensei. Dividend growth. "4 Reasons I'm Pounding The Table On These 2 Low-Risk, 7 %-Yielding Stocks." *Seeking Alpha*, 15 Oct. 2018, seekingalpha.com/article/4211535-4-reasons-pounding-table-2-low-risk-7-plus-percent-yielding-stocks?page=3.

Durden, Tyler. "Why We're Underestimating American Collapse." *Zero Hedge*, 26 Jan. 2018, www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-01-25/why-were-underestimating-american-collapse.

Elliott, Larry. "Inequality Gap Widens as 42 People Hold Same Wealth as 3.7bn Poorest." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 22 Jan. 2018, www.theguardian.com/inequality/2018/jan/22/inequality-gap-widens-as-42-people-hold-same-wealth-as-37bn-poorest.

Fish, Lily. "Vinay Gupta: We Can Create a Better Society by Making a Floor That People Can't Fall beneath." *Nesta*, 11 June 2018, www.nesta.org.uk/blog/vinay-gupta-we-can-create-a-better-society-by-making-a-floor-that-people-cant-fall-beneath/.

Foster, Natalie. "The Boldest Cash Transfer Proposal in Modern History." *Medium*, Economic Security Project, 19 Oct. 2018, medium.com/economicsecproj/the-boldest-cash-transfer-proposal-in-modern-history-495dce8264a7.

Frank, Priscilla. "'The Proposal' Is The Reality Show 2018 Deserves." *The Huffington Post*, TheHuffingtonPost.com, 20 June 2018, www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/the-proposal-abc-favorite-bachelor-tropes_us_5b28fc3be4b05d6c16c75c6c.

FRED. "Real Median Personal Income in the United States." *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis*, 21 June 2018, fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?g=kjoq.

Freedom from Want. "Four Freedoms." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 20 Aug. 2018, en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Four_Freedoms.

Fouksman, Elizaveta. "Why Universal Basic Income Costs Far Less than You Think." *The Conversation*, The Conversation, 14 Aug. 2018, theconversation.com/why-universal-basic-income-costs-far-less-than-you-think-101134.

Fromm, Erich. *The Sane Society*. Routledge, 1991.

Ganeva, Tana. "Here Are 10 Incredibly Sh*tty Things America Does to Homeless People." *Raw Story*, Raw Story, 6 June 2018, www.rawstory.com/2018/06/10-incredibly-shitty-things-america-homeless-people/.

Gottschalk, Simon. "In Praise of Doing Nothing." *The Conversation*, The Conversation, 19 Sept. 2018, theconversation.com/in-praise-of-doing-nothing-95998.

Graeber, David. *Bullshit Jobs: A Theory*. Simon & Schuster, 2018.

Groover, Heidi. "UN Official Slams American Response to Poverty: 'Homelessness on this Scale is Far from Inevitable.'" *The Stranger*, TheStranger.com, 5 June 2018, www.thestranger.com/slog/2018/06/05/27078274/un-official-slams-american-response-to-poverty-homelessness-on-this-scale-is-far-from-inevitable.

Groty. Reddit Contributor. "R/BasicIncome - The Overworked American: We Already Have Too Much Work in the United States. Why Not Redistribute It?" *Reddit*, Reddit, 6 June 2018, www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/8p4h5c/the_overworked_american_we_already_have_too_much/e08yelo.

"Growth or Life?" TheRules.Org, *YouTube*, 11 July 2018, youtu.be/cBJxBWwdQ2E.

Grusky, David B., and Jasmine Hill. *Inequality in the 21st Century: A Reader*. Westview Press., 2018.

Haarmann, Dirk. "BIG Coalition Namibia." *Basic Income Grant Coalition - Namibia*, www.bignam.org/Index.html.

Hanh, Thich Nhat. "Interbeing with Thich Nhat Hanh: An Interview." *Tricycle: The Buddhist Review*, tricycle.org/magazine/interbeing-thich-nhat-hanh-interview.

Hạnh Nhất, and Fred Eppsteiner. *Interbeing: Commentaries on the Tiep Hien Precepts*. Parallax Press, 1987.

Hansen, Louis. "Bay Area Cities Take First Steps to Deal with RV Dwellers - and Parking." *The Mercury News*, The Mercury News, 19 Sept. 2018, www.mercurynews.com/2018/09/19/bay-area-cities-take-first-steps-to-deal-with-rv-dwellers-and-parking/.

Harramein, Nassim. "The Connected Universe." *YouTube*, TEDxUCSD, 24 June 2016, youtu.be/xJsl_klqVho.

Harrington, Michael. "Woe Is Facebook." *TukaGlobal*, 27 July 2018, www.tukaglobal.com/woe-is-facebook/.

Harris, Marvin. *Why Nothing Works: The Anthropology of Daily Life* ; Updated with a New Preface. Simon Et Schuster, 1987.

"Hawai'i State Legislature." SB2571. *Twenty-ninth Legislature, 2017*. House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 89, 5 May 2017, www.capitol.hawaii.gov/Archives/measure__indiv__Archives.aspx?billtype=HCR&billnumber=89&year=2017.

Heisenberg, The. Currencies. "With FANG In a Correction, Can Gandalf Rescue The Rally?" *Seeking Alpha*, 31 July 2018, seekingalpha.com/article/4192239.

Hedges, Chris. *America: The Farewell Tour*. Simon & Schuster, 2019.

Hiltzik, Michael. "Employers Will Do Almost Anything to Find Workers to Fill Jobs - Except Pay Them More." *Los Angeles Times*, Los Angeles Times, 10 July 2018, www.latimes.com/business/hiltzik/la-fi-hiltzik-employment-20180710-story,amp.html.

Hochschild, Jennifer L. *What's Fair?: American Beliefs about Distributive Justice*. 1st ed., Harvard University Press, 1981.

"How Many U.S. Deaths Are Caused by Poverty, Lack of Education, and Other Social Factors?" *Columbia Mailman School of Public Health*, 5 July 2011, www.mailman.columbia.edu/public-health-now/news/how-many-us-deaths-are-caused-poverty-lack-education-and-other-social-factors.

"How many denominations of Christianity exist?" *Quora*, Quora Contributors, 21 Feb. 2014, www.quora.com/How-many-denominations-of-Christianity-exist.

"How the Census Bureau Measures Poverty." *US Census Bureau*, Census Bureau QuickFacts, 16 Aug. 2018, www.census.gov/topics/income-poverty/poverty/guidance/poverty-measures.html.

Hughes, Chris. *Fair Shot: Rethinking Inequality and How We Earn*. Bloomsbury, 2018.

Illing, Sean. "Why Capitalism Won't Survive without Socialism." *Vox*, Vox, 25 July 2017, www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2017/7/25/15998002/eric-weinstein-capitalism-socialism-revolution.

Ioannou, Filipa. "Facebook Users Unable to Post Story about Huge Facebook Hack on Facebook." *SFGate*, San Francisco Chronicle, 28 Sept. 2018, www.sfgate.com/technology/article/Facebook-blocks-post-guardian-story-hack-article-13266764.php.

"It Took a Century to Create the Weekend-and Only a Decade to Undo It." *Quartz*, 6 May 2017, qz.com/969245/it-took-a-century-to-create-the-weekend-and-only-a-decade-to-undo-it/.

Johnson, Stacy. "50 Ways to Make a Fast \$50 - or More." *MSN*, MSN Money Talks, 17 Aug. 2018, www.msn.com/en-us/money/personalfinance/50-ways-to-make-a-fast-dollar50--or-more/ss-BBM2SfP.

Johnson, Stephen. "Minimum-wage Jobs Can't Pay Rent Anywhere in U.S., According to Report on Affordable Housing." *Big Think*, Big Think, 15 June 2018, bigthink.com/stephen-johnson/report-minimum-wage-jobs-cant-pay-the-rent-anywhere-in-us.

Jordan, Michael. "Artificial Intelligence - The Revolution Hasn't Happened Yet." *Medium*, Medium, 19 Apr. 2018, medium.com/@mijordan3/artificial-intelligence-the-revolution-hasnt-happened-yet-5e1d5812e1e7.

Joseph, Peter. *New Human Rights Movement: Reinventing the Economy to End Oppression*. Benbella Books, 2018.

Kazimirski, Seymour. "There Is Never Enough." ThinkTech Commentary, *YouTube*, 15 June 2018, youtu.be/W9RZjqnc3wg.

Kelly, Kevin. *What technology wants*. New York: Viking, 2010.

King, Martin L. "MLK: The Other America." *YouTube*, 02 July 2015, youtu.be/dOWDtDUKz-U.

King, Martin L. "Statement on Ending the Bus Boycott." *Birmingham Campaign | The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute*, 20 Dec. 1956, kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/statement-ending-bus-boycott.

King, Martin L. *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* Harper & Row, 1967.

King, Martin Luther, and Lewis V. Baldwin. *"In a Single Garment of Destiny": a Global Vision of Justice*. Beacon Press, 2014.

Kingsbury, Kathleen. "The Value of a Human Life: \$129,000." *Time*. Time Inc., 20 May 2008, content.time.com/time/health/article/0,8599,1808049,00.html.

Kirk, Martin. "What If Economic Growth Isn't as Positive as You Think?" *Fast Company*. Fast Company, 16 July 2018, amp.fastcompany.com/90202203/what-if-economic-growth-isnt-as-positive-as-you-think.

Krauss, Lawrence Maxwell. *A Universe from Nothing: Why There Is Something Rather than Nothing*. Simon & Schuster, 2012.

Lam, Bourree. "What Becomes of Lottery Winners?" *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 12 Jan. 2016, www.theatlantic.com/amp/article/423543.

Lampman, R. J. "Nixon's Family Assistance Plan." *Institute for Research on Poverty*, DP 57-69, 25 pp, 1969, www.irp.wisc.edu/publications/dps/pdfs/dp5769.pdf.

Laurence, Bethany K. "Will I Get Penalized for Working While Collecting Social Security Retirement?" *Nolo.com*, Nolo, 16 Jan. 2017, www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/will-i-get-penalized-working-while-collecting-social-security-retirement.html.

Le, Johnny. "When does Elon Musk think it would make sense to implement basic income?" *Quora*, Quora Contributors, 21 June 2018, www.quora.com/When-does-Elon-Musk-think-it-would-make-sense-to-implement-basic-income/answer/Johnny-Le-10.

"Lessons from the Income Maintenance Experiments." Conference Series 30. *Federal Reserve Bank of Boston*, Sept. 1986, www.bostonfed.org/news-and-events/events/economic-research-conference-series/lessons-from-the-income-maintenance-experiments.aspx.

Lincoln, Kevin. "Environmental Collapse Makes for Terrifying Nightmares, and Compelling Art." *The Outline*, The Outline, 07 June 2018, theoutline.com/post/4833/climate-change-art-first-reformed-the-overstory-carbon-ideologies.

"Mannabase." *Mannabase: Blockchain Platform for Universal Basic Income*, www.mannabase.com.

Marchese, David, and Bobby Doherty. "Penn Jillette on Magic and the Alleged Trump Celebrity Apprentice Tapes." *Vulture.com*, Vulture, 14 Aug. 2018, www.vulture.com/2018/08/penn-jillette-in-conversation.html.

Mayer, Martin. "The Politics of a Guaranteed Income, by Daniel P. Moynihan - Commentary." *Commentary Magazine*, April 1973, www.commentarymagazine.com/articles/the-politics-of-a-guaranteed-income-by-daniel-p-moynihan/.

"Meet the Invisible Workers of Silicon Valley - CNN Video." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 18 Sept. 2018, www.cnn.com/videos/us/2018/09/18/making-rent-in-silicon-valley-beme.beme.

Meranto, Philip J. "The Kerner report revisited; final report and background papers." *Institute of Government and Public Affairs*, University of Illinois, 1970, archive.org/details/kernerreportrevi00asse.

Moynihan, Daniel P. *The Politics Of A Guaranteed Income*. 1st ed., Random House, 1973.

Naughton, John. "The First Self-Driving Car Fatality Proves Nothing | John Naughton." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 17 July 2016, www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/jul/17/self-driving-car-crash-proves-nothing-tesla-autopilot.

"New Hires and Major Donations: MIRI's September Newsletter." *Machine Intelligence Research Institute*, [us5.campaign-archive.com](https://us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=353906382677fa789a483ba9e&id=f83d47327e&e=c77ca9f985), 30 Sept. 2018, us5.campaign-archive.com/?u=353906382677fa789a483ba9e&id=f83d47327e&e=c77ca9f985.

Orfalea, Matt. "Martin Luther King Jr. on the Record for a Guaranteed Income." *Medium*. Augmenting Humanity, 10 Jan. 2017, medium.com/basic-income/martin-luther-king-jr-on-the-record-for-a-guaranteed-income-b47b58b41e93.

Pang, Alex Soojung-Kim. "Rest: Why You Get More Done When You Work Less." Amazon, Amazon, 6 Dec. 2016, www.amazon.com/Rest-More-Done-When-Work/dp/0465074871.

Parijs, Philippe van. "1848: Brussels' Two Utopias." *The Brussels Times*, BXLConnect: English-Speaking Resources, Contacts, Deals, and Offers in Brussels, Oct. 2014, pp. 6-8.

Parijs, Philippe van. *Arguing For Basic Income: Ethical Foundations for a Radical Reform*. 1st ed., Verso, 1992.

"Peter Joseph Interview W/ Abby Martin | Empire Files : Abolishing Capitalism." *YouTube*, 1 Sept. 2017, youtu.be/NVDLkL8Nvjw.

Phillips, Matt. "G.E. Dropped From the Dow After More Than a Century." *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 20 June 2018, mobile.nytimes.com/2018/06/19/business/dealbook/general-electric-dow-jones.html.

Picchi, Aimee. "Most Americans Can't Handle a \$500 Surprise Bill." *CBS News*, CBS Interactive, 06 Jan. 2016, www.cbsnews.com/news/most-americans-cant-handle-a-500-surprise-bill/.

Piketty, Thomas. *The Economics of Inequality*. The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2015.

"Press & Media." *Reddit Help*, reddit.zendesk.com/hc/en-us/articles/206630455-Press-Media.

PLoS Biology. *Public Library of Science*, Apr. 2004, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC387823/.

"Potential for AI and Robotics in Healthcare Is Vast." *Life Science Company News*, Pharma, Biotechnology, Medical Device, Diagnostics Industry Trends, BioSpectrum Asia, www.biospectrumasia.com/opinion/54/11237/potential-for-ai-and-robotics-in-healthcare-is-vast.html.

"President Obama's 2016 Budget Interactive." *National Archives and Records Administration*, National Archives and Records Administration, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/interactive-budget.

Puplava, Chris. Registered Investment Advisor. "And Then There Were None." *Seeking Alpha*, Seeking Alpha, 30 July 2018, seekingalpha.com/article/4192164-none.

Quadagno, Jill. "Race, Class, and Gender in the U.S. Welfare State: Nixon's Failed Family Assistance Plan." *American Sociological Review*, vol. 55, no. 1, 1990, pp. 11–28. JSTOR, JSTOR, www.jstor.org/stable/2095700.

Rademacher, Ida. "What Washington Doesn't Understand About Working Families." *LinkedIn*, [linkedin.com/pulse/what-washington-doesnt-understand-working-families-ida-rademacher](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-washington-doesnt-understand-working-families-ida-rademacher).

Ramchandani, Ariel. "Forced Labor Is the Backbone of the World's Electronics Industry." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 28 June 2018, www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2018/06/malaysia-forced-labor-electronics/563873/.

"/r/BasicIncome - Let's Collect the Best Quotes about Basic Income from Famous People." *Reddit*, Reddit Contributors, 19 Mar. 2014, www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome/comments/20uqmt/lets_collect_the_best_quotes_about_basic_income/.

"/r/BasicIncome." *Reddit*, Basic Income Community on Reddit, www.reddit.com/r/BasicIncome.

Reich, Robert B. *Saving Capitalism: for the Many, Not the Few*. Icon Books, 2017.

Robins, Philip K. *A Guaranteed Annual Income: Evidence from a Social Experiment*. Academic Press, 1980.

Robinson, Melia. "The San Francisco Housing Market Is So Absurd That Restaurants Are Putting Diners to Work Because They Can't Afford to Pay Waiters." *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 26 June 2018, amp-businessinsider.com.cdn.ampproject.org/c/s/amp.businessinsider.com/san-francisco-expensive-restaurants-cant-afford-workers-2018-6.

Rogan, Joe. "Joe Rogan Experience #1169 - Elon Musk." *YouTube*, 07 Sept. 2018, youtu.be/ycPr5-27vSI.

Ross, Mary. Oral history interview, 10/26/95. *SSA History Archives*, 13 Aug. 2014, www.socialsecurity.gov/history/orals/maryross.html.

Rossman, Sean. "That 30-year-old Man Finally Moves out of His Parents' House, Thanks to Alex Jones." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 01 June 2018, www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation-now/2018/05/31/30-year-old-finally-moved-out-his-parents-house-thanks-alex-jones/659658002/.

Roth, Alvin E. *Who Gets What - and Why: The New Economics of Matchmaking and Market Design - from Birth to Death and along the Way*. William Collins, 2015.

Rousseau, Steve. "Millennials Must Work Until They Die, And Other Facts." *Digg.com*, Digg, 8 June 2018, digg.com/2018/millennials-will-die-working.

Ruben, Adam. "Federal EITC Modernization Bill Introduced – Economic Security Project – Medium." *Medium*, Economic Security Project, 26 Sept. 2018, medium.com/economicsecproj/federal-eitc-modernization-bill-introduced-e65b1ed151fc.

Santens, Scott. "It's Time for Technology to Serve All Humankind with Unconditional Basic Income." *Medium*, Augmenting Humanity, 13 Apr. 2018, medium.com/basic-income/its-time-for-technology-to-serve-all-humankind-with-unconditional-basic-income-e46329764d28.

Santens, Scott. "The BIG Library: Books About Basic Income – Basic Income – Medium." *Medium*, Augmenting Humanity, 25 May 2016, medium.com/basic-income/the-big-library-books-about-basic-income-b9763071b987.

Santens, Scott. "Unconditional Basic Income Would Fix a Major Flaw in Markets." *Scott Santens*, 13 July 2018, www.scott santens.com/unconditional-basic-income-would-fix-a-major-flaw-in-markets.

SAR. "Scholars at Risk - Home." Scholars at Risk, www.scholarsatrisk.org/.

Sarwari, Khalida. "Sunnyvale Mobile Home Park's Last Holdouts Cling to Hope as Demolition Looms." *The Mercury News*, The Mercury News, 23 July 2018, www.mercurynews.com/2018/07/22/mobile-home-parks-last-holdouts-cling-to-hope-as-demolition-looms/.

Shafer, Scott. "Voters' Plea to S.F. Mayoral Candidates: 'Fix Homelessness'." *KQED*, KQED, 01 June 2018, www.kqed.org/news/11671742/voters-plea-to-s-f-mayoral-candidates-fix-homelessness.

Shankland, Stephen. "IBM's Got a Computer That'll Take on Your Debate Team and Maybe Win. It's a New Frontier for AI." *CNET*, CNET, 19 June 2018, cnet.co/2K4OyC9.

Shaughnessy, Larry. "One Soldier, One Year: \$850,000 and Rising." *CNN*. Cable News Network, 28 Feb. 2012, security.blogs.cnn.com/2012/02/28/one-soldier-one-year-850000-and-rising/.

Shaw, Chris. "Policy Positions and Political Imaginaries: Framing Basic Income." *The Libertarian Ideal*, 26 Oct. 2018, thelibertarianideal.wordpress.com/2018/10/26/policy-positions-and-political-imaginaries-framing-basic-income/.

Sheahen, A. *Basic Income Guarantee: Your Right to Economic Security*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Smith, Jack IV. "8 Essential Quotes Show Why Basic Income Is the Future." *Mic*, Mic Network Inc., 7 June 2016, mic.com/articles/145468/basic-income-quotes-bernie-sanders-stephen-hawking-martin-luther-king.

Smith, Noah. "What Economists Still Don't Get About the 2008 Crisis." *Bloomberg.com*, Bloomberg, 29 June 2018, www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-07-29/what-economists-still-don-t-get-about-2008-crisis.

Staisil. "What Was Nixon's Family Assistance Plan?" *Yahoo! Answers*, Yahoo!, 19 Apr. 2012, answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20120415171119AA7InDe.

"Star Trek: The Next Generation, The Neutral Zone (TV Episode, 1988)." *IMDb*. *IMDb.com*, m.imdb.com/title/tt0708811/quotes.

Steiner, Sheyna. "Survey: How Do You Pay For Unexpected Expenses?" *Bankrate*. *Bankrate.com*, 16 July 2018, www.bankrate.com/banking/savings/survey-how-americans-contend-with-unexpected-expenses.

Stern, Andy. *Raising The Floor: How a Universal Basic Income Can Renew Our Economy and Rebuild the American Dream*. Public Affairs, 2017.

Stiglitz, Joseph E., and Linda J. Bilmes. "Estimating the Costs of War: Methodological Issues, with Applications to Iraq and Afghanistan." *Oxford Handbook of the Economics of Peace and Conflict*. Ed. Michelle R. Garfinkel and Stergios Skaperdas. Oxford University Press, 2012.

Stricker, Frank. *Why America Lost The War On Poverty— And How To Win It*. 1st ed. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

"Summer MIRI Updates." *Machine Intelligence Research Institute*, MIRI, 29 Sept. 2018, intelligence.org/2018/09/01/summer-miri-updates/.

Tanner, Michael. "The American Welfare State: How We Spend Nearly \$1 Trillion a Year Fighting Poverty—and Fail." *Cato Institute*, 11 Apr. 2012, Policy Analysis, Number 694, 8 Aug. 2014, www.cato.org/sites/cato.org/files/pubs/pdf/PA694.pdf.

"Tell Congress: pass tax reform for the middle class." Petition. *Change.org*, www.change.org/p/economic-security-project-encourage-the-government-to-get-behind-a-guaranteed-income.

Tesla, Nikola. "Nikola Tesla Daily." *Apps on Google Play*, Google, play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.nikola.tesla.daily.

"The Economic Security Project Basic Income Reading List." *Medium*, Augmenting Humanity, 16 Nov. 2017, medium.com/economicsecproj/the-economic-security-project-basic-income-reading-list-fdcaa39badof.

"The Future of Artificial Intelligence & Society - Marcus Hutter." *YouTube*, 26 Feb. 2018, youtu.be/N54ytMKsv14.

"The Higgs Boson." *CERN*, CERN Accelerating Science, home.web.cern.ch/topics/higgs-boson.

"The New Big Idea - the Universal Basic Income." *Master Investor*, 07 Feb. 2017, masterinvestor.co.uk/economics/new-big-idea-universal-basic-income/.

"The Rise of the Useless Class." *Ideas.ted.com*, TED, 23 June 2017, ideas.ted.com/the-rise-of-the-useless-class/.

"The State of the Nation's Housing 2018." *YouTube*, 20 June 2018, youtu.be/zZfg25ErXDM.

Thurman, Robert. "From The ONE Vault - Robert Thurman on Suffering." *YouTube*, 19 Mar. 2012, youtu.be/qexkpSaApqc.

Tufekci, Zeynep. "Machine intelligence makes human morals more important." *YouTube*, 11 Nov. 2016, youtu.be/hSSmmlridUM.

"Understanding the Teen Brain." *University of Rochester Medical Center Health Encyclopedia*, Medical Reviewers: Rita Sather and Amit Shelat, University of Rochester Medical Center, 2018, www.urmc.rochester.edu/encyclopedia/content.aspx?ContentTypeID=1&ContentID=3051.

VA Web Solutions Office. "Under what conditions will DoD pay the special death gratuity? (SGLI)" *MHV*, 19 Dec. 2012, iris.custhelp.va.gov/app/answers/detail/a_id/2674.

"Vertical Farming." *Wikipedia*, Wikimedia Foundation, 22 Sept. 2018, en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vertical_farming.

"Vinay Gupta - Space - Internet of Agreements." *YouTube*, 25 June 2018, youtu.be/hCBki5sBw5E?t=25m34s.

Weisman, Aly. "Zach Galifianakis Bought A Homeless Woman An Apartment - And Took Her To 'The Hangover III' Premiere." *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 22 May 2013, www.businessinsider.com/zach-galifianakis-bought-homeless-woman-an-apartment-2013-5.

Weissmann, Jordan. "Remembering Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Solution to Poverty." *The Atlantic*. Atlantic Media Company, 20 Jan. 2014, www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2013/08/martin-luther-kings-economic-dream-a-guaranteed-income-for-all-americans/279147/.

"Where Do We Go from Here?" Address Delivered at the Eleventh Annual SCLC Convention. *King Encyclopedia*, The Martin Luther King, Jr., Research and Education Institute, 16 Aug. 1967, kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/where-do-we-go-here-address-delivered-eleventh-annual-sclc-convention.

Wile, Rob. "A Human Life Is Worth \$7.4 Million." *Business Insider*, Business Insider, 08 Aug. 2012, www.businessinsider.com/the-epa-has-tabulated-the-value-of-a-human-life-2012-8.

Williams, Clarence G. *Reflections of the Dream: 1975-1994, Twenty Years Celebrating the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology*. MIT, 1996.

Wilson, William Julius. *When Work Disappears: the World of the New Urban Poor*. Knopf, 1999.

Wolfram|Alpha. "Making the World's Knowledge Computable." Wolfram|Alpha, m.wolframalpha.com/input/?i=50%25+of+U.S.+per+capita+GDP.

"Working Families Tax Credit." Economic Security Project, Working Families Tax Credit, www.workingfamielstaxcredit.org.

"World Economic Forum on LinkedIn: 69% of Workers between Ages 18 and 24 Leave Their Employer within One Year." *LinkedIn*, June 2018, www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6410051969309904896.

"World's Biggest Hedge Fund: We Are Bearish On Almost All Financial Assets." Zero Hedge, 5 June 2018, www.zerohedge.com/news/2018-06-05/bridgewater-we-are-bearish-almost-all-financial-assets.

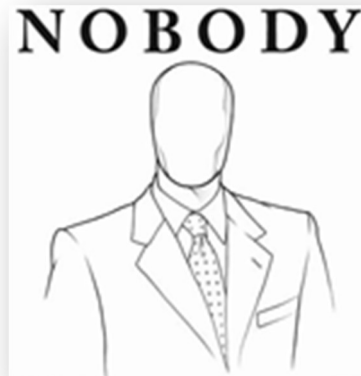
Yampolskiy, Roman V. *Artificial Superintelligence: a Futuristic Approach*. Chapman & Hall CRC, 2016.

Yang, Andrew. "The Freedom Dividend." Andrew Yang for President, www.yang2020.com/policies/the-freedom-dividend/.

* * *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This book was originally published under the pen name 'A'ohe Mea, which means nobody, in 'Ōlelo Hawai'i, the Hawaiian language. This is a book about social and political priorities, public policies, not personas. Rather than garner negative attention for himself in a highly polarized political climate, the author aspired for this work to catalyze and contribute to productive conversations that function to dissolve the current politics of hyperpolarized cults of personality, helping us forge new consensus-cultivating frameworks and narratives, toward a more perfect Union. Toward a world that works for everyone. With this second edition, he realized that these ideas do, in fact, require more public awareness-building and education in order to accomplish these goals and improve human flourishing in the twenty-first century.



Nobody helps the poor, unemployed, and displaced.

Nobody makes the world a better place.

Nobody listens to our concerns.

Nobody keeps their promises.

Nobody makes a difference.

Nobody tells the truth.

Nobody ever notices.

Nobody changes.

Nobody cares.

Be nobody.