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To the average person in our society, who is neither a philosopher nor a fool, the violence and thuggery of Antifa is disturbing. Though they certainly realize that Antifa members are dangerous people who are misplacing their discontent, they may not realize the full weight of the threat that cultish groups such as Antifa represent.

Perhaps the best place to start in examining the problem that is the presence of these Antifa groups is to analyze their ideologies. As their name suggests (Anti-fascist Action), their principal mission is to fight against what they perceive as fascists. These groups are associated with anarcho-communism, and indeed their members are heavy proponents of far-left progressive dogma, most often devout communists, and in general are about as extreme left a group as exists. They perceive fascists as authoritarian-right ideologues, though in truth this is not accurate, nor who they target.

So, who are the fascists they oppose? Well, if you are a gun owner, an entrepreneur, or a Christian, or if you think that limiting immigration might have beneficial effects, think people ought to be allowed to say what they wish with no violent consequences, or in many cases, are just white, male, or heterosexual, you are a fascist as far as Antifa is concerned. In 1944, George Orwell wrote a short piece on the meaninglessness of the word "fascism", in which he states that indeed it is really more of a convenient label which can be tacked on to any movement, ideology, or organization that one disagrees with. This seems to be quite accurate in describing how this term is used nowadays, and its use ought to carry little power.

In reality, the already ugly character of these organizations manifests itself in an even more negative way. They are well known for their protests and riots against

advocates of free speech, speakers with even moderately conservative views, and more recently, of intergovernmental forums such as the G-20 meeting. These so-called anti-fascists assemble large groups, all dressed in black-bloc, carry provocative and dogmatic signage in their demonstrations, often carry weapons, and in their clashes with attendees of conservative speakers or free-speech advocates, initiate violence to deter further voicing of opinions.

The most clear and present danger that Antifa poses is their ability and propensity to commit acts of violence against individuals with which they disagree; and to riot, loot, and in general destroy both public and private property.

Now, what is the great irony in the nature of Antifa? Oh, of course. They have become exactly the group they claim to despise. Who else used violence and intimidation to achieve political goals, and attempt to achieve ideological compliance? Who else hated and condemned good people just because of their identities? That's right, fascists. Communists too, actually.

Antifa groups seem to stand for very much the same sort of ideologies and policies that groups such as the Nazi Party did in the past, although with the preferred demographic shifted from "Aryans" to "oppressed peoples." The prime goal of all political action is to fight the designated ideological enemy of the group, a trait which is shared by all Leftist organizations, and in this case the greatest enemies are white, Christian, conservative, heterosexual men, though anyone who does not fully accept their far-left doctrine is a target. A common Antifa quote, indicating their uncompromising desire for dominance and intent to cause political violence, is "Liberals get the bullet too." In the same way as did communists, Antifa identifies

itself with anarchism, indeed in a way most vexing to us real voluntaryists.

As they only ever want to expand coercive state power, and constantly both encourage and commit violence against those who stand in their way, they are certainly not anarchists, but in reality, just tyrants in the same way as their ideological kinsmen of old.

Antifa regularly and more accurately identifies itself with Marxism and communism in general. In keeping with communist tendencies common in the past, they hate “fascists”, as they are the main competition communists have. They act like they have the moral high ground being Communists. Ironically, communists and their regimes killed far more people than fascists ever did, by orders of magnitude, and communism oppressed millions of more people and for decades longer than fascism did. Antifa members seem to be unable to realize that they resemble fascists both in ideology and tactics, and even visibly, with their use of black-bloc tactics. They have too little historical knowledge to realize that fascism was also an authoritarian leftist ideology. Both communism and fascism were interested in using socialism as a way to control the populace and engineer the economy. They used similar tactics, such as indoctrinating the youth, weakening the family, and growing and glorifying the military, to gain influence and control their societies. They both took advantage of economically devastated nations, and were extremely authoritarian, and expansionist in nature. They were both leftist in that they were anti-religious, despised family values, and postured themselves in such a way as to be seen as they were fighting against the “oppressive old-guard”. These anti-fascists are fundamentally the same, in their desires and in their tactics, to the fascists they claim

to hate. As the famous quote says “The fascists of the future will be called anti-fascists.”

Antifa groups may seem small and not very influential now, but they must be resisted. Very recently in Hamburg, nearly 10,000 antifa members, supposedly the largest black-bloc in history, rioted during the G-20 summit. Cars were burned, more than \$1,000,000 in property damage was caused, and many police officers were injured in clashes with Antifa. They cannot be ignored.

To all freedom loving voluntaryists reading this, and anyone else who wishes to live in a free society, I ask you to resist these people wherever possible. Use logic, reason, and evidence to destroy their narrative, tell them why they are wrong, and discourage their savage violence. The road to liberty is full of monsters who try to imprison us, but in the end, we will prevail.

[They seem to think certain styles of authoritarian collectivism are bad and others not so much. While they try to act neutral, and call themselves “black flag anarchists”, they admit that “tankies” and “anarcho” communists are among their ranks; and of course they (at least in Colorado Springs) associate with the Marxists in town. I’m unsure what any of their differences are with the Marxists. Both want to: smash the “white supremacist, capitalist patriarchy”; obtain “worker-owned means of production”, i.e., expropriate businesses; and silence the masses in their crusade for “social justice” by smearing us with a slew of terms. Funny thing is, they call us [voluntaryists] “fascists” when we’re the only ones who are poles apart from collectivism and statism. So if “fascists” are their enemies, why are they spending time doxxing anarcho-capitalists? I assume they don’t want any competition in ideas. They want to be the sole virtue-signalers that everyone looks to as presenting a true alternative, which they don’t have. While there are a lot of fascists out there, and I’d say the American state is, surely this buzzword as they use it is becoming as meaningless as “racists” which they hurl around. Great article! ~ Mike, FRV]

**ANTIFA WRONG AGAIN:
ANARCHO-CAPITALISM DOES NOT EQUATE
TO ALT-RIGHT, ARTICLE BY GRAHAM SMITH**

The "Alt-Right," or "Alt-Reich," as it is often referred to these days, is an emerging movement of—speaking in general terms—"conservative," "white" nationalists fighting a self-described "culture war" against the left.

I put conservative in quotations above because the movement, accurately examined, is not really conservative at all. Many individuals in the alt-right wish to increase government spending via taxation, in order to pay for things such as extensive military defense and multi-billion-dollar border walls. Indeed, many individuals identifying as "alt-right" are also completely pro-police and pro-Drug War, two of the biggest *welfare* programs the state has to offer. For some reason, the irony here seems to be lost on most of these individuals.

Socially speaking, the movement could, by mental gymnastics, be argued to be conservative, but this would also be a misnomer, and incorrect in almost every sense of the word.

Though the alt-right tends to be pro-border security, anti-immigration, pro-family, and pro-monogamous pair-bonded relationships, they are also *pro-socialist* (with state borders, not private property lines, defining legitimate property in "alt-right" think), *anti-family* (breaking up monogamous, pair-bonded relationships and loving families is perfectly okay if done by "the police" over illegal plants, for example, or by acts of war such as drone-bombing little kids in the Middle East), and finally, *pro-state* (the majority of alt-right individuals, in my experience, believe in the necessity of a state to protect "Western Culture").

Just for clarity's sake, let's look over that list again:

- PRO-SOCIALIST
- ANTI-FAMILY
- PRO-STATE

Hardly a movement reconcilable with Anarchist Capitalism, which is:

- ANTI-SOCIALISM
- PRO-INDIVIDUALLY CHOSEN VOLUNTARY RELATIONSHIPS
- ANTI-STATE

So why does "Antifa" get it wrong on anarcho-capitalists?

Recently, some many members of the ANTIFA ("Anti-Fascist") movement have been equating anyone who identifies as an "Anarcho-Capitalist" with being a part of the Alt-Right movement. As demonstrated above, this is by definition, incorrect. The two movements remain necessarily, and by definition, diametrically opposed on major political and social issues. So why does Antifa conflate the two? Well, enter the "*pragmatists*."

There is a new breed of "Alt-Right-Lite" trolling around in both the meat and cyberspaces of our world, essentially claiming—absurd as it may sound—that one can indeed both be Alt-Right and an anarcho-capitalist at the same time.

Thanks to the likes of these unsavory characters, the internet is now chock-full of profile pictures with the traditional AnCap black and yellow, juxtaposed with bright red MAKE AMERICA GREAT AGAIN hats. While these new "alt-right-lite" call for the "police to be unleashed" and for Jews to be "physically removed," the rest of us anarcho-capitalists stand by and scratch our heads, still too baffled by the absurdity of it all to be too angry about it. A philosophically clusterfucked clown show of this magnitude only comes around once so every often, and when it does, it always means something big is about to happen.

Like the Alt-right, this new, "AnCap Alt-Right-Lite" movement is not something to be brushed aside without a second thought. Forget the fact that many of these individuals advocate blanket violence and blanket state force against *anyone* they deem to be "the left," regardless of infractions against private property or lack thereof, the new "AnCap-Alt-Right-Lite" team also enjoys talking about "racial biodiversity," and essential genetic differences between races which render some "superior" to others.

This is nothing more than a bastardized version of epigenetics, misconstrued so as to appear to support the legitimacy of a eugenics-based application of blanket state force/violence. To put it in simpler terms: state-legitimized racism. Now, I loathe Antifa as much as the next guy. I have no respect for the movement or its philosophy. It is a laughable, puerile, dangerous, violent, and completely irrational approach to the achievement of peace and liberty. (cont. p. 5)

That said, these folks over at Antifa are not that far off when characterizing some of these aforementioned "Alt-Right-Lite" types as "Nazis."

Two sides of the same, shitty, *anti-liberty* coin.

My hope in writing this article is to set things straight: AnCap" does not equal "Alt-Right! It never has, and it never will. No matter how many KEK-frog-donning profile pictures emerge sporting the black and yellow, resting above content declaring the perceived inferiority of "Jews," the necessity of border security (even for land not homesteaded or legitimately owned, and to clarify, I don't support open or closed state-borders), or the virtues of gassing entire groups of millions and millions of individuals (No, I am not joking, message me and I will try to dig up the quote for you, spoken by a leader of the "Alt-Right-Light"), this stuff remains irreconcilable with anarcho-capitalist principle. Namely, the axiomatic, immutable and objective reality of individual self-ownership. The individual self ownership axiom dictates that it is always *objectively* unnatural and illegitimate (if the value/goal is minimal violent conflict) to initiate force against another individual. Screaming that "all Democrats should be gassed!" is a violation of this principle, clearly.

So, there you have it, Antifa. Please attack the real enemy, and not a group of people (Voluntaryists/AnCaps) who really just want to leave you alone, and, more importantly, to be left alone by you. (If you think I should be killed for wanting to leave you alone, then you are an idiot).

Communism and Fascism are two sides of the same coin. As an Anarcho-Capitalist, I recognize the philosophical and objective illegitimacy of the fiat coin and toss it in the trash.

As usual, the Voluntaryists/AnCaps remain individualist aliens amongst their robotic bandwagon-bastardized "counterparts," who seem to be ever-frothing at the mouth to be part of this or that "movement," and ever-terrified to be an independent, self-responsible, self-thinking, individual.

To both the Antifa "left" and the "Alternative right," I say, "No thanks."

[Grant Smith is a contributor from Japan who represents Voluntary Japan. We asked for an article rebuking Antifa claims that we're the "alt-right", as they shout in our faces at protests and online.]

Travelling to FreedomFest, by Jim Davidson

[Special to the Front Range Voluntaryist]

This week, the Resilient Ways Foundation co-founders, Jim Davidson and Dan Sullivan, are headed to Las Vegas for Mark Skousen's annual FreedomFest.com event. Details on our work at ResilientWays.net

Mark and I first crossed paths in person in May 2002 when I attended his Foundation for Economic Education FEEFest and 30th anniversary of Laissez Faire Books bookstore event, also in Las Vegas. That was the basis for what became, in July 2004, FreedomFest, which I attended as an exhibitor. That year I met Irwin and Peter Schiff, who exhibited across the aisle from me. Mark began running FreedomFest as a business in 2007, so this year is the 10th Anniversary of that event. Irwin has since sadly died in prison for non-payment of taxes.

Resilient Ways Foundation is working on free communities, and creating a network of existing communities. We are also building an initial coin offering, designing a theme park, acquiring land, we've hired an architect, we've engaged Wendy McElroy to head our advisory board, we've engaged a firm in Virginia to do our publicity and marketing, and we're working on several other events.

We'll update the Front Range Voluntaryist after our trip to FreedomFest, and before our trip to Ohio later this month. We also plan to visit San Francisco in August for the Startup Societies Summit. It's going to be a busy year.

RESILIENT WAYS

"Our purpose is to create resilient communities of like minded-people who all believe in the concept of voluntary action. Our communities will be physical, as well as, philosophical. We believe that in order to achieve a free, non-coercive existence without aggression and violence we must limit our interactions with state agents. We must build a community of people who are free-thinking, innovative, and creative."

RAISE A FAMILY TO END THE STATE,

ARTICLE BY MATTHEW DEWEY

The nuclear family, which is a monogamous pair bonded couple raising their mutual offspring, is the first and last defense of private property. The establishment of the nuclear family with the use of land as private property is the cognitive innovation that established civilization as we know it, but the destruction of private property norms through Cultural Marxism is currently threatening that foundation.

The Neolithic Revolution, as described by Hans Hermann Hoppe in *A Short History of Man* was a human intellectual breakthrough of the highest magnitude. *"The institution of private land ownership and of the family and the practice of agriculture and animal husbandry is explained as a rational invention, a new and innovative solution to the problem faced by tribal hunters and gatherers of balancing population growth and increasing land scarcity."* [1] Before this cognitive achievement humans survived in hunter-gatherer societies that were parasitic to the nature provided goods of their environment. Hunter-gatherers only depleted the supply of goods, they did not produce but only consumed.

This means then each individual is in direct competition for nature given goods with every other individual, but this is tempered with the recognition of the benefits of cooperation based on the division of labor. As Hoppe explains, the division of labor increases productivity because there exists tasks which exceed the power of any single man and require the combined efforts of several men, also individuals and their abilities are different, and finally because time is scarce. *"Given the peculiar, parasitic nature of hunter-gatherer societies and assuming land to be fixed, invariably the moment must arise when the number of people exceeds the optimal group size and average living standards will fall, threatening whatever degree of intragroup solidarity previously might have existed...This situation is captured and explained by the economic law of returns...that states that for any combination of two or more production factors an optimum combination exists (such that any deviation from it involves material waste, or "efficiency losses")."* [2] There exists a point of (absolute) overpopulation that Mises terms the Malthusian law of population. [3]

To avoid physical conflicts and successfully deal with the emerging overpopulation issues, *"The technological invention, then, that solved the problem of a steadily emerging and re-emerging 'excess' of population and the attendant fall of average living standards was a revolutionary change in the entire mode of production. It involved the change from a parasitic lifestyle to a genuinely productive life. Instead of merely appropriating and consuming what nature had provided, consumer goods were now actively produced and nature was augmented and improved upon. This revolutionary change in the human mode of production is generally referred to as the 'Neolithic Revolution': the transition from food production by hunting and gathering to food production by the raising of plants and animals... The new technology represented a fundamental cognitive achievement and was reflected and expressed in two interrelated institutional innovations, which from then on until today have become the dominant feature of human life: the appropriation and employment of ground land as private property, and the establishment of the family and the family household."* [4][5]

Before the establishment of land as private property, land was just a part of the environment, but with the advent of agriculture and animal husbandry it became necessary to have objectively defined boundaries on land to prevent conflicts with another family's resources. Original appropriation and voluntary exchange were recognized as the objective means of avoiding conflicts over scarce land and resources. But the appropriation of land as property for use in agriculture and animal husbandry solved only half the increasing population pressure.

The use of land to increase productivity did not address the issue of the costs of reproduction. It is important to realize that before the Neolithic revolution that children were considered everyone's and part of the tribe, therefore each individual had no responsibility to bear the cost of producing enough resources for the children each produces.

Hoppe explains further *"Instinctively, by virtue of man's biological nature, each woman and each man is driven to spread and proliferate her or his genes into the next generation of the species. The more offspring one creates the better, because the more of one's genes will survive. No doubt, this natural human instinct can be controlled by rational deliberation. But if no or little economic sacrifice must be made for simply following one's animal instincts, (cont. p. 7)*

because all children are maintained by society at large, then no or little incentive exists to employ reason in sexual matters, i.e., to exercise any moral restraint.” [6]

Thomas Malthus in an *Essay on the Principle of Population*, explains then that, *“the most natural and obvious check (on population) seemed to be to make every man provide for his own children; that this would operate in some respect as a measure and guide in the increase of population, as it might be expected that no man would bring beings into the world, for whom he could not find the means of support; that where this notwithstanding was the case, it seemed necessary, for the example of others, that the disgrace and inconvenience attending such a conduct should fall upon the individual, who had thus inconsiderately plunged himself and innocent children in misery and want. – The institution of marriage, or at least, of some express or implied obligation on every man to support his own children, seems to be the natural result of these reasoning’s in a community under the difficulties that we have supposed.”* [7]

So by the formation of monogamous families then the hunter-gatherer’s tribal lifestyle was transformed into separate families separately owning sections of land in which they produce the resources they need accordingly. The monogamous family owning land in which to produce the resources they need to ensure their own survival, either by agriculture or animal husbandry, or a combination of both, was the foundation of civilization. The private property norms of original appropriation and voluntary exchange formed the basis of a non-aggressive yet competitive society based on the mutually recognized benefits of division of labor. *“Private ownership in the means of production is the regulating principle which, within society, balances the limited means of subsistence at society’s disposal with the less limited ability of consumers to increase. By making the share in the social product which falls to each member of society depend on the product economically imputed to him, that is, to his labor and his property, the elimination of surplus human beings by the struggle for existence, as it rages in the vegetable and animal kingdom, is replaced by a reduction in the birth-rate as a result of social forces. ‘Moral restraint,’ the limitations of offspring imposed by social positions, replaces the struggle for existence.”* [8]

Community life, or closely proximate families, increased productivity for all due to the division of labor that had its effect on both production of resources as well as defense from external threats. It follows then that the nuclear family is the first defense of private property, because of the establishment of agriculture and animal husbandry, along with corresponding privatization of the costs and benefits of producing and raising offspring.

It takes time and resources from both parents to raise children successfully. Children, especially infants, are entirely dependent on the resources provided by their parents. They are incapable of doing any of the necessary work to sustain their own lives at first, and as they grow, they acquire the skills necessary to be entirely responsible for themselves. This means that the minimum requirement to raise a child is two parents that produce more than they themselves consume. The resources that a child requires is often more than any one parent can provide alone, due to the scarcity of time. It’s mutually beneficial for the parents to divide the labor in order to successfully raise their children. Children raised in a stable two parent households also learn the value of choosing the right monogamous partner. Making the wrong choice in who to start a family with is one that negatively affects multiple lives and has far reaching ramifications throughout society. The absence of either parent greatly increases the likelihood of that family turning to the State to provide the resources necessary to live.

The State’s forced redistribution of wealth negatively influences people’s decisions on who to start a family with by subsidizing irresponsible choices. The State’s welfare programs are ostensibly to help the poor and downtrodden but in reality they are a de-civilizing force that undermines the nuclear family. The State redistributes wealth from productive two parent homes, in the form of taxes and inflation of fiat currency, that it then gives to single parent homes. Therefore a single parent no longer faces the prospect of being without enough resources to survive, so they are less likely to care about making a bad decision when choosing a potential mating partner. *(Cont. p. 8)*

Without State welfare programs, individuals were forced to make a good decision on whom to start a family with, because if a bad decision was made and one were left to raise a child alone, the consequences would have been disastrous. The single parent is faced with the problem of producing enough resources for the children alone.

Also, *“children raised by single mothers are far more likely to live in poverty, be abused, commit aggression, go to jail, suffer from drug addiction and alcohol abuse, be the victims and perpetrators of sexual assault, drop out of high school, murder, commit suicide, run away from home or become homeless.”* [9]

So clearly it benefits a civilized society to have two parent households. Despite the clear advantages of nuclear families, the State incents the single parent homes by subsidizing their costs. The State will step in and provide some of the basic resources that a single parent needs, but the State cannot replace a parent’s time investment in the child’s development and the absence of that time investment is what leads to the issues listed above. Without the supposed safety net of State welfare programs, all individuals would be far more concerned with finding a potential monogamous partner that was far more likely to be a loyal, and resourceful parent. Individuals would seek out a mating partner that promised to work towards raising their offspring in a stable two parent home. The consequences of choosing a bad potential mating partner would be far direr situation without the promised resources of the State. Absent a State welfare program, anyone who wished to raise a family would spend considerable time and waste no effort in making sure that their potential partner shared their values and was one that they could count on to stay productive for their potential family.

In the respect that the State is the leading contributing factor to the erosion of the family and the subsequent de-civilizing effect that follows, it’s evident that the nuclear family is also the last defense of private property. To prevent a total breakdown of civilization it is important to recognize the importance of the nuclear family and to advocate pair bonded monogamous nuclear families in order to preserve our society

based on private property. The best way to contribute to actions that can bring about a Stateless society is to find a monogamous partner that understands the importance of the nuclear family, produce more than each of you consume, plan out the division of labor for the family, and then reproduce and raise your offspring to know and understand private property rights. A monogamous pair bonded couple raising a family is one of the best ways of taking action to end the State because the nuclear family is an objectively effective means defending private property norms that form the foundation to civilization.

*[Matthew Dewey is CEO of RWDS Corp.,
Arbitral Tribunal at Murray’s Market]*

[1] A Short History of Man, Hans Hermann Hoppe, p18; [2] Ibid., p42-43; [3] Human Action, Ludwig von Mises, p127; [4] A Short History of Man, Hans Hermann Hoppe, p47-48; [5] Understanding Human History, Michael H. Hart, p139; [6] A Short History of Man, Hans Hermann Hoppe, p62-63; [7] Essay on the Principle of Population, Thomas Robert Malthus, chapter 10; [8] Socialism, Ludwig von Mises, p282; [9] The Truth About Single Moms, Stefan Molyneux, Freedomain Radio, 2015

PSILOCYBIN MUSHROOMS SAVED MY LIFE, *ARTICLE BY KRYSTAL NATALE*

I was diagnosed with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder when I was 14 years old. I spent the next 13 years in an absolute hell that my own mind had created for me. Desperate to find relief, I did what any normal person would do: I turned to doctors for help. Pill after pill, therapy session after therapy session, there was no relief. I continued to have flashbacks and nightmares, sometimes as often as 5 times a week. At age 26, the doctor's placed me on Venlafaxine, also known as Effexor. They started me on the smallest dose possible and quickly raised me to the maximum dose you can give an adult. I began the most rapid decline of my life, becoming very withdrawn, moody and unable to control my thoughts. I even started hearing music inside of my head. Only 2 weeks after the music started, I had attempted suicide. I had a terrible day and finally something inside of me let go and I gave up. I rolled my windows up in my car and parked it on the side of the road by my home and closed my eyes. It was a 90-degree day. *(cont. p. 9)*

(Shrooms) I was in the car for 2 and 1/2 hours. Sweat had soaked my clothes but was no longer coming from my pores. My breathing was fast and labored. I opened my eyes, and I could see the clouds morphing into shapes and changing into the most beautiful colors I had ever seen. I closed my eyes again for what I thought was going to be the last time. Just as I did, I received a text message. I opened it and read it, it was my neighbor informing me that my daughter was looking for me and was extremely upset. Something inside my brain clicked in that second and told me to get out of the car. I opened my door and regardless of how hot and humid it was that day, I felt a cool blast of air, like air conditioning. I fell out of the car and landed on the pavement, then proceeded to drag myself into my home. I collapsed on the dining room floor where my neighbor soon found me in a pool of sweat. All I can remember, is his dog licking my face, sudden splashes of cold water and him telling me to drink.

My roommate forced me to go to the hospital for a psychiatric evaluation. They gave me two options, I stay by choice or I stay by force. Either way I was being coerced to stay. I really had no choice. They immediately brought me to the psych floor, and as soon as the door locked behind me, I began to melt down; realizing what had happened. I started screaming for my children and for them to let me go. I soon found myself surrounded by extremely large men and warned if I didn't settle down, they were going to inject me with medication and take me to isolation. The others called it the rubber room. It was something straight out of a movie. White padded walls, with a 5 point restraint table in the center.

After 5 days of doing what I was told, taking their medications, and insisting I was okay, they finally let me leave. While I was in the hospital, I had done a lot of thinking. Upon release I instantly typed "side effects of Effexor" into my Google search engine. The list blew my mind. Psychosis was one of the top listed negative side effects. At that moment, I knew the medication was the problem. My normal self would have never attempted to take my own life.

I had children to care for. I stopped taking the pills immediately. Within just a few hours, I began severe withdrawal symptoms; profuse sweating, vomiting, shaking, electric brain zaps, and fatigue. For several days I couldn't even get out of bed. My boyfriend approached me with an idea, little did I know that idea would save my life. "Why don't try mushrooms?"

I had exhausted every other method to return my mind to a healthy state. I began researching. I typed into Google "mushrooms to treat depression" and was supplied with a plethora of sources. Studies showing that it worked, even for people who had cancer and were dying. Finally, I agreed. I had never been so nervous in my life. What would I see? Would little green men come popping out, or demons? What was my mind going to unleash? I saw none of those things. Instead, I saw the most intricate geometric patterns,

and my mind began to think. For 6 hours, I was lost in my own thoughts, and the beautiful display in front of me. Two phrases came through, and resonated me to my soul. A message, one louder than I had ever heard before. I could feel the mental chains shatter as a voice whispered: "Happiness is a choice....Perception is reality." The next morning when I woke up, those two phrases kept echoing in the back of my mind. For the first time since I was a child, life suddenly had meaning again. Colors stood out like never before, and I had a genuine smile on my lips; something I hadn't experienced in years.

The mushrooms taught my brain how to think again after having been stuck in "fight or flight" mode for the past decade. New thought processes were now created that were once blocked, or hadn't even existed before. I came to the realization that I am in control of my thoughts, nothing else has that power. Happiness really is a choice.

I have now been free of flashbacks, nightmares and depression for a year. This is not to say that I don't still have some social anxieties or stress, but they are entirely manageable now. I don't lose myself in doom and gloom. When my situation feels hopeless and bleak, that phrase automatically pops into my head without effort.

Psilocybin saved my life, and freed my mind from the chains it once wore; the chains my own mind created for itself. Mushrooms not only treat depression, they also treat anxiety, addiction (from heroin to nicotine), and even cluster headaches. There is no risk of overdose, or addiction to psilocybin. Mushrooms lose their potency if you try to take them multiple days in a row. They are not a "party drug", and they may even knock you on your ass for trying to use them like that; they do have a mind of their own. They are a medicine, the most safe and effective one out there; and best of all, our earth grows them all naturally. Even those who have a bad trip almost always have a positive experience from it afterwards. If you do have a bad trip, it is highly likely that the mushrooms are trying to show you something that you needed to see or learn. You should listen. That being said, the only requirements needed for healing is a safe and positive environment. Allow your mind to think, and don't try to fight it. It may be a little scary at times, or you may feel as though you're going insane. Rest assured, you are not. They cannot hurt you in any way, shape or form. At worst, you may feel nauseated and may vomit, or be a little gassy the next day. You don't even need to trip to experience some of the medicinal properties. You can microdose, which is taking below the threshold of any visuals. However, I highly recommend people should trip at least once in their lifetime; preferably once per season. Psilocybin mushrooms cured my PTSD. I am living proof of it's powerful abilities. Could you imagine if everyone learned to love themselves again? What kind of world this would be? You are free to choose.

DESCENT INTO ANARCHY: ARE YOU OPEN TO VOLUNTARIYISM?, BY ROBERT PAUGH

In humans, we possess an inherent desire to seek truth, which may not be so obvious to us at first. However, it is a major driving force acting on us in our everyday lives. For example, it shows itself between many disagreements about who is 'right' and who is 'wrong'. It can range from something as simple as one's perception of the weather, to the more complicated arguments behind politics such as who is right to govern us. We seek truth, not only for ourselves but in the eyes of others. We want to see the world for what it is, and want to share this as a collective consciousness on what we believe to be an accurate depiction of reality.

However, despite this enduring human quality, we can unknowingly create barriers to truth. We can mask it in feelings of fear, or simply because we cannot or do not want to accept it. And thus, we may tend to close the door on our way to truth, unknowingly shutting down our capacity for introspection and empathy to name a few. One lesson of wisdom in using our ability to be self-critical of our own beliefs and feelings is to be brave in the faces of our own personal demons we unknowingly create and fear. To be aware of the origins of our own feelings and how they shape our beliefs regarding what is true, can be arguably one of the most important learning lessons in life in my opinion.

When I was little I was taught to associate the word anarchy with a state of disorder, chaos, and nightmarish violence and victimhood. I don't remember how I learned to make this association, but nonetheless it is there and it is a common fear among many people. A world without the state is engrained into our subconscious to mean a world without rules and order. And thus the first lesson for me to break free of this fear of association was to simply open my mind to the possibility that I was wrong about something, to swallow my pride, overcome the fear, and take a hit to my ego. To me these were the most difficult barriers to overcome.

By shutting down our ability to think clearly or critically, we are no longer pursuing truth, but merely lying to ourselves to create a world that we want to see. It is this lie, such as the one we tell ourselves about government, that I believe impedes many people in the pursuit of freedom and truth.

The purpose of this writing was to share my own personal journey in the pursuit of truth. I cannot overstate the simplicity of the lesson I learned in being open-minded to new ideas. Many people like to think they are open-minded, but in reality, are simply creating their own idealistic one. Many people aren't aware of the philosophy of voluntaryism. I hope that you may find some value in my personal experiences on my journey to freedom.

[Robert Paugh lives in St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada with his boyfriend Kevin; he's a teacher's assistant at Brock University]

GOVERNMENT IS AN IMPEDIMENT TO HUMAN EVOLUTION, ARTICLE BY ANARCHOJOE

There are groups of people, in many parts of planet Earth, who call themselves 'government' and get away with massive crimes against those who are not a part of their group. Government is comprised of humans, as far as we know, like myself and maybe you too, except they use violence and threats of violence against us to get what they want.

These people are holding the rest of us back. All too often libertarians and anarcho-capitalists are faced with predictable Pavlovian responses to our humble suggestion that life could go on without the parasitic class of bureaucrats, Deputy Assistants to the Assistant Secretary's Assistant, and other slime who make up government: "What about roads? Schools? And the Easter Bunny?" Instead of thinking about these services inefficiently provided at gunpoint by our overlords, we should reframe the objection into pondering all that has been prevented from being developed by the voluntary and productive society. Where could we be right now? Would we even need roads? Schools? Or Churches? We will never know how much further into the outer and inner cosmos we could have explored without government preventing the rest of us from Evolving.

Governments around the world are most likely preventing technological advancements from being released that would send us to a fantastical future, and they are most definitely waging a war on mind altering plants which have proven health benefits in addition to being used throughout a variety of cultures in different areas and times since the beginning of human civilization for connecting with the divine.

In a voluntary society, absent an institution with a territorial monopoly on the use of force, the freed market would allocate resources to the most desired and yet not met demands of the masses. These could be technological and spiritual needs, but there's no way of knowing (and that's what's most exciting about it!) If indeed technological and spiritual advancements were in demand, the market would provide. Interstellar space travel and communicating with our ancestors through ancient teacher plants like the Iboga root used by Central African tribe, or the incredible Ayahuasca brew consumed by the Amazonian Shaman, could all be possible to each and every one of us.

Government is an unnecessary evil and a major obstacle to the next evolutionary step for our species.

[Anarcho]Joe, Chattanooga, Tennessee

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REFRAMING THE DEBATE: ANARCHISM VS. MINARCHISM, OPENING REMARKS TO A LIBERTY ON THE ROCKS DEBATE, BY JUSTIN LONGO

Professor Huemer and I are under no delusion. We don't expect to change anyone's mind tonight in 2 hours of discussion. So what we intend to do rather, is to reframe this issue in your minds. It's a confusing and muddled issue for many different reasons. One of which is the ever elusive A word. Yes, "anarchy." First, I'd like to strike that word from your thinking. It is a loaded term that means a million different things to a million different people. And anarchy is not even what we are talking about here. Instead, I'd like to reframe the issue as markets vs. monopoly.

Human beings need goods and services to survive and thrive in the world. The question then becomes, by what mechanism do we produce and receive these goods and services. Things like food, shelter, protection, dispute resolution, ROOOOADS and yes, even the rules under which we live. All of these important things are goods or services that must be provided somehow.

Richard Dawkins has a famous one-liner he uses that I think fits very well into what we're discussing tonight. When he's talking with various religious people about atheism, he draws common ground by saying to a Christian for example, "Mr. Christian. There have been 1,000 gods worshipped over the course of human history. You are an atheist when it comes to 999 of them. I just go one god further."

And that's how I want to reframe the discussion tonight. Our opponents love and revere the market. There's no question

about that. And they want markets to provide 98% of goods and services. We just go 2% further.

So we're not asking you to choose the "system" of anarchy. Which is a nonsensical statement. We're asking you to choose the market system.

So why markets vs monopoly? The State is a monopoly - a coercive one at that. Meaning, it's not like a private company that comes to acquire 100% market share of a good. The company would still have to ask you to buy its product. The state however does not have to ask you anything. *It compels you.*

Meaning, even if we're talking about 1 or 2% of the goods and services in the economy - say protection services for example. The State doesn't ask you to purchase protection services from them. It compels you - by taking money directly out of your paychecks - and using that stolen money to provide police services on your behalf - whether you like it or not. We have no say over how much those protection services cost us. And we have no say over the quantity produced or the manner in which they are provided to us.

All of the failings of monopoly provision we instinctively fear are WORSE when it comes to the State's monopoly provision - because the State has the ability to legally take our stuff.

Monopoly provision of goods and services results in all the things we as free marketers despise - central planning, no consumer choice, no

competition, no profit and loss test, no prices, and so on.

We all understand why monopoly provision of food and health care ends in disaster. What I'm asking you to do is apply that same reasoning to things like protection services and dispute resolution. It's not as though market economics only applies to things like food and health care. Economic laws don't suddenly suspend themselves when it comes to the last 2% of the stuff we need.

I'll end by issuing a challenge - the very challenge that finally cleared up my thinking about this issue back in college. Towards the end of one of my upper level econ classes, our Professor pushed our view of the market process all the way to the edge. He gave us a brief overview of the ways in which the market could provide the really tough cases - goods and services like defense, fire protection, and dispute resolution. You can imagine the pushback he got from the class. Full disclosure: I was one of the ones leading the charge against such "utopian" thinking.

In response to the outcry, he issued a challenge: "Give me economic reasons why the market cannot provide the goods and services you believe it incapable of providing."

My challenge is this: Every time you advocate that government provide a certain good or service, replace the word government in your mind with the word monopoly. Then try to think of economic reasons why a monopoly would provide that particular thing better.

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"Imagine a free world..."

**SWEDEN - A CASE FOR FREE MARKET
CAPITALISM, ARTICLE BY JAKOB**

HORNGREN-FOLCH

Sweden has for a long time been lifted up as the primary example from left-liberals attempting to push for the implementation of so called democratic socialism in the United States. With a large public sector and a vast welfare state, Sweden seems on the surface to be what a "progressive" would consider a successful case of central planning, state intervention, and heavy wealth redistribution under the rubric of providing for the "public good". The "Swedish model" has been a holy grail for the political left for quite a long time, and pointing to Sweden as alleged evidence of victory for socialism is progressives' modus operandi for shutting down discussions. It is difficult to decide what the most upsetting part is: The fact that many people view Sweden as a socialist utopia, which is sheer nonsense, or the indisputable ignorance in regards to the laws of economics, as well as the economic history of Sweden.

Failure to understand historical conditions

It is not a huge surprise that misinformation like this gains traction in social media outlets. After all, it does give aid and comfort, though it's a false sense of comfort, to socialists who champion a failed ideology which should have been thrown in the dustbin of history. The minions of Karl Marx are desperate and they will latch onto anything they can these days, and they certainly won't let the truth stand in their way, whether it comes in form of empirical data or by praxeological deduction.

It is very popular, to say the least, for Bernie Sanders supporters and other left wing liberals to point to Sweden as a successful case of democratic socialism, but the rationale behind this conclusion is astonishingly trivial.

These interventionists and "social justice" activists will look at a snapshot in time,

namely the present economic and social conditions in Sweden, and they will not spend an ounce of energy to research the historical actions taken by my ancestors, leading up to the current situation. Even as of today, the claim that Sweden is a socialist country is not completely accurate. For instance, Sweden has a significantly lower corporate tax than the United States, 22% to be precise. Compare that to the U.S. corporate income tax of 39%. Sweden has also been in the forefront when it comes to school choice. Sweden has a voucher system that allows parents to choose a different school should the school in their district not be of satisfaction. Betsy DeVos, who is the current U.S. Secretary of Education, also champions the voucher system model. I do not on principle support a government voucher system due to the fact that it does not allow schools to discriminate, but it is still a step forward because it creates competition.

Prosperity comes from productivity and freedom

From 1850 to 1950 Sweden had a liberalization of economies unheard of in most of the world during that time period. Under this century of quasi *laissez-faire* capitalism, Sweden, a very poor country, saw the value of its capital stock skyrocket, and the real income of families increased by more than a multiplicative of ten. Furthermore, Sweden had a public sector smaller than the one in the United States, which allowed for capital investment to take place, and privatization of the means of production. The awareness of the growing value of the capital stock, among the Swedish citizens, lowered their time-preference for consumption, and increased their willingness to await delayed gratification. Sure enough, Sweden systematically became a wealthy nation, due to free markets, very little government spending, and very low taxes. We should also not forget that Sweden did not participate in either WWI or WWII, and that also certainly helped Sweden to become one.. (cont. p. 13)

..of the five wealthiest countries in the world.

While the majority of nations in Europe took turns systematically destroying each other, and their own accumulated wealth by engaging in wasteful warfare spending and the consequential destruction of property, labor, and capital, Sweden prospered under very little government supervision of private enterprise.

The resurgence of statism

From the 1950 and onward, the Swedish government started to plunder the nation's capital stock, and Swedes witnessed the beginning of economic decline in Sweden as a result of socialist regulatory reform via a vast expansion of the welfare state. This is the period that was heavily dominated by the Social Democratic Party in Sweden. In fact, between 1950 and 2005, Sweden did not manage to add one single net private sector job.

By looting the wealth generated under a century of economic prosperity, Sweden has been able to live in comfort, not because of socialism, but rather *in spite* of socialism. In 1995 Sweden joined the European Union, which added more state power, more welfare reform, and additional regulatory burdens imposed on private business by bureaucrats in Brussels.

Furthermore, Sweden has been faced with an even greater burden enforced upon them by EU's political super project, namely forced integration. Tolerance, and a welcoming attitude towards foreigners, has been the rhetoric of Swedish state officials for at least three decades. The government has been able to afford to carry on a generous appearance full of welfare promises for immigrants, knowing that it is painfully difficult for an individual to make it all the way from the Middle East, to the geographically isolated Nordic country, in Scandinavia.

The border problem

More recently, EU's outer border has more or less fallen apart. And since there is..

..virtually no restriction of movement within the borders of the EU, it is now exponentially easier to arrive in Sweden compared to how difficult it was before. As a result we've seen a massive migration movement from the poorer parts of the world into Europe, and especially to Sweden. In addition, the EU has compulsory quotas in regards to the number of immigrants a country has to accept, regardless of whether or not such proposed quotas have support from private citizens and property owners living within the affected geographical territories.

The trembling Swedish welfare state is currently at the verge of reaching the tipping point with the amount of pressure put on the system by new waves of welfare migrants. The strategy coming from the state makes sense if they want to obtain its ultimate goal of a one world government with international wealth redistribution. What would be a better way of breaking down barriers and confiscating property than to flood the different countries with immigrants and destroying the identity of the inlanders?

The Swedish government will continue to justify more state intervention and expansion of the welfare state as long as Sweden have a steady flux of low skilled immigrants, so the state has every incentive to keep this migration wave rolling.

If the Swedes want to avoid economic decline, forced integration, multiculturalism, an ever more expansionary welfare state, and moral decay, they will first need to reject the commands from Brussels, secede from the European Union, and reclaim their sovereignty as an independent nation. Only then can the population go back to free trade, property rights, and be on a path to prosperity. The new generation of Swedes must learn the lesson from their ancestors, and look at what Sweden did to become wealthy, not what an already wealthy Sweden is doing to destroy their capital stock.

**BASEBALL IS POLITICS IS WAR, ARTICLE BY
NICK WEBER (WITH A CONTRIBUTION FROM
LARRY LEIBER)**

Break out your favorite jersey and start yelling at that other guy: my local sports team is better than yours and so are my politics.

A Baseball Parable

After idolizing now-retired slugger David Ortiz, a guy who treated home run trots like a park stroll, earlier this year Boston Red Sox fans became outraged after Orioles slugger Manny Machado “showed up” their pitcher by taking 30 seconds on a home run trot. Granted, it was a 470 foot bomb after he had been intentionally thrown at 6 times in the previous two weeks, with MLB All-Star and 100-mph hurler Chris Sale throwing *behind* him during the previous at-bat. Fans and sportswriters voiced their opinions on the matter, I’ll spare you the research: Machado is the devil in Boston and a hero in Baltimore.

Sports fans have personalized the concept of their favorite team to such an extent that when you criticize their team, you are criticizing them and they will jump to its defense immediately and vehemently. They associate their team identity as the highest expression of themselves. It’s no small jump to translate this concept to politics: no talking point is too embarrassing to repeat, no narrative too ridiculous to question, no policy too far-fetched so long as it’s something my team supports. This is the essence of the two-party system: I’m right, you’re wrong and there is no other way. In sports as in politics, there is comfort in the herd but there are also blinders. The safeness of the collective discourages straying from the norm and although being on the fringe is scary, mob rule is much worse.

But further along, the two parties ultimately merge, the bickering merely theater for memes and Facebook feeds. This is most explicitly evidenced by the American way of war, which continues on unabashedly under both parties. A long dormant anti-war left and a non-existent anti-war right are utterly silent when it comes to questioning our military might-makes-right foreign policy. The foreign policy war apparatus operates at a higher level and is unquestioned by either party. Whether it is Obama dropping some 26,000 bombs in 2016, Bush’s WMD claims for..

..invasion of Iraq, Clinton in the Balkans, or HW Bush’s Iraq, the list is endless. We have deliberately destabilized the Middle East for decades, compiled numerous NATO bases at the doorsteps of Russia and routinely ignore that clearly less-than-sacred piece of paper known as the Constitution; we haven’t declared war in 75 years. We have attempted to overthrow 50+ countries and operate countless military trip-wire installations scattered across the globe; this is no small undertaking, it is multi-faceted and securely embedded into our culture. We have a decades long, three presidency spanning, “military conflict” against a guerilla force on their own land that history has proven time and again can’t be won. And yet, when we are attacked it’s because “they hate our freedoms?”

Enough with the dumbed down narratives. How does this continuity happen if we are so divided? How is it possible for the House to pass (344-81) a 1,330 page, 696 billion dollar National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA FY18) without any objection, discussion or even acknowledgement of its existence from the people? How many people even know what NDAA stands for? We the people have become unquestionably wedded to the ultimate belief in American exceptionalism and it's obligatory bombs for freedom ideology; an ideology that can only be sustained through bureaucracy and fear.

The Bureaucracy

Regardless of which party is in power there are firmly entrenched interests hard at work continuing the status quo. Bureaucracy will continue to grow and will consume even the most stalwart advocate of reduction policies. As with all government programs, the goal is to ensure continuation and naturally, a continuation of funds with each party merely shifting and shuffling the funds to their favorite spending programs. There is good money to be made in prolonging, rather than fixing a problem; this is a hallmark of government. Sure, the bureaucracy allows a fig leaf on occasion via a tax cut here or there, but spending never goes down and budgets are never balanced. Politicians are too flush with campaign contribution cash and too worried about war machine layoffs in their districts to garner any real support of dismantling the machine. A distracted populace is blind and wars abroad are irrelevant when you have *(cont. 15)*

..an ocean on either side of you (a de facto wall), literal walls to the south and a friendly neighbor to the north. So long as it occurs "over there," (where is Yemen?) the masses can have their collective cognitive dissonance: there is a war on somewhere and I'm sure we are doing the right thing. As Felix Morely put it: "a man is great in that his nation is great." This attitude allows the bureaucratic wheels to keep churning.

Boiling it down further, Michael Swanson summarized in *The War State*: "It is the nature of the bureaucracies that make up a larger organization to look after their own interests and exhibit rigid thinking...Government bureaucracies are even more rigid and slow to adapt to change than a bureaucracy that is a division of a large private corporation is, because they are subject to severe budgetary constraints. A corporation's purpose is to increase profits, so if a corporate division is successful in helping to achieve this goal, it usually will have the benefit of an expanding budget, which it can use for new purposes. Government bureaucracies do not have the ability to grow their budget on their own, so they are dependent upon the President and Congress for their funds. If some big change in policy occurs, they may lose money while others gain at their expense. As a result, government bureaucracies tend to simply do more of the same." [1] Both parties have a vested interest in keeping each other in power and to keep the war machine funds flowing while allowing for talking point tirades to fill the news cycles to keep the masses occupied with their team politics. You scratch my back, I'll scratch yours.

The Fear

The most effective ways to build consensus for the necessity of an all-consuming military apparatus is fear. This has long been understood by those in power. As Hermann Goering admitted to American military psychologist Gustave Gilbert in his cell at Nuremberg, "Naturally, the common people don't want war...That is understood. But, after all, it is the leaders of the country who determine the policy and it is always a simple matter to drag the people along, whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship or a Parliament or a Communist dictatorship."

"There is one difference," Gilbert insisted, "In a democracy, the people have some say in the matter through their elected representatives, and in the United States only Congress can declare wars."

Goering was unimpressed and was quick to continue: "...the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders. That is easy. All you have to do is tell them that they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same way in any country."

Follow that with an endless parade of military and foreign policy "experts" with wall to wall media coverage; the narrative is embedded and unquestioned and it functions the same, regardless of party. No one questions the obvious: we are an empire, we are never not at war. The justifications are endless: humanitarian, economic necessity (corporate socialism), fight them there or fight them here, we *must* do something. We are one team in this regard. Sports gives us something comfortable to argue about instead of confronting the reality of the impacts of our foreign policy.

All in, it's quite a sordid story: these wars are not meant to be won, they are meant to be continuous. In the aftermath of the Bay of Pigs fiasco, Arthur Schlesinger summarized the, as he called it, permanent government, which "soon developed its own cozy alliances with committees of Congress, its own ties to the press, its own national constituencies. It began to exude the feeling that Presidents come and go but it went on forever. **The permanent government was, as such politically neutral; its essential commitment was to doing things as they had been done before.**" [2] This has become an unquestionably true summary of our war state, our empire, our team. The combination of a businesses as usual Congress, fully supportive of the endless cycle of war treachery, a press always eager to parrot the "official" story, and a willingly subordinate populace makes for a global game where no one is a winner and sovereign lands, families and cultures are destroyed.

It's easy to turn a blind eye to insane antics when it's "your guy," be it sports or politics, but who cares, believe it or not, there's another *big game* tomorrow, will your team win?

[Nick Weber is a husband, father of two and loves baseball. You can follow him on Twitter: @DenLibertarian or at www.denverlibertarian.com]

[1] Swanson, Michael. *The War State: The Cold War Origins Of The Military-Industrial Complex And The Power Elite, 1945-1963*. Michael Swanson. Kindle Edition, Introduction; [2] *Ibid*. pp. 246

ECONOMICS GONE AWRY, ARTICLE BY MIKE MORRIS

In today's world, where the long-overdue effects of government meddling in the markets (central bank intervention, for one) are beginning to reveal their fragility and failure, proper economic understanding is needed more than ever to explain the cause-effect of such courses of action. Blame must be assigned, not on the markets they've inhibited, but squarely on the government when the time comes. But economics has sort of been dissolved into other disciplines, or taken on other roles that have nothing to do with it, to become something of a confused mush which isn't considered highly important as far as education goes. People think of these laws of nature that economics can establish as something which can be usurped, since they must be approximate and inexact anyway. They're insignificant to our daily lives or deserve no attention.

But this isn't so. All the things we do as humans is economics, whether recognized or not. At its core, and appearing simplistic, economics is the social science of *human action*, the formal fact that man acts to attain ends he values using scarce means. Man has nearly unlimited and unsatisfied wants, and only a limited means to achieve them. Nature has not blessed us with superabundance, which we all would love. Resources and time are scarce in relation to our desires. Acting man must therefore make choices, and in doing so, forego other possible courses of action, at least hoping before the fact that they will bring a greater satisfaction than other possibilities. What he foregoes is his costs, but only he can know what is right for himself and learn over time what's better. Man is always seeking to alleviate this felt-uneasiness, as Ludwig von Mises would explain it, and to achieve a more satisfactory state of affairs, whether monetary or personal. He makes for himself a goal, places a value on this end sought, and he then tries to attain it. He may make mistakes about his choices, but this is acceptable. He is a human after all and may at times err in his decisions.

The corpus of economic theory is derived from this simple axiom of action, which is irrefutable on the basis that one must contradict themselves in the act of asserting that man doesn't act. Economics needs the human. It deals with the realities humans face in the world—*scarcity*—and the resulting implications—the ranking of values, the costs incurred in making some choices versus other alternatives—up to deriving the laws of diminishing marginal utility, law of demand and supply, time-preference and the phenomena of interest, businesses cycle theory, and so forth.

The science, though, has gone astray. It has become something more of an art, a guessing-game where people play around with figures and come up with theories to explain their observations. Many today think of something else other than a social science when someone says economics.

Business comes to mind, the activity of the stock market, finance in general such as writing checks, making predictions of an uncertain future, reading over boring statistics and using them to make correlations, coming up with equations, the necessity of mathematics, etc. But none of these things are necessary economics, which is concerned strictly with the implications surrounding man's conscious, purposeful behavior in life: employing scarce means, of at minimum his body and time, to achieve subjectively valued ends.

While businessmen don't need to be trained economists, and economists don't need to be good at business, both are certainly complementary, though not inextricable, to each other. Either could do without the other, though not understanding subjective value, or what it is you're actually doing as an entrepreneur, could be detrimental to your business. This lack of economic understanding could lead to bad ideas ideas like "cost-plus pricing", holding the fallacious labor theory of value, or believing that raising prices is always the means to making more money, etc. But knowing how it works (economics) isn't the same thing as successfully playing the game (entrepreneurship). Indeed, many businessmen are highly ignorant of economics, and many economic theoreticians aren't businessmen and don't aspire to be. Moreover, this entrepreneurial element is almost entirely taken out of economics, and yet this role is an essential driving force of the economy. Nonetheless, economics deals with theory, not exactly business acumen and strategy.

Another thought is that, if one knows some elementary economic theory, some principles, they must excel in math too. While it might be helpful, or even related in that they're both aprioristic, math and economics are two different things. Economics has been "mathematized", so to speak, turned into an effort of statistic-taking and correlation-making of data, of drawing charts and lines in a boring manner, explaining things in equations, etc. This "econometrics" makes economics look daunting, or "dismal", to those outside of it, likely preventing many from having an interest. Sometimes it seem this is the purpose. But the actions of so many individuals cannot be condensed into a single, convenient number that is useful to the central planners of the economy, who use the consumer price index or gross domestic product to calculate their future planning. While math is logical too, economics doesn't have much to do with math. While cost-accounting is essential in an economy, and may help the business person, math doesn't have much to do with economic theory. One can come to understand economics without math.

Economic logic should be explained in words, through reason, not math and charts. The problem is that economics has been overly complicated to the point of incomprehensibility. This "Keynesian jargon" or "Fed-speak", as they've been named, somehow impresses people though. It's no longer the everyday

common-sense of the layman. It has evolved into something much more serious, but for the worse.

Econometricians are regarded as the sophisticated economists while anyone who presents a more clear-cut picture is considered dull. Concocting new equations is the fashion. Looking to whatever mumbo-jumbo Greenspan, Bernake, or Yellen screech is considered fascinating. One is refreshed, however, when they read authors like Henry Hazlitt, who clearly wrote what economics is really about in no uncertain terms.

There is little vigorous defense of markets today in mainstream circles. There's Modern Monetary Theory (MMT) which fully supports the government's monopolization of money and printing thereof, Marxist economics still lives on, Keynesian central bankers still think they can fix the economy they've rigged, and other bad ideas continue to thrive. The study has been swept with overly sophisticated models meant to explain the economy and prescribe policies to the government, with new ideas of how to use the government and central bank to centrally plan the economy, etc. The faith has been lost that natural forces of the market can be left to function on their own. Even the so-called free market schools, i.e., Chicago (Friedman, et al), which make up what's thought to be free-market economics, calls for many government interventions in the way of: monetary policy, solving "externalities" by socializing them, basic income guarantees, etc. A fringe minority stand to defend complete liberty.

This is why the Austrian school is so important today. For one, methodological individualism shows us how to look at things: *Only the individual acts*; groups do not; groups are made up of individuals. Thinking of "the economy" as this entity unto itself allows excuses for government intervention to be made under the notion that this living-being, the economy, could be steered back on course if only the right actions were made against it, for the "common good", of course. The market is where man is free to pursue his ends, not those chosen for him by someone else. The market we might say is just a result of the non-aggression principle: people—individuals—exchanging their property titles freely in a network of voluntary exchange in a division of labor. This is cooperation and civilization, not state-coercion as we're made to think. Other economists who advocate government policy however have little to no theory of *the State*, not defending a system of ethics when stepping outside the bounds of positive economics to regard this violent institution simply as some useful, convenient mechanism for retooling the economy to correct so-called "market failures" and such. The state, to them, isn't a gang of thieves: it's the necessary forum for performing economic stunts.

Austrians are also the natural enemies of the Marxists. Since as far back as the late 19th century, early Austrians as Menger, Bohm-Bawerk, and Mises had destroyed economically the core of Marxian theory,

respectively attacking the idea of a labor theory of value, capital theory, and the possibility of socialism to rationally calculate how to allocate resources in the absence of privately owned means of production as to not incur any costs or losses. The debate rages today, with Marxism far from dead in the culture or academia. Fortunately, it would seem, as Austrians are the only ones who can explain the business cycle, interest rates, money, banking, prices, capital, and everything else, the attractiveness in a view that challenges the orthodoxy seems to be on the rise.

Yet another inevitability the economist will face by the public that is a confusion of the scope of this discipline is the request to predict the future. Economists are looked at as people who can give precise information about future events (e.g., when the stock market will crash, how much demand for X there will be on Y date). But this is impossible: the future is uncertain. If it wasn't, if it was *sure*, then I doubt there would be a need for economic science at all, as actors would no longer be. There would be no need for the entrepreneur, whose role is to anticipate future demand and prices and produce accordingly in hopes of a profit. While he may describe what must happen given certain variables, the economic theoretician is not a fortune teller. As Lew Rockwell put it in a fabulous and short pamphlet everyone should read, "*forecasting the future is the job of entrepreneurs, not economists.*"

This also misses the *ceteris paribus* notion of economics, i.e., that its propositions are on an "if all things are equal" basis when speaking of predictions. And here's where another misconception occurs. Thus we can say that increasing the money supply will cause prices to rise, *if* every factor remains the same (though it doesn't), but we cannot say exactly how much and when. We can say that central bank policy is making an artificial boom appear in the economy which must eventually collapse, but we cannot know this precise date, indeed one that awaits us in the near future. It is generally hacks that try to say, "on September 30th of next year, the market will finally implode." We can't know this. This would assume that economics can make quantitative predictions of man, when its statements are merely qualitative.

In addition, this quantification is thought to be achievable by government statisticians who believe they can aggregate many factors of the economy into one number, such as "Gross Domestic Product" (GDP), to give us a picture of the economy. This, necessarily, isn't possible either, and statistic-taking is in large part only to continually plan the economy. There is no need in the free economy for an extra-market institution (the state) to collect data. Considering the economic loss of paying people to gather this data for the government, all the fancy econometricians should be relieved of their duties. Those people should be freed to go be productive elsewhere in the economy rather than to make up numbers for central planners.

But of this wrongful idea of economics as quantitative, man, again, is a conscious actor. He is an individual. He is unlike subjects of the physical sciences that do not purposefully act. In fact, it's thought economic laws can be invalidated because it can't say precisely what the effect will be and when. But we can only, at best, explain the *ceteris paribus* notions of economics: that an increase in demand, *supply being unchanged and remaining the same*, will cause a rise in prices. Being that humans are freely acting with ever-changing preferences in an uncertain future, we cannot know exactly how this will play out. For instance, supply might rise, too, and no rise in prices is seen. But this doesn't refute the basic logic of supply and demand. We can't say, "the central bank created X amount of money, so we will see Y amount of rise in prices on Z date", and nor could we say, seeing as the central bank has engaged in expansionary monetary policy, that "on X date, the economy will fall into recession."

As Ludwig von Mises has said of this problem in his aptly-titled *Human Action*, "...the main fact is that there are no constant relations. Economics is not, as ignorant positivists repeat again and again, backward because it is not 'quantitative.' It is not quantitative and does not measure because there are no constants. Statistical figures referring to economic events are historical data."

In other words, there are no causal constants in human action, and for this reason economics is necessarily qualitative. Quantitative modeling, widely practiced today, has no place in economics. Perhaps past data is useful for the economic historian, but not in constructing economic theory. We need not experiment with silly economic ideas like "minimum wage laws", as a prime example, to see if they work. Economic propositions can be irrefutable on their own, through logic. Experimentation is unnecessary and inappropriate for the social sciences, where we have instead the thought experiment to hold one variable constant as opposed to the physical science's empirical methodology. Humans cannot be made into a laboratory, despite those who remark, "I wish we could just test it to see who's right." This empiricism should remain in the *physical sciences*, its rightful home, not the social science of economics where real, conscious, acting humans are involved. In fact, it isn't even possible to reproduce in experimentation human actions, because all factors are always changing.

Thus, yet another point where economics has gone wrong is that its practitioners wish to apply seamlessly the empirical methodology of the physical sciences to the social sciences, where it's not applicable. Economists have largely adopted the positivist approach to the study, even those like Milton Friedman who believe in positive economics (positive, not in the empirical sense, but in that there is something to say about economics rather than merely normative statements).

They hold that no propositions can be true without being "tested", that it's insufficient to do logical thought experiments, that everything must be tried out first. Minimum laws *might* work, but who knows? But we need not rely on empiricism to establish these truths of economics. Man is capable of rational thought and reasoning through these issues. You can't explain economic theory using using this empirical methodology. Economics is a logic science, elaborated upon through thought rather than experimentation. This misunderstanding is precisely where many go wrong. Perhaps the prestige of the physical sciences is too tempting not to carry over to economics.

Another still-prevalent, though fallacious, idea is that there's some sort of objective-value in economics. Ironic, because those that espouse this are also moral relativists. Why wouldn't they think *value* is subjective too? Marx took this idea of an inherent or intrinsic value of a good coming from the amount of labor imputed into it from the classical economists, like Smith and Ricardo, who hadn't yet solved the problem. It took the Marginal Revolution, of the Austrians like Carl Menger, to restore the value problem with the marginal concept. Since all of Marxism is basically centered around this fallacious view, i.e., that a given-good is worth a given-value because a given-amount of labor was used in making it, such as seeing the employee-employer relationship as exploitative like that of the state and tax-slave, basically all of Marxist theory is incorrect and fallacious too. This theory of value is espoused today, for one, in the idea of a "living wage" or the minimum wage, which the defender must posit some arbitrary number that *they think* is the correct one. But it doesn't matter how hard or long one labors for something that no one wants, it has no value on the market. Driving around in circles for hours before delivering a product would not increase its value. Value is a subjective matter. We all know this, really. Why can a Jackson Pollock splatter-painting sell for more than a Van Gogh? Because the buyer, the subjective and unique individual himself, believed it to be worth more than the other, despite anyone else's opinion. Value, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

The significance of the subjectivity of value, like the inability to use empiricism in economics, is that there is no way to measure our values. Our preferences are ordinal, not cardinal, and we all rank our preferences differently. Thus there is no way for the redistributor-politician to measure, or know, utility-gained vs. utility-lost. And it is the egotistical idea of politics that *someone else* knows what's best for us, what we value most. We're all too ignorant, and need our all-knowing benevolent men in government to choose for us, they think. These are the bad ideas that give us wasteful, bloated bureaucracies that bog down the progress of mankind in attempt to make the collective "society" richer.

It would seem another key point in the corruption of economics has been to separate “microeconomics”, where generally good theories are taught of basic economics from the standpoint of the individual, from so-called “macroeconomics”, where former theories are abandoned and excuses are made for why and how the government can intervene in the economy on a “macro” level to make supposedly needed corrections. It’s popular to ask if one is studying “micro” or “macro” under this misconception. But there is really only *one* integrated economic theory. If supply and demand applies to the price of apples, in the case that prices *rise* if demand for apples is unchanged and supply falls (or if the supply of apples is unchanged and the demand rises), then it applies to money, too. There’s no reason a natural money, such as gold, can’t be beholden to supply and demand too, though many have the idea of “stable prices” to be stabilized by the central bank, as if this is something desirable. Increasing the supply of money (inflation) will cause the price of money to fall in terms of other goods, i.e., its purchasing power will be diminished, or prices as expressed in terms of money will rise. I imagine the large majority of the American population thinks that printing money might be a solution to economic problems, and the remaining who intuitively feel it’s not a real thing that printing money is the same thing as creating new, real wealth, in terms of goods and services, couldn’t necessarily tell you why.

Mainstream economists want us to believe that central bank meddling in the markets, namely via inflation, can “stimulate” the economy, inducing us to spend more under the notion that consumption, rather than savings, investment, and production, is what drives an economy. Of course, they’re the ones who cause the instability. The business cycle is an effect of central banks manipulating the rate of interest, not people freely acting in the market. There’s no reason to assume a free market would be anything but stable and growing, not subject to random shocks or sudden, systemic business failures were it left alone.

With this out of the way—with the fact that “stable prices” aren’t needed, but an economy can operate on any supply of money; that interest should be determined by people’s time-preference, and if they’re manipulated, the business cycle ensues; and that, to add, all unemployment would be voluntary in a market economy without the disemployment effect of government policies—the whole purpose of the central bank (see last link) is smashed. The Federal Reserve System should be outright abolished, not simply audited.

Many of today’s economists adhere to statist-economics, however, which isn’t economics at all. It would seem to me they’ve created this vast body of work posing as economics in order to justify government intervention. There are many antidotes to this, but new theories are continuously erected, and the

youth of today is turned on by the failed ideas of socialism, seen in the rise of Bernie Sanders in 2016. Bernieites who would never claim to be economists, but nonetheless have policy proposals which are necessarily regarding the economy. His hopes are to divert attention to emotional issues, and away from the economic realities behind them, such as to just state a fact, like “X amount of people are without healthcare”, divorcing this of a solution of making it more affordable, i.e., in freeing the extremely over-regulated market for health care. His hopes are that none of his voters will question him on things he can’t answer, such as the money problem (that the government has a paper-money monopoly and replaced it with gold) or the banking problem (that the Federal Reserve is just a means to cartelize the banking system) or how minimum wage laws would actually raise real wages (since there’s no logical explanation for how they would). The problem is that Bernie Sanders doesn’t have a theory on money banking, he has a mouth that angrily shouts things to disaffected Leftists. Sadly, many millions believe him.

While economics itself could be taken for a value-free science, i.e., a specialized discipline that can explain the effects of taxation without saying if taxation itself is morally just or not, “good” or “bad”, to mount an attack against taxation that goes further than to explain its relative impoverishing effect we must resort to ethics, which for us has been summed up quite simply in online-meme pop-culture spreading beyond the libertarian community that: taxation is theft. We could elaborate, but shall it suffice here that this is our view. An economist who has stepped outside this scope of economics to propose things the state *should do*, without defending a set of ethics too, is not really acting as an economist anymore. And really, it would seem to me, these types (like Keynes) are using their sophisticated, incomprehensible “economics” as an excuse and shield to justify interventionism. Most economists, like the rest of the population, simply see the state as this useful mechanism for correcting so-called market failures. Bernieites wouldn’t want you to mention any government failures, now.

Yet the people who are talking of these problems, which they’ve turned political, forget that they necessarily require an economic understanding to be qualified to deal with them. Government cannot simply make policy and call it good, but they must know what the effects of said policies will be. Of course, politicians aren’t principled men, but no less *should* they know economics. To the extent economics is value-free, it is not concerned with men’s opinions on such matters. It doesn’t matter if Bernie Sanders personally believes a minimum wage law can work to raise wages, or that, by some other magical means, he has found the perfect number, \$15, which it should be set at; the law still will not work. Again, economics doesn’t care for opinions. Economics is a science.

I'm not from the United Kingdom, but one doesn't have to be to point out that the Labour Party is a fine example in the promotion of economic fallacies today. The Labour Party—the U.K.'s social-democratic party—is busy pushing the same fallacious collectivist theories as always. Social democracy is softcore communism, and it doesn't work. Apparently the communism of Corbyn, the U.K.'s Bernie, is quite popular though. Unashamedly, they're calling their plans a "New Deal for the Economy" and a "Fair Deal at Work." They didn't learn anything from the disastrous New Deal of Roosevelt, because history is still taught that he "saved us from the Depression" and that these acts are of enduring benefit to today's economy.

The Labour Party offers us a run-down of all the bad economic policies that have been concocted in the world, and refuted many times over, so we can just use their "manifesto" to make a short example. Believing in minimum wage laws, which is price-fixing for wages, as expected the LP is proposing rent controls, too, saying, "Labour will make new three-year tenancies the norm, with an inflation cap on rent rises." Few people still believe in rent-controls, though the concept of the widely practiced minimum-wage is the same idea. The problem with rent-controls (a maximum selling-price for an apartment) is simple: if prices are not allowed to rise, then producers will have no incentive to add to the supply, and in turn lower the price again, since they cannot turn a profit off such a deal. If I was told I'm not legally allowed to sell guitars for more than \$100, but it costs me anything close to \$100 to produce one, I will stop producing them. The availability of guitars will decline. Thus the intention of increasing availability, the egalitarian dream, achieves just the opposite: a shortage. Other effects will result too (e.g. the elderly hoarding older, bigger apartments at fixed-rates rather than giving them up to larger families to downsize for smaller, cheaper living, etc). We need a free-market in housing as much as anything else. Furthermore, they state that a "Labour government would introduce new legal minimum standards to ensure properties are fit for human habitation." So, it meets the one-size-fits-all government-standard, or it's out. This is a problem in healthcare too, as in other industries: if it doesn't meet government approval, no one gets to consume it. They call this being fair.

They never want to fix the inflation (money printing) problem, but always want to intervene in belief they can mitigate its effects through other policies. As in Venezuela, the government inflates, prices begin to rise for all sorts of goods, then they implement price controls to try and stop it, and then, in addition, they blame the rising prices on the non-existent free-market when the source was themselves. It's those "greedy price-gouging capitalists who caused things to get more expensive, not us!"

As per usual of the democratic socialist, they intend to "raise the minimum wage to the level of the living wage."

But how can anyone know what a "living wage" is? Why don't they talk about "living prices?" The effect the same here too. If there's a minimum someone can pay, then at some point (the point above the market price for labor), they'll stop buying labor. Indeed, this artificial raising of the wage may cause an artificial expediting of replacing labor with machines, too. But raising the arbitrary minimum wage level doesn't raise wages, it causes unemployment, as no one facing a downward-sloping demand-curve is forced to hire anyone, but only to pay them said amount when *and if* they do. I think the point was made most succinctly in *Economics in One Lesson* by Henry Hazlitt: "You cannot make a man worth a given amount by making it illegal for anyone to offer him anything less." That's really all anyone needs for an argument. This is all the minimum wage law says: all jobs under X-sum an hour are now banned; and since the buyer of labor is a consumer too, less labor will be purchased.

Assuring as always that the vast majority of people's incomes (95%) will be left unaffected, *Labour* says, "only the top 5 per cent of earners will be asked to contribute more in tax to help fund our public services." Asked to contribute!? Taxation is not a voluntary act. It's patently coercive, which is the point. If one was simply asked or encouraged to donate more, then the government would be nothing more than a private charity. There's obviously consequences should one deny their offer to "contribute" more to them, making it indeed involuntary. But of course, they know this. I guess people are supposed to thank their governments when they say, "we will not ask ordinary households to pay more?" How nice of you! Why should it matter anyway, because if you were only *asking* them, they could just say, "no thanks," right? If the government were voluntary, and offered its services to willing customers, it would be none other than a business. Like any other private business, it would receive its income voluntary; no one would be forced to buy their products. This idea of soaking the rich not only won't work, but many people have become rich off the political means that government places before them. And in another failing of economics, the economists have forgot to apply the theory of monopoly, that prices will rise and quality will deteriorate, to crucial areas as money, defense, and the whole of the state, which many would suggest cannot be free, private, competitive, and voluntary as food and other goods and services.

Funny enough, the Manifesto is covered with the title, "for the many, not the few." Makes you wonder why Bernie is driving one-hundred thousand-plus dollar cars and owning multiple homes when he spent his life in public office, or why Maduro of Venezuela is eating caviar from his balcony while others are looking for dog-meat in the garbage can, or why others, such as Hillary Clinton, who spent their life "serving the public", are millionaires. With government, a small, privileged ruling-elite will always rise to the top at the expense of everyone else. Our current President is a

billionaire himself, and it looks like rich interconnected political dynasties are set to rule the U.S. government forever. Democracy cannot evade the Iron Law of Oligarchy.

England, I believe, like the U.S. without a Department of Education, became the most literate country in the world under a privately provided education system, but the Labour Party now thinks *“governments have the responsibility to make lifelong learning a reality by giving everyone the opportunity to access education.”* They can't give though without first taking. Government is not a producer. It steals from producers and redistributes what was already produced. This is the essence of why socialism causes impoverishment: it takes from the productive, which discourages them from producing more, and allows people to consume who are non-producers, therefore lowering the cost of non-production and raising the cost of production, i.e., welfare vis-a-vis work.

Contrary to the Labour Party, who tells us *“taxation is what underpins our shared prosperity”* under this false “common-good” premise, a tax on production is a tax on everyone, paid for in lower output. Raise taxes high enough, and watch the economy completely fall apart and mankind return to a more primitive standard of living. What bloody rubbish for them to pitch taxation as the source of prosperity!

In conclusion, the “economists” and the non-economists are both doing irreparable damage to the allocation of resources which so many millions depend on for survival. From Paul Krugman to Bernie Sanders, either's utopia realized would be ruinous for economic progress—Krugman's mounds of paper money or Bernie's nationalization of everything. (I have a theory, or, a hunch, that Bernie Sanders knows full-well the effects of state-intervention into the economy, but that he's a pure fraud and crony for the system. But maybe I'm wrong. Perhaps he is just an somewhat-innocent economic ignoramus.)

But just like in the United States, where the government's conceived and limited role was to protect life, liberty, and property, which of course is a contradiction for it to do, the role and reach of government has extended far beyond what anyone could have imagined. There is no sector of the economy today untouched by government policy. Most everyone, being born it, takes it totally for granted the endless government programs, agencies, bureaucracies, etc., that exist today. The American State is completely unprecedented in size and power, and poised to grow ever-more authoritarian.

For many reasons, such as that the USD remains the world's “reserve currency”, or other central banks are colluding with ours in a concerted inflationary effort, the United States is able to sustain its program for now. If there had not been such a large capital stock to draw from due to the preceding relatively free markets to initially create wealth, the U.S. government would have brought us disaster long ago.

In places in Venezuela, it's already being more quickly realized that state socialism destroys the pool of real wealth. Europe's time will come too. Its welfare state is entirely unsustainable as well. If we had the present regulatory system imposed in early America, it would have never become what it did today. Poor African countries, for example, could not just enact minimum wage laws and begin printing truckloads of paper money, and expect to see wealth come out of it. Wealth comes out of production and exchange of these goods and services, not by plundering these resources through the state bureaucracy.

To return economics back to its rightful path, it will need to be stripped of moral relativism, empiricism, and emotion, and return to speaking of the seemingly “cold-hearted” reality that governments cannot repeal economic laws, but are subjected to them too. I suppose it's comforting, albeit disastrous, to believe governments can create wealth by legislative act, but it isn't true. There are no shortcuts or magic in the world that make wealth appear from nowhere. One fundamental economic lesson is indeed that there ain't no such thing as a free lunch.

Everyone wants to be passionate about something. We must help everyone to the path of liberty, and to liberty in the economic sphere as well as the social sphere. To have men adopt voluntarism as an organizing principle for society—and as the means of prosperity—will rely largely on economic education. While the market economy is full of complexities which aren't necessarily easy to grasp, such as the division of labor, money as a medium of exchange, the price system, the structure of production, etc., socialism offers the simple, naive solution that a monopolist of resources can take care of all our needs for us. It's just that much easier to adopt the latter, unfortunately. At this stage in our evolution, most haven't come around to seeing the beauty of markets. Capitalism is a shunned term.

But even if Bernie isn't a bad man, he's still simply wrong. Well-intentioned people with bad ideas cannot improve the world. It doesn't matter if everyone is convinced that socialism is a good idea, it must still fail. There is no “good in theory” but fails in practice. It's a matter of good theory and bad theory. This is why, contrary to the socialists, our libertarian ideas of peace and freedom, though maybe a hard road to attain, are actually achievable and workable. Of course, we must convince the populace too. But our ideas work.

Frankly, I fear the do-gooders the most! My idea of a government, if it must exist at all, is one that does little to nothing. The White House is a cigar-smoking lounge for three-piece suits. Everyone nowadays expects a superman. Preferably the President plays golf *every* day! But most are of this mind set that Congress needs to “get to work.” They ought to be churning our new pieces of legislation against liberty or else we're not advancing the progressive agenda.

The future is not yet written. It depends on good ideas (liberty) prevailing over bad ones (government schemes against liberty). Men act upon ideas, and if they do so with bad ones, with socialist ideas, then this cannot be good for our future. If people come to believe in bad ideas, or ignore sound economics at their own peril, they will come to implement them, ending in disaster. Only time will tell if what presently prevails can be logically smashed once and for all. Since men are self-interested, and since many benefit directly from property redistribution, though overall we all lose, it might be difficult to get anyone to buck the system. We must convince the masses however that this doesn't work for them; it works for the beneficiaries only, which often are those already at the top. Free markets are what would help them achieve the ends they truly want.

I can't say Marx would have endorsed how his ideas were implemented, but his ideas had power, and they remain today, just as they did back then, when communist governments began seizing the means of production and centrally-planning whole economies. Equally, long after Keynes has died, central banks still manipulate economies in belief they can stimulate them, keep prices stable, and unemployment low.

We're all, soon, going to be a victim of a decade of experimental, unprecedented monetary policy when the scheme that was ramped up after the Great Recession unfolds. At that time, I fear governments may implement their final schemes, such as a one-world government, a one-world paper-money, a cashless society, and putting the police state in full-throttle. This, of course, will largely be blamed on the [non-existent] free-market, with the people crying "capitalism has failed us" when it's only statism that has.

To have a sustainable social order, i.e., to have civilization, it's necessary for the people at large to heed the principles of economics in their everyday life, and to not consider them of a study which has nothing to say of the world. One cannot have a complete worldview without an economic understanding. It is essential. Otherwise, without it, stagnation, or decline, largely wrought by state intervention, though thought to be progressive, will roll back the gains we have made. We must keep up the fight in convincing everyone that free-markets, not socialism, is what will do the most to serve their ends. This is why winning the ideological battle of our times, of liberty over socialism, is just as important as it ever was.

*[Sorry for the long one, and thanks for reading, if you did.
Mike Morris, editor/publisher of the Front Range
Voluntaryist]*

ON CROSSWALKS IN MANITOU SPRINGS,

ARTICLE BY PAOTIE DAWSON

"HEY! USE THE CROSSWALK!" yelled a parking enforcement employee. It was a hot, sweltering July afternoon when an elderly woman, crossing the main street in downtown Manitou Springs, was jostled by the parking employee. She hurried and completed her journey across the street in spite of the barking man. She scanned the sidewalk for a parking kiosk, headed to one to pay to park, and then noticed the same employee who had barked at her was now eyeballing her car, parked across the street.

And so it goes in Manitou Springs, the most scenic and beautiful little town in all of Colorado. The city sits at the base of Mt. Manitou, home to hugely popular Manitou Incline. Nearby, the world-famous Garden of the Gods draws in millions of visitors each year with a good many of them heading west to Manitou Springs or up to Pikes Peak, AKA, "America's Mountain."

To say Manitou Springs is popular is a bit of an understatement. It is probably more accurate to state the city is primely located to take advantage of the tourist draws of the Garden of the Gods and Pikes Peak. Less certain is the Manitou Incline, in large part due to growing complaints of traffic and parking congestion from those who live and work in the city. Among the complaints are the fact parking enforcement employees, when not extorting more money for city politicians from unsuspecting tourists and hikers, are busy yelling at tourists to use the crosswalks in town.

And so begins the discussion about crosswalks. Are they safe? Are they dangerous? Do pedestrians have entitled rights to secure and safe passage in a public crosswalk? All of these questions tend to be answered by some folks who reduce everything into, "Pedestrians have the right of way." DUH.

I don't like crosswalks ([and I'm not the only one](#)). I've lived in Manitou Springs for almost 10 years now and have seen so many near accidents at the crosswalks that I don't use them as much as some folks would like, such as the parking enforcement employees. The problem with crosswalks is that they breed complacency for pedestrians, as if they are somehow entitled to cross the street without needing to look in any directions.

(cont. p. 27)

**THE EXPEDIENCY OF EXCHANGE, ITS
EVOLUTION, EFFORTS BEHIND
FACILITATING AND EXTENDING IT, AND THE
WALL OF POPULAR RESTRICTIONS THAT IT
IS UP AGAINST, THEN AND NOW, ARTICLE
BY SCOTT ALBRIGHT**

[A continuation of our series of reviews of
Frederic Bastiat's *Economic Harmonies*, Chapter
Four]

The evolution of exchange, of voluntary trade, has advanced so far beyond the depths of what we can imagine and we take it for granted all too often. When you see clearly how an increased population allows for a larger and more dynamic workforce, and that advances in science and technological innovations in capital investments that can perform more complex services and utilities emerge in the market, the range of your ability to exchange is immeasurable, providing that exchange is voluntary. As Bastiat so concisely put it, "*the capital savings due to exchange surpass one's imagination.*" [1]

Ultimately, the effects of an extended division of labor with in-sourced labor or outsourced production are essentially the same as capital investment/machinery used in production in that they all free up labor to be available for newer wants, talents to fulfill desires of goods and services of a higher order. This was first discussed in chapter two of the *Harmonies* but the quote is most noteworthy in chapter four. Summing up its main principles and thesis are:

"In the state of isolation, our wants exceed our productive capacities. In society, our productive capacities exceed our wants." [2]

He goes on:

*"There are two great incontrovertible truths. The first is: The better man exploits the forces of Nature, the better he provides himself with all that he needs...
...The second truth is: The resources of Nature are unequally distributed over the earth."* [3]

What is so plain and clear at the individual level is often so heavily disputed at the larger and national level. When we think of how hardly no individual household attempts to produce all that they consume and that this would be too..

..impoverishing to try, the plain as day in every way of life's details show us the basics of economic principles that make textbook economics look like featherbedding to protect salaries of the tenured at our universities today!

When Marco Rubio campaigned for president last year, he advocated a continuation of import quotas on sugar so that a relatively few number of U.S. farmers would be protected from international competition. This is the typical status quo of most politicians, but why not better exploit the forces of nature to render the benefits more accessible to all. We don't produce "ice at the equator and sugar at the poles" (p.70) so to speak, and although that would be an extreme case of economic isolationist production, or definitely not exploiting the forces of nature with sensible applications of our faculties where they are more conducive to richer results, what Rubio and others are proposing with these import quotas is to restrict our ability to consume, on better terms, produce that grows more abundantly in climates more favorable to their gratuitous flourishing. It's a very lopsided argument without any logical consistency.

What I like to call intellectual welfare, or welfare that all of society shares in the benefits of due to the creative brains/intellect of our pioneers and innovators in tech, industry, engineering, and vast array of health care innovators (as well as in other lines of work) is the only legitimate form of welfare because it doesn't come about via coercion, but rather voluntary exchange and an enabling of its expansion. It is born about because we have the property rights and market freedom to ceaselessly apply our faculties to better our lot in life (for so many beyond the inventors themselves) and exploit the natural resources and forces of nature to make our labor more prosperous and beneficial to an ever-widening circle of people. In this regard we all benefit so heavily from and live off of the benefits produced by these few (relatively speaking) giants.

"Our knowledge," says M. de Tracy *"is our most precious possession, since it is knowledge, in proportion to its soundness and breadth, which guides our efforts and makes them productive. Now, no man is in a position to see everything, and it is much easier to learn than to invent. But when several men are in communication, what one observes is soon known by all, and only one of them needs to be especially*

ingenious for all of them soon to be in possession of valuable discoveries. The sum total of knowledge, therefore, grows much more rapidly than in the state of isolation, not to mention that it can be preserved and, therefore, passed on from generation to generation." [4]

Bastiat reveals the nature and effects of subjective value very well in this chapter. We highlighted that briefly in earlier chapter reviews, namely for chapters two and three, but it is explained more clearly in chapter four and we certainly don't disagree that the nature of exchange in and of itself reveals that we are seeking to obtain a good or service on better terms than we can realize for ourselves in direct production.

"It is simply that, when one man says to another, 'You do only this, and I will do only that, and we'll share,' there is better employment of labor, talents, natural resources, capital, and consequently, there is more to share." [5]

"It is at this point, therefore, that political economy really begins, for it is here that we can first observe the appearance of value. Barter occurs only after an agreement, a discussion. Each of the contracting parties makes his decision after considering his self-interest. Each one calculates in this fashion: 'I shall barter if the trade brings me the satisfaction of my want with less effort on my part.'" [6]

How exchange is amplified and expedited with money, a medium of exchange, is touched on in chapter four as well. When society advances from isolationist/direct production to direct exchange or barter, there is still a limit of exchange because of what economists term the "double coincidence of wants." In short, this is when we can only exchange with another who has what we want and wants what we have. An example would be a coat maker who desires chicken eggs. The only way that he/she can realize a gain from exchange is if they find a chicken farmer who desires a new coat. That places a very strict constraint on the ability to exchange. Bastiat is definitely describing the effects of eliminating the double-coincidence of wants very eloquently, without even using the term! Indirect exchange via money is what eliminates this double coincidence of wants as well as enabling economic calculation, since we can compare the value of goods with one another better with a medium of exchange.

"Now, at the outset of our study of political economy, we must notice that the exchange that is transacted through an immediate commodity loses nothing of the nature, essence, or character of barter; it is simply a form of indirect barter. As Jean Baptiste Say very wisely and profoundly observed, it is better with two factors added, one called sale, the other purchase, which together are indispensable to complete a barter transaction...

...In this way (because of money) the ultimate transactions are carried on across time and space between persons unknown to one another, and no one knows, at least in most instances, by whose effort his wants will be satisfied, or to whose wants his own efforts will bring satisfaction. Exchange, through the intermediary of money, breaks down into countless acts of barter between parties unacquainted with each other." [7]

Bastiat describes the evolution of exchange in what could be envisioned on a sort of timeline, if you will, from isolated production to direct exchange/barter to indirect barter (via mediums of exchange) to other transactions extended over time and space by credit... *"In logical order,...an amazingly intricate piece of machinery." [8]* We will touch on credit in later chapter reviews.

In order to expedite exchange, it is obvious that an infrastructure of roads, tunnels, ports, canals, airports, trade routes in general, and anything that eases the flow of people and goods must be developed to enable your growth and prosperity. The natural resources, efforts and energies devoted to these feats can't be appreciated enough, because we now have the advanced methods of production and capital machinery to upkeep these necessities far more efficiently and safely but in the early days of getting them up and off the ground, so to speak, we didn't have the same efficient methods and it was much more backbreaking work necessitating considerably more labor. This meant that more diversions of labor at more risk for injury were necessary than what would be now and it keeps things in perspective. Bastiat elucidated upon this cause, in order to bring people closer together to extend and expedite exchange.

"But exchange too encounters obstacles and demands effort. Proof of this is to be found in the great mass of human labor that exchange brings into play. Precious metals, roads, canals, railways, coaches, ships—all these things absorb a considerable part of human activity.

And just think of how many men are employed solely in expediting acts of exchange, how many bankers, businessmen, shopkeepers, brokers, coachmen, sailors!

This vast and costly assemblage of men and things proves better than any argument the tremendous power in the faculty of exchange; otherwise, why would humanity have consented to burden itself with it?

Since it is in the nature of exchange both to save effort and to demand effort, it is easy to understand what its natural limitations are. By virtue of that force within man that always impels him to choose the lesser of two evils, exchange will expand indefinitely as long as the effort it requires is less than the effort it saves. And it will halt, naturally, when, in the aggregate, the sum total of satisfactions obtained by the division of labor reaches the point where it is less, by reason of the difficulties of exchange, than the satisfactions that could be procured by direct, individual action." [9]...

... "The improvement of the commercial machinery, therefore, is equivalent to moving the two towns closer together. Hence, it follows that bringing men closer together is equivalent to improving the machinery of exchange. And this is very important, for it is the solution of the problem of population; here in this great problem is the element that Malthus has neglected. Where Malthus saw discord, this element will enable us to see harmony.

By means of exchange, men attain the same satisfaction with less effort, because the mutual services they render one another yield them a larger proportion of gratuitous utility.

Therefore, the fewer obstacles an exchange encounters, the less effort it requires, the more readily men exchange.

And the closer men are together, the fewer the obstacles, the smaller the effort. A greater density of population is, therefore, necessarily accompanied by a greater proportion of gratuitous utility. It transmits greater power to the machinery of exchange; it makes available a greater part of human effort; it is a source of progress." [10]

This harmony in population will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming chapter 16 review concerning Malthus and his fear of overpopulation. But even here, it can be illustrated clearly in the same principle of having more people in closer proximity to better facilitate exchange. However, what must be remembered here, is that one fault of the classical economists is that they often assumed that man sought after solely monetary and economic gains in so far as..

consumer wealth and ability to continually obtain goods and services on better terms is concerned.

While I am not accusing Bastiat of that here, it is important to note that not all people desire solely monetary gains. Many people today still cling to parts of the labor theory of value, have protectionist or mercantilist leanings in so far as espousing and/or acquiescing into the idea that outsourcing of production, trade deficits, and heavier flows of in sourced labor are inherently bad for domestic producers and employees.

Once you consider the scope of advancement in economies and globalization, of prices of inputs such as raw materials, capital goods, intermediary goods, and final consumer goods and labor, taking on a more global nature and giving investors more opportunity to offshore their capital, in-source some labor, this extent of liberty applied to free trade and movement of people is still met with alarm for many. Many technophobic tech-heads (if I can coin a term) today are even advocating for UBI, or a universal basic income, to supplement a mass of workers who they believe will be automated out of work permanently due to nanotechnology and Artificial Intelligence.

While I believe there will undoubtedly be sharp dislocations and reallocations of labor, I do not believe the extent of effects that the alarmists are warning of are well thought out. They are ignoring the fact, as Bastiat elaborated on in chapters two and three, that man's wants are not static, but progressive. This must not be lost sight of because if it is, then people can assume all too easily that we will "run out of things to do and be idle." That benefits of cheaper goods and services, the freeing up of labor to pursue newer talents for newer goods and services will meet a wall with A.I. is to be determined, but I have my hope for liberty, for the creative destruction and the ingenuity of mankind. Don't forget that people had the same fears from the tractor, automobile, and many other forms of machinery.

Either way, we can explain to some people these benefits of free exchange with great logic, points and data until we are blue in the face, but if they were a "victim" of free trade, automation, or downward pressure on wages due to migrant workers willing to work for less or a competing product in another market outside the U.S., it is much more difficult getting this to resonate with them. (cont.)

The offsetting benefits aside, as I've already explained, at the individual level, no one disputes the benefits of exchange, at the national level, it has been, is and will always be heavily debated. I know the logical inconsistency is still absurd, although that is just my opinion. So long as exchange is voluntary and not forced and/or restricted, I believe its benefits will always outweigh its costs, especially since voluntary exchange implies a subjective valuation of an end that one can obtain on better terms than what he/she could produce themselves, although this does not mean that after the fact, we can't come to the conclusion that we've made a poor choice.

The restrictions and limits on exchange were a big issue in Bastiat's day as well. The revelations from him concerning the class tensions between the working class and wealthier landowners and capitalists of the day during the February Revolution of 1848 are still present today, 170 years later in the U.S. and much of the world. That contagion of legal plunder that he so eloquently warned about in *The Law* and here as well, is prescient and should always be heeded. That, when the privileged classes can obtain it, instead of an outcry against all privileges, we see it spread pervasively so that there is more robbing of Peter to pay Paul, so to speak, until everyone succumbs to it, not necessarily in principle but even consequentially only as a means to hopefully offset some of what was plundered. I call this the pocket picking circle. Eventually everyone wants their hand in someone else's pocket and no one wants to pull it out. We can only imagine how frustrating it must have been to be able to so eloquently describe and spread these ideas, these benefits of liberty, economic freedom and exchange, and his country only wind up embracing more legal plunder. In light of what is happening with the "Skinny Repeal" of the "Affordable Care Act" in 2017 here in the U.S., I feel the same pain.

"Take from some to give to others! Permit me to point out the danger and the absurdity of the economic thinking in this so-called social aspiration, which welled up in the hearts of the masses and finally burst forth so violently during the February Revolution.

When there are a number of strata in society, it is understandable that the uppermost one should enjoy privileges at the expense of the others. This is hateful, but it is not illogical.

Then the second stratum from the top will not fail to batter down these privileges; and, with the help of the masses, will sooner or later stage a revolution. In that case, as power passes into its hands, we can understand that it too creates privileges for itself. This is always detestable, but it is not illogical; at least it is not unfeasible, for privilege is possible so long as it has the great mass of the people under it to support it. If the third and the fourth strata also stage their revolutions, they too will arrange, if they can, to exploit the masses of the people, downtrodden, oppressed, exhausted, stage their revolution too. Why? What do they propose to do? You think perhaps they are going to abolish all privilege, inaugurate the reign of universal justice? Do you think that they are going to say: "An end to restrictions; an end to restraints; an end to monopoly; an end to government interference for the benefit of one class; an end to heavy taxation; an end to diplomatic and political intrigue"? No, their aim is very different. They become a pressure group; they too insist on becoming privileged. They, the masses of the people, imitating the upper classes, cry in their turn for privileges. They demand their right to employment, their right to credit, their right to education, their right to pensions. But at whose expense? That is a question they never stop to ask. They know only that being assured of employment, credit, education, security for their old age, would be very pleasant indeed, and no one would deny it. But is it possible? Alas, no, and at this point, I say, it is no longer detestable, but illogical to the highest degree.

Privileges for the masses! People of the lower classes, think of the vicious circle you are placing yourselves in." [11]...

"...And they do not see that by extending and systematizing more and more the axiom: Take from some to give to others, they are encouraging the error that creates the difficulties of the present and dangers for the future...

...Even greater is the harm done by our university system, which fills all our heads with Roman prejudices, that is, with everything most incompatible with social truth." [12]

Does anything really ever change? Bastiat ends the chapter with an enlightening point, and makes plausible one of the reasons why these logical consistencies exist. Like I said earlier about how contentious free exchange is at the national level but never is it contested at the individual level, the question of free exchange implying that some..

..producers will inevitably go out of business with evolving economies, changing demands, and the same effect happening at the national level when certain investors move their capital abroad, does imply that because domestic output of product and employment of labor is under more competitive pressure with advancing economies worldwide, it is not surprising that those employed who may believe that they are at risk of being dislocated from work at least temporarily, and those that have capital outlays on the line and risk losing on investments as producers, would only naturally be inclined to favor of some protectionist measures, believing that it could not be harmful since it "keeps Americans employed or shielded against foreign competitors."

"How happy will nations be when they see clearly how and why what we find false and what we find true of man in isolation continue to be false or true of man in society! ...

...And, since the more keenly all those about us are aware of the obstacles that stand in their way, the more generously they are inclined to remunerate our efforts, it follows that we are all disposed, from this point of view, as producers, to dedicate ourselves almost religiously to exaggerating the importance of the obstacles that it is our business to combat. We consider ourselves richer if these obstacles are increased, and we immediately conclude that what is to our personal gain is for the general good." [13]

This ending of chapter four is a timely fit for chapter five which is titled Value. In it will be discussed the nature of value, how it differs from utility, and where the classicals went wrong in conflating the two, inevitably giving fuel to the communists fire!

[1] Bastiat, Frederic. Economic Harmonies, p. 71, The Foundation for Economic Education, 1996; [2] Ibid. p. 61; [3] Ibid. p. 69; [4] Ibid, pp.70-71; [5] Ibid, p.71-72; [6] Ibid, p. 72; [7] Ibid, p. 74-75; [8] Ibid, p. 76; [9] Ibid, pp.76-77; [10] Ibid. p. 78; [11] Ibid, pp.90-91; [12] Ibid, p. 93; [13] Ibid. p. 98

(Cont. Crosswalks) Usually, these people will look straight down as they cross the street. And these people should be terrifying to you and every motorist. Studies repeatedly demonstrate crosswalks can and do make crossing streets dangerous. The more cars and pedestrians there are at a crosswalk/intersection the more likely..

are at a crosswalk/intersection, the more likely accidents will happen.

Additionally, some tourists, not used to driving in the downtown Manitou Springs area, may not realize they are driving through a crosswalk until they've passed one. Familiarity of the downtown area is not to be expected of tourists, though people who support or think enforcement of jaywalking laws will magically make pedestrians safer fail to take into account [many variables that both make crosswalks safer and dangerous](#).

In nearby Colorado Springs, pedestrian fatalities have [risen](#) this year alone. In 2015, a pedestrian walked in front of and was hit by a police cruiser. The [report](#) states, "There is no marking on the ground, however, this is a city park trail, designated to cross the street. Bicyclists and pedestrians cross that every day. Every day, all day. That is the place to cross."

So, here's a [summary](#) of Colorado's pedestrian right of way law (use the link to see your state's summary of the same law):

"Vehicles must yield the right-of-way to pedestrians within a crosswalk that are in the same half of the roadway as the vehicle or when a pedestrian is approaching closely enough from the opposite side of the roadway to be in a danger. Pedestrians may not suddenly leave the curb on foot, bicycle, or electric bicycle and enter a crosswalk into the path of a moving vehicle that is so close to constitute an immediate hazard. Pedestrians must yield the right-of-way to vehicles when crossing outside of a marked crosswalk or an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection. Where traffic control devices are in operation, pedestrians may only cross between two adjacent intersections in a marked crosswalk and may only cross an intersection diagonally if authorized by a traffic control device."

It's pretty simple to understand, though the basic rule of thumb should be:

- Before you enter a crosswalk, make sure you're not about to step in front of a vehicle
- Look in the immediate direction of oncoming traffic before you enter a crosswalk
- Keep looking at your surroundings as you cross the street, crosswalk or not
- It helps to make friendly eye contact with drivers as you enter and cross a street/crosswalk

- Do not dart in front of a vehicle as it approaches a crosswalk
- If a traffic device is at an intersection, use it but keep in mind you will still need to do the above steps, too
- Finally, treasure your life and don't play games with 2000+ pounds of metal rapidly moving at you

Bonus reading material: [When Marked Crosswalks Can Be More Dangerous for Pedestrians](#)

Meanwhile, I've already shipped an email to the City Council in Manitou Springs regarding a dangerous and marked crosswalk with pedestrian crossing signs partially and fully obscured by municipal trees. If motorists don't know they are approaching a crosswalk because a large, yellow sign is obscured, and a pedestrian decides to walk into the crosswalk at about the same time ...

Anyway, crosswalks are not guaranteed public safe spaces. They are merely to help you cross the street. And most importantly, public crosswalks create and foster complacency on the part of both motorists and pedestrians, so it goes without saying that if and when you drive in Manitou Springs, be prepared to stop; and if you're crossing a street in Manitou Springs, it may be best to ignore the parking enforcement employees.

Whatever. It's your call. Be safe.

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