

Utopia Now: Global Ethics and Politics from An Existential Kantian Cosmopolitan Anarchist Point of View

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I. Introduction

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realisation of Utopias.¹

I once heard an astronaut describe his trip to space. At first he saw individual countries, then continents, bound by oceans. When he went high enough, he could see only one world. Do we all need to go to the moon to understand that we live together in one interconnected world where peace can be found?²

Two Kinds of Utopia

There are two fundamentally different conceptions of “utopia.”

One conception, call it *millenarian utopia*, begins with an uncompromising vision of an ideal human community in a far-off future, and is all-too-often often used by authoritarian political regimes in order to justify coercive social engineering in the present, molding people to fit the uncompromising vision, ending in actual *dystopia*.

But the other conception of utopia, call it *utopia now*, epitomized by Oscar Wilde’s famous essay, “[The Soul of Man Under Socialism](#),” instead provides a guiding idea of a morally and politically better world, as a ground of rational hope for progressive social activism and change in the present moment.

This essay philosophically pursues Wilde’s visionary project in global ethics and politics, and applies it directly to the contemporary world.

Four Motivations

More specifically, however, this essay has four motivations: three smooth-flowing ones, and an angry one.

First, it flows smoothly from the central arguments and theses of my book, *Kant, Agnosticism, and Anarchism: A Theological-Political Treatise*.³

¹ O. Wilde, “[The Soul of Man Under Socialism](#).”

² A. N’Simbo, “**Forced From Home** Launches in the Northeast,” *ALERT: Medecins Sans Frontieres/Doctors Without Borders* 17, 4 (2016): 12-13, at p. 12.

³ R. Hanna, *Kant, Agnosticism, and Anarchism*, forthcoming at *Rounded Globe*, URL = <<https://roundedglobe.com/>>, esp. part 2.

Second, it flows equally smoothly from my intellectual and emotional engagement with three excellent recent books on altruism and utopianism: Rebecca Solnit's *A Paradise Built in Hell*, Larissa MacFarquhar's *Strangers Drowning*, and Rutger Bregman's *Utopia for Realists*.

Third, it also flows smoothly, although somewhat more negatively, from my critical engagement with Peter Singer's truly excellent but in certain important ways, I think, philosophically misguided recent book, *One World Now*, and correspondingly, from my wanting to provide a clearly-presented, well-worked-out anti-Utilitarian, principled non-consequentialist, *existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist*⁴ alternative to it, while also remaining broadly sympathetic with Singer's *globalist* ethical and political orientation.

Fourth and finally, the angry motivation.

To be quite frank, this essay was also inspired by an intense personal, moral, political, and spiritual *rage* about

- the media-driven Punch-and-Judy show that masqueraded as the 2016 United States of America Presidential campaign, and, as a direct consequence of that,
- the election of the greedy, ruthless, nativist, bigoted, demagogue billionaire Donald Trump as President of the USA, starting in 2017.

Trump received 46.1% of the popular vote (as compared to Hillary Clinton's 48.2%), and 306 Electoral College votes (as opposed to Clinton's 232 votes).

As I will demonstrate, however, for a great many if not most people, the process of voting for and electing the US President in 2016 was an exemplary case of what the Brazilian radical philosopher of education Paulo Freire, in his highly influential 1968 book, *The Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, with incisive, prescient moral and political insight and aptness, calls *internalizing the oppressor*: kissing the foot of the tyrannical person who is stepping on your head.

⁴ See R. Hanna, "Radical Enlightenment: Existential Kantian Cosmopolitan Anarchism, With a Concluding Quasi-Federalist Postscript," in D. Heidemann and K. Stoppenbrink (eds.), *Join, Or Die: Philosophical Foundations of Federalism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2016), pp. 63-90, also available online at URL = <https://www.academia.edu/6994230/Radical_Enlightenment_Existential_Kantian_Cosmopolitan_Anarchism_With_a_Concluding_Quasi-Federalist_Postscript>; and Hanna, *Kant, Agnosticism, and Anarchism*.

Therefore, in addition to presenting, defending, and directly applying the idea of *utopia now*, this essay is also intended to be—

- a radical philosophical contribution towards our collective self-liberation from this contemporary situation of local, national, international, and global ethical and political oppression,
- *by daring to think and act for themselves and for ourselves*, that is, by collectively developing what Freire also so very aptly called *a critical consciousness*.

Solnit, MacFarquhar, Bregman, & Me, Sharply Over Against Singer

Solnit's book very compellingly describes how ordinary people frequently become active altruists and temporarily create real-world utopias in the aftermath of disasters.

MacFarquhar's book brilliantly explores the ethics and existential psychology of real-world altruistic "sinner-saints."

And here are Bregman's ideas in a nutshell.

- Universal Basic Income (UBI) means that every adult person gets a decent living income (say, \$25,000.00 USD per year) with no further requirements and no strings attached.
- Wherever UBI has been tried in the past, it has had good all-around benefits for everyone involved.
- UBI could be easily funded by rich countries, e.g., by progressive taxes on capital accumulation, large incomes, money transactions, and money-managing, and by sharp reductions in military spending (especially in the USA).
- UBI would end world poverty, if implemented worldwide.
- The UBI idea primes us to think seriously about the nature and purpose of work, and more specifically about why anyone should be doing what the political anthropologist David Graeber aptly calls *bullshit jobs* (i.e., jobs that are inherently uncreative and meaningless, and also unproductive and useless for anyone other than the job-holder, even if lucrative) if they don't have to.

- The primary barriers to UBI are (i) cognitive “walls” or illusions about poverty (in particular, the classical invidious, ideologically-driven distinction between “deserving” and “undeserving” poor) and (ii) neoliberal ideology.

Bregman also has some very interesting and important—although less well-worked-out—ideas and arguments about universal open borders (UOB) and a 15-hour workweek (FHW).

In what follows, then, building and elaborating on Hanna, Solnit, MacFarquhar, and Bregman, *but also sharply over against Singer’s act-utilitarian, consequentialist ethical commitments*, I present, defend, and directly apply a six-part, collective altruist, anti-Utilitarian, principled non-consequentialist, *existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist*⁵ proposal for utopia now.

First The U-Zone, and Then the Rest of the World

By *The U-Zone*, I mean an empirical test of the six-part collective altruist, anti-utilitarian, principled non-consequentialist, existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist proposal, by means of a large-scale, real-world pilot project consisting of a *North and Central American Utopian Zone* comprising Canada, the USA, and Mexico.

The U-Zone pilot project would start with a process of radical political change in the USA, then include Canada and Mexico.

Obviously, not only would The U-Zone pilot project require intensive and extensive advance-planning, but also every year, year after year, the existing conditions, effects, and implications of the U-Zone pilot project would have to be carefully studied by large teams of well-trained experts in Canada, the USA, and Mexico, working together; and many important fine-tunings, refinements, reforms, or repairs would have to be made along the way.

Assuming that all goes well, however, then the success of The U-Zone *will show the rest of the world what can actually be done*, and as a natural consequence, other u-zones will begin to proliferate around the world, until finally the *global* implementation of the six-part collective altruist, anti-Utilitarian, principled non-consequentialist, existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist proposal for utopia now is complete.

⁵ See note 3 above.

To give it a handy eponymous label, I will also call this six-part proposal, including The U-Zone pilot project and its eventual extension to global implementation, *Utopia Now*.

In other words, the creation of *Utopia Now* will be *bottom-up, dynamic, and (d)evolutionary*, not *top-down, externally-imposed, and revolutionary*.

Starting with the USA, here is what I am proposing —

1. *Universal Basic Income (UBI)*:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over and living permanently in the USA, who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000 USD per year, with no strings attached.

2. *A 15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs (FHW-for-UNBJs)*:

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

Thus anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

The rationale behind the three-year gap between (i) being offered an eco-job at 18 and (ii) beginning to receive their UBI at 21, is that every young adult who has finished high school will have the option of pursuing three years of part-time or full-time free higher education without credentialing, i.e., for its own sake, after high school, before making longer-term decisions about what, in section IV, I will call *job-work* and *life-work*.

3. *Universal Free Higher Education Without Credentialing (HEWC)*:

- Everyone would be offered, beyond their high-school education, a free, three-year minimum, optional (but also open-ended beyond those three years, as a further option), part-time or full-time universal public education program in the so-called “liberal arts,” and also in some of the so-called “STEM” fields, including the humanities, the fine arts, the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences.

- For many or even most people, their HEWC would fall between (i) the end of their high school education at age 18 and the corresponding availability of eco-jobs, and (ii) the beginning of their UBI at age 21.
- But HEWC *would be open to anyone with a high school degree, no matter how old they are*, provided they are mentally and physically capable of doing the program.

4. Universal Free Healthcare (UFH):

- Every human person living permanently in the USA will receive free lifelong healthcare.

5. 2-Phase Universal Open Borders (2P-UOB):

- **Phase 1:** Starting in 2021, there will be universal open borders with Canada and Mexico, and everyone who moves across those borders and then claims residence in the USA, will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA* and also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the USA*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents to depend on the current availability of (i) adequate funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the USA, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the USA and elsewhere in the world.*
- **Phase 2:** Also starting in 2021, the USA, Canada, and Mexico will collectively form a *Global Refugee Consortium (GRC)*, with three-way open borders to *any political refugee, economic refugee, or asylum seeker from anywhere in the world (aka "global refugees")*, who will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA, Canada, or Mexico*, and also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the three GRC countries*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents, and the precise distribution of new residents among the three members of the GRC, to depend on the current availability of (i) funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the three GRC countries, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the GRC and elsewhere in the world.*

6. Universal No-Guns (UNG):

- No one in the USA, *including police, internal security forces of all kinds, armies, and intelligence forces of all kinds, has the moral right to possess or use guns of any*

kind, for any purpose whatsoever, because the primary function of guns is coercion, and coercion is immoral.

- UNG would be implemented *by repealing the Second Amendment to the US Constitution in 2021 and then universally banning the possession or use of guns thereafter.*

I'm assuming that **Universal Public Education (UPE)**—universal free access for all human persons of any age to good public education up to the end of high school—already exists in most countries, and needs no further justification.

Where UPE does not already exist, it would automatically become a necessary part of the six-part **Utopia Now** package, thereby making it a seven-part package.

In any case, my threefold contention in this essay is:

- **first**, that implementing UBI + FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs + HEWC + UFH + 2P-UOB + UNG first in the USA, secondly in The U-Zone, and then thirdly and finally across the entire world—i.e., **Utopia Now**—not only *morally and politically should be done* but also *realistically can begin to happen immediately*,
- **second**, that our primary motivation for **Utopia Now** should be *spiritual* in nature, and in particular, a *rage for humanity*, and
- **third**, that contemporary *real* (i.e., authentic, serious) philosophers both inside and outside professional academic philosophy not only *morally and politically should* but also *realistically can* contribute directly and substantially to **Utopia Now**.

II. Collective Altruism

Hobbesians and neo-Hobbesians are not merely mistaken, but in fact dangerously, spectacularly wrong that *all human beings* are egoistic and mutually antagonistic by nature, neurobiology, or inevitably by culture.

On the contrary, *all human persons* are fully capable of altruism, kindness, and mutual aid, and the Hobbesian or neo-Hobbesian thesis is nothing but a cognitive illusion and cultural myth self-servingly used to justify personal egoism/self-interest or authoritarian oppression and tyranny, whether by pharaohs, kings, popes, emperors,

Czars, military dictators, fascist governments, communist governments, or the elected governments of neoliberal democracies.

Another version of the same cognitive illusion and cultural myth is the clearly false thesis that if everyone always pursued egoistic ends, then they would be better off than if not everyone did or no one did.

That's because the egoist always has sufficient reason to cheat, maim, or murder his competitors for limited resources and rewards *if no one else is watching*.

Moreover, the classic claim that every apparently altruistic choice or action satisfies some deeper egoistic imperative or urge is patently question-begging and sophistical, since it refuses to tell us what could ever count as acceptable evidence in favor of altruism, by presupposing that every item of apparent evidence for altruism is reinterpreted to confirm egoism.

Altruism, it should also be noted, isn't merely self-sacrificing choices or action for the sake of others, but also idealistic, non-egoistic, non-hedonistic, non-instrumental, non-consequentialist choice or action of any kind.

Now *collective intelligence*—see, e.g., [this](#) and [this](#)—is an emergent property of human or otherwise animal mindedness, that is constituted by the cognitive capacities and cognitive activities of a group of (e.g.) people *as a group*, especially including group-reasoning, group brain-storming and innovation, the social production of written texts and other kinds of social media, group deliberation, and participatory decision-making.

Recent work in cognitive psychology, social psychology, and organizational studies shows that *collective wisdom*, or a relatively high level of group coordination, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity (aka constructive *Gemeinschaft*), is determined by high levels of socially-open, non-hierarchical, free-thinking, and non-conformist, [but at the same time also mutually comfortable, mutually communicative, mutually respectful/principled, relaxed, mutually sensitive, mutually supportive, and highly dialogical collaborative activities within groups](#), and is *not* a function of high average IQ levels among the group's individual members.

Correspondingly, by *collective altruism* I mean an emergent property of human or otherwise animal mindedness, that is constituted by the practical capacities and practical activities of a group of (e.g.) people *as a group*, especially including group deliberation and participatory decision-making.

More specifically, collective altruism is a relatively high level of altruistic group activity that is *not* a function of high average levels of altruism across individual group members, but instead is produced by effective collaborative interaction within the group.

In other words, and to put it simply, *you don't have to be an all-star altruist yourself* in order to engage in *highly successful team altruism*, aka collective altruism.

Utopia Now is therefore a six-part, collective altruist, anti-Utilitarian, principled non-consequentialist, existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist project in utopian global ethics and politics, that is grounded on *a thoroughgoing rejection* of the Hobbesian or neo-Hobbesian myth and the self-serving, sophisticated egoism and many-faced authoritarianism and tyranny lying behind it.

III. Poverty, Economic Oppression, and Universal Basic Income

Poverty and Economic Oppression in the USA

According to [the US Census Bureau Report on Income and Poverty in the USA for 2015](#), in 2015, the median household income in the USA was \$56,516 USD.

This means that 50% of all households had an income *below* \$56,516 USD.

In 2015, the official poverty rate in was 13.5 percent, and there were 43.1 million people in poverty.

Do you really think that, over the next 4 or 8 years, President Donald Trump and all the other rich people in the Trump governing elite are going to make economic life better for you, for those people with household incomes under \$56,000, and for the 43 million people living in poverty?

Hell no. Of course not.

It's *not* going to get significantly better and will *probably* get significantly worse, especially if you are black, Hispanic, a single mother of any race, or a white person who lives in a non-urban area.

Now let's call all those people with household incomes under \$56,000 USD or living in poverty, *economically oppressed people*.

How would *you* like to be an economically oppressed person?

Or perhaps *you already are one*. How does it feel?

Like a *sickness-unto-death*, right?

UBI to the Rescue

According to my *Universal Basic Income* (UBI) proposal:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over who is living permanently in the USA, who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000.00 USD per year, with no strings attached.

In order to receive your UBI, you would have to request it.

No one would receive a UBI who hadn't requested it.

Anyone could voluntarily forego their UBI for any given year, just by not requesting it.

Those who are incapable of requesting a UBI would still be fully covered for all their basic needs by *Universal Free Healthcare*, aka UFH—see section VI below.

Individuals whose personal income is \$50,000.00 USD or less, but whose personal worth is far in excess of that, would be officially asked to donate their UBI to the collective good.

If desired, one could also have his/her name publicly listed as a *conscientious UBI-donor*.

Every year, there would be a single-day national holiday devoted to UBI celebrations, and especially to thanking conscientious UBI-donors.

We could call it *UBI-Day*.

The UBI would be indexed to the cost of living (COL), so that if the COL went up, then every UBI recipient would also receive a yearly Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) in addition to their basic UBI.

Various experimental versions of the UBI proposal have been tried in the past, with significant benefits for all concerned, and currently, several different experimental versions of UBI are being tried in Europe.

One Obvious Objection to UBI, and a Vigorous Reply

One obvious objection to UBI is that it would be too expensive, hence couldn't be afforded by the USA.

But I want to reply, vigorously, that that's clearly not only false, but also serious bullshit.

Here's why.

According to my proposal, we set the UBI at \$25,000.00 USD per year.

In 2016, there were 226 million eligible voters in the USA; and since 2012, 16 million people have reached the age of 18.

Let's conservatively estimate, then, that roughly 10 million of those are between 18 and 20.

So there are roughly 216 million possible UBI recipients in the USA right now.

Of those roughly 216 million people, 111.5 million have yearly personal incomes of 50K USD or less.

Therefore the total cost of UBI for the USA right now, if everyone who is 21 years or older, who has a personal income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting a UBI, actually did request-and-receive their UBI, would be *at most* 2.8 trillion USD per year.

To put that in perspective, the 2015 US military defense budget *alone* was 585 billion USD, i.e., more than half a trillion.

Since UBI would replace social security and many other basic assistance programs, all the money currently raised in social security taxes or spent on other basic assistance programs per year could be used for UBI, in addition to progressive taxes on capital accumulation, high incomes, money transfer, and money management, and also sharp reductions in military spending reduction.

Hence UBI is easily affordable, and those who claim it isn't, are trying to sell you down the river.

Another Perhaps Even More Obvious Objection to UBI, and an Equally Vigorous Reply

Another perhaps even more obvious objection to UBI is that it would turn people into *lazy bums*, aka *slackers*, unwilling ever to work for a living.

That is clearly false and serious bullshit too.

As I will argue in the next section on FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, by nature, people want to do creative, meaningful, productive, useful things with their lives.

Moreover, they do not want to be coerced or nudged, or otherwise told what to do.

So almost all UBI recipients will take their UBI together with their FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and do the things they think are most important.

My estimate is *that at most 10% of the people who request their UBIs will misuse it or squander it.*

But in any case, the precise normal rate of misuse or squandering can also be tested in small-scale UBI + FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs pilot programs.

Now think of all the well-off people who are currently misusing or squandering their incomes!

It is obvious that the rate of misuse or squandering among UBI-recipients would be *significantly lower than that.*

This is because the moral values of autonomy and freedom-from-oppression under the UBI plan *are non-denumerably infinitely great.*

Therefore, with their UBI, people will be *greatly more* creative, meaning-making, productive, and useful than they were without it.

To summarize so far, here are three decisive reasons for adopting and implementing my UBI proposal.

First, if this UBI proposal were adopted and implemented, *then it would end poverty in the USA, forever.*

Second, if this UBI proposal were adopted and implemented, *then it would end economic oppression in the USA, forever.*

Third, if this UBI proposal were adopted and implemented *then everyone living permanently in the USA would be liberated from the fear of poverty and economic oppression, forever.*

In other words, no one living permanently in the USA would have to feel that their life is like a sickness-unto-death for *those* reasons, ever again.

IV. The Job Dilemma, a 15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs, and Eco-Jobs

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation. What is called resignation is confirmed desperation.... A stereotyped but unconscious despair is concealed even under what are called the games and amusements of mankind. There is no play in them, for this comes after work.⁶

What is a Shit Job?

By a *shit job*, I mean *either* a job that pays well but is meaningless and pointless, and also unproductive and useless for anyone other than the job-holder (aka a *bullshit job*) *or* a job that is bad for any other reason, e.g., it's boring, dangerous, demeaning, otherwise low-status, grossly underpaid, etc. etc.

Simply put, *a shit job is a job you would quit right now, if you could afford it.*

So the criterion of whether you now have a shit job or not is this:

Would you quit your job right now, if you could afford it?

If so, then you have a shit job.

Is this your fault?

No, *it isn't your fault.*

And here's why.

⁶ H.D. Thoreau, *Walden*.

The Job Dilemma

In The Age of Trump — that is, over the next 4 to 8 years — most people living in the USA are going to face the following dilemma, *The Job Dilemma*:

either you have no job, or else you hate your job because it's a shit job.

The reasons for this are simple.

First, in November 2016, according to the [US Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), the unemployment rate was 4.6 percent, with 7.4 million unemployed people actively looking for jobs, plus 2 million long-term unemployed people.

That's almost *10 million* unemployed people.

Do you think that those people are happy or unconcerned about being unemployed?

If you do, then you're in the grip of a self-serving cognitive "wall" or illusion.

Try it sometime, for a year or 2, and *then* tell me what you think.

Unemployed people hate being unemployed, like a *sickness-unto-death*, just as people who are in poverty or otherwise economically oppressed hate their situation like a sickness-unto-death.

Let's assume that the roughly-10-million-unemployed-people number is a benchmark for the next 4 years.

This means that, for the next four years, *roughly 10 million people are always going to be unemployed and hate their own lives like a sickness-unto-death.*

Second, over the next four or eight years, *advances in technology are going to make a great many current jobs obsolete* — e.g., driverless trucks.

Third, since many or even most people would quit their current job instantly if they could afford to, *many or even most jobs are going to be shit jobs.*

Now as I pointed out above, President Donald Trump, who received 46.1% of the popular vote, is a billionaire—a greedy, ruthless, nativist, bigoted, demagogue billionaire.

Do you really think that, over the next 4 or 8 years, he and all the other rich people in the Trump governing elite are even going to *attempt* to fix The Job Dilemma?

Again, *hell no*. Of course not.

So, for as long as Trump is POTUS and nothing is done to fix The Job Dilemma, *we're screwed*.

Universal Basic Income *and* a 15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs, i.e, Eco-Jobs

According to the *Universal Basic Income* (UBI) proposal I spelled out and defended in section III:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000.00 USD per year, with no strings attached.

Now, over and above UBI, I am also proposing a *15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs* (FHW-for-UNBJs), which says:

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

More precisely, then, high school graduates of 18 years of age or older would be offered an eco-job paying \$25,000.00 USD per year, and, in addition, when they reached the age of 21, provided they were earning in total \$50,000.00 USD per year or less, they would also receive another \$25,000.00 as their UBI (subject, however, to systematic scaling-back for non-eco-job income, as described below).

The rationale behind the three-year gap between (i) being offered an eco-job at 18 and (ii) beginning to receive their UBI at 21, is that every young adult who has finished high school will have the option of pursuing three years of part-time or full-time higher education for its own sake after high school, before making longer-term decisions about what, six sub-sections below, I will call *job-work* and *life-work*.

In any case, it would mean that anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000.00 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

Here are a few more details about UBI and eco-jobs.

- The UBI is to be paid by a monthly stipend check.
- Eco-job income is not taxed.
- For all individual yearly incomes of \$50,000.00 USD or under, no tax will be levied; hence for someone receiving their UBI and also doing an eco-job, no income tax will be levied.
- For all individual non-eco-job incomes, for every \$1.00 USD earned above the standard UBI of \$25,000.00 USD, the monthly UBI stipend is reduced by 50 cents, until the recipient's UBI is reduced to zero; hence for those individuals with yearly non-eco-job incomes equal to or under \$50,000.00 USD, the maximum UBI + non-eco-job income sum is always \$50,000.00 USD.
- For all individual yearly incomes over \$50,000.00 USD, for every \$10,000.00 USD earned, that surplus income is taxed at the rate of 1%, with the highest surplus income tax rate being 50%; hence the maximum surplus 50% tax rate starts at individual yearly incomes of \$550,000.00 USD, and applies to all higher surplus incomes.

Kantian Eco-Politics

What's so good about eco-jobs?

Here is a short, but I think decisive, non-Utilitarian, non-consequentialist argument for eco-jobs, from the standpoint of a radical environmental philosophy I call *Kantian eco-politics*.

- As rational human animals, and real human persons, by means of *natural piety* we have reverence (*Ehrfurcht*) for nature and its *proto-dignity*.⁷

⁷ See R. Hanna, *Kant, Nature, and Humanity* (Fall/Winter 2016/2017 version), available online at URL = https://www.academia.edu/26884678/Kant_Nature_and_Humanity_Fall_Winter_2016_2017_version_comments_welcomed_, esp. section 0.7 and part 1.

- But, as rational human animals and real human persons, we must also exit the state and statelike institutions in order to create and belong to a world-wide ethical community in which everyone sufficiently treats everyone else with respect for their human dignity, including alleviating or ending human oppression, mutual aid, and mutual kindness.⁸
- Therefore, we must simultaneously protect the natural world and systematically dismantle the state- and statelike- institutions and mechanisms that are damaging or destroying the natural environment, *insofar as they oppress people*.

Five Types of Eco-Jobs

According to my FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs proposal, there would be five types of eco-jobs.

- 1. *eco-education (eco-ed) jobs*:** that is, jobs whose specific role is to provide help in currently under-staffed areas within the system of *Universal Public Education* (UPE),
- 2. *eco-healthcare (eco-health) jobs*:** that is, jobs whose specific role is to provide help in currently under-staffed areas within the system of *Universal Free Healthcare* (UFH),
- 3. *eco-protection (eco-pro) jobs*:** that is, jobs whose specific role is to provide help in currently under-staffed areas in (3i) urban-environmental clean-up and tending (including garbage collection, litter removal, recycling, public gardening, snow removal, etc.) and (3ii) natural-environmental clean-up and tending (including forestry and re-forestation, water pollution-clean up, industrial pollution clean-up, etc.)
- 4. *eco-transportation (eco-trans) jobs*:** that is, jobs whose specific role is to provide help in currently under-staffed areas in the hybrid or all-electric car industry, and
- 5. *eco-administration (eco-admin) jobs*:** that is, jobs whose specific role is to provide help in organizing, implementing, and running the system of eco-jobs.

The Requirements for an Eco-Job

According to my FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs proposal, there would be 6 individually necessary and jointly sufficient requirements for an eco-job.

⁸ See note 3 above.

- 1. If you want to own a vehicle other than a bicycle or other self-propelled machine, you either (1i) sell or trade in any gasoline-only vehicles you already own, in return for a free hybrid or all-electric car, or (1ii) if you do not already own a gasoline-only vehicle, then you receive a free hybrid or all-electric car.
- 2. If, by virtue of requirement 1, you do own a hybrid car, you agree to drive it according to a regular plan for modest gasoline consumption.
- 3. You agree to purchase and eat meat-products according to a regular plan for modest meat-consumption.
- 4. You have completed a high school education.
- 5. You are 18 years of age or older.
- 6. You are mentally and physically capable of doing your eco-job.

How Would the System of Eco-Jobs Be Implemented?

According to my FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs proposal, in the first six months of 2021, all (roughly ten million) unemployed people would be asked the following two-part question: do you meet the requirements for an eco-job, and if so and you were offered an eco-job, would you take it?

Let's call the number of unemployed people who could answer yes to both parts of that question, *the New Jobs Number*, aka the NJN.

Then, in the second six months of 2021 *a total number of eco-jobs equal to the NJN would be created and offered to those unemployed people.*

Also during 2021, the number of jobs made obsolete due to new technology would be calculated.

Let's call that number *the Obsolete Jobs Number*, aka the OJN.

And *also* during the first six months of 2021, everyone who has a job at that time will be asked the following question: if you were offered an eco-job starting in January 2022, would you quit your current job and take the eco-job?

Let's call the number of those who say yes to that question *the Shit Jobs Number*, aka the SJN.

Then, starting in 2022, *the total number of eco-jobs that would be created and offered every year would be equal to the OJN + the SJN for the preceding year.*

Marx's Theory of Labor and Alienation, Job-Work, and Life-Work

Here is Marx's theory of labor and alienation, in a Wiki-nutshell:

In a capitalist society, the worker's alienation from their humanity occurs because the worker can only express labour—a fundamental social aspect of personal individuality—through a private system of industrial production in which each worker is an instrument, a thing, and not a person; in the “Comment on James Mill” (1844) Marx explained alienation thus:

Let us suppose that we had carried out production as human beings. Each of us would have, in two ways, affirmed himself, and the other person. (i) In my production I would have objectified my individuality, its specific character, and, therefore, enjoyed not only an individual manifestation of my life during the activity, but also, when looking at the object, I would have the individual pleasure of knowing my personality to be objective, visible to the senses, and, hence, a power beyond all doubt. (ii) In your enjoyment, or use, of my product I would have the direct enjoyment both of being conscious of having satisfied a human need by my work, that is, of having objectified man's essential nature, and of having thus created an object corresponding to the need of another man's essential nature . . . Our products would be so many mirrors in which we saw reflected our essential nature.^[1]

In the [Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844](#) (1927), ... Marx identified four types of alienation that occur to the worker labouring under a [capitalist](#) system of industrial production.^[2]

In the [capitalist mode of production](#), the generation of products (goods and services) is accomplished with an endless sequence of discrete, repetitive, motions that offer the worker little psychological satisfaction for "a job well done". By means of [commodification](#), the [labour power](#) of the worker is reduced to wages (an exchange value); the psychological estrangement (*Entfremdung*) of the worker results from the unmediated relation between his productive labour and the wages paid him for the labour. That division of labour, within the capitalist mode of production, further exploits the worker by limiting their [Gattungswesen](#) (species-essence)—the human being's power to determine the purpose to which the product (goods and services) shall be applied.... [C]apitalism remove[s] from the worker the right to exercise control upon the value and the effects of their own labour, which, in turn, robs the worker of the ability to either buy (consume) the goods and services, or to receive the full value from the sale of the product. The alienation of the worker from the act of producing renders the worker unable to specialize in a type of productive labour, which is a psychologically satisfying condition; within an industrial system of production, social alienation reduces the worker to an instrument, to an object, and thus cannot productively apply every aspect of one's human nature. ⁹

⁹ Wikipedia, “[Marx's Theory of Alienation.](#)”

I am in substantial agreement with Marx's analysis of labor and alienation under capitalism, *if*, in an existential cosmopolitan Kantian anarchist way,¹⁰ we interpret Marx's notion of *human species-essence* as *human dignity*.

But I also think that Marx made two serious mistakes.

First, Marx mistakenly concentrated almost exclusively on *the exploitation of workers*.

On the contrary, he should have concentrated on *the oppression of humanity*, which is not only more fundamentally wrong, but also massively more widespread, than worker-exploitation alone.

Second, Marx was mistaken that human labor under capitalism is *necessarily* alienating.

On the contrary, capitalism per se,¹¹ although it certainly has and certainly still does lead to the exploitation of workers and the alienation of their labor, is, as such, actually consistent with a realistic cosmopolitan altruistic utopian system in which human labor is not only *not alienating, but in fact liberating*, when human *labor* is re-conceived as human *work* from the standpoint of *Utopia Now*.

What is the Concept of *Human Work*?

From the standpoint of *Utopia Now*, this is the concept of *human work*:

- human work is any form of *creative or productive rational human agency*,
- every human worker is a *real human person*, inherently possessing *human dignity*, and not a mere instrument or a mere thing,
- there are two basic kinds of human work, namely *job-work* and *life-work*,
- job-work, in general, is whenever a human worker receives wages in return for creation or production,

¹⁰ See note 3 above.

¹¹ See, e.g., "Capitalism," *Wikipedia*, available online at URL = <<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capitalism>>. As Jonathan Sperber rightly reminds us in his recent biography of Marx, *Karl Marx: A Nineteenth-Century Life* (New York: Liveright, 2013), p. xv, "what Marx meant by 'capitalism' was not the contemporary version of it, ... [and] the bourgeoisie Marx critically dissected was not today's class of global capitalists."

- job-work, specifically according to FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, is the part-time (15 hours per week) means by which the person *earns an adequate living-wage* doing something productive and useful for humanity,
- *life-work* is some creative, meaningful activity (aka a *project*), or a series of such activities (aka *projects*), pursued as a full-time, or almost full-time, lifetime calling, and
- *the basic function of job-work is to enable and support life-work*, although one's job-work could also be chosen as one's life-work.

It is crucial to note that life-work is an exceptionally broad category, including anything from raising children or otherwise caring for other people, to carpentry and other sorts of craftsmanship, to playing games or sports, to making or performing music, to painting or sculpting, to writing literature of any kind, to making movies, to studying and writing history, to philosophy.

What is essential to life-work is that it involves creative, meaningful activity.

Therefore, life-work substantially overlaps with the category of human *play*, which is often falsely opposed to human work.

On the contrary, insofar as play is creative and meaningful, it can *also* be life-work.

Six Decisive Reasons for Implementing UBI *and* FHW-for-UNBJs/Eco-Jobs Together

First, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, *no one who is capable of working and who wants to work will ever be unemployed again, forever.*

Second, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, *no one who is capable of working and who wants to work will ever have to take a shit job again, forever.*

Third, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, *The Job Dilemma would be fixed, forever.*

Fourth, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, since there would be an initial set of eco-jobs created and offered in the second six months of 2021 equal to *the New Jobs Number*, then a further set of new eco-jobs equal to *the Obsolete Jobs Number + the Shit Jobs Number* for 2021 created and offered in January 2022, and then a further set of new eco-jobs equal to the OJN + SJN for 2022 created and offered in January 2023, and so-on for subsequent years, then, year by year, there would be a

significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in the USA, and, correspondingly significant progress would be made by the USA towards preventing future disasters of global climate change.

Fifth, therefore, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, *every eco-job will by its very nature be a useful, productive, environmentally respectful job.*

Sixth and finally, under the system of UBI together with FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, since the function of *job-work* is to enable and support *life-work*, *the universal availability of eco-jobs will be in itself liberating for humanity.*

V. Higher Education Without Commodification: From Open Philosophy to HEWC

Commodification and Human Values

Commodification, according to the Marxist-humanist and Neo-Marxist traditions,¹² is the process whereby capitalism turns everything that has human moral and spiritual value into *mere things*—commodities—that can be produced, re-produced, bought, and sold.

Commodification also applies directly to human agents, or real persons, who, by being unintentionally absorbed into the capitalist system, to that extent, turn themselves into *mere decision-theoretic Hobbesian machines*—self-interested, mutually antagonistic biochemical puppets—who endlessly produce and consume, controlled by their bosses and political masters, via ideology and coercive force, until they finally break down and die.

In the 21st century, commodification is a direct implication of *neoliberalism*, its *technocracy*, and its *valorization of global corporate capitalism*.

It is by no means an antiquarian or irrelevant historical fact, however, that the origins of the 19th, 20th, and 21st century concept of commodification lie in the Hegelian and Young Hegelian idea that organized religion is *the alienation and externalization of absolute Spirit*, and in Kant's moral critique of organized religion in *Religion Within the Boundaries of*

¹² See, e.g., K. Marx, *Karl Marx: Selected Writings in Sociology & Social Philosophy*, trans. T.B Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964); E. Fromm, *Marx's Concept of Man* (New York: Frederick Ungar, 1966); R. Geuss, *The Idea of a Critical Theory: Habermas and the Frankfurt School* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981); M. Hartmann and A. Honneth, "Paradoxes of capitalism," *Constellations* 13 (2006): 41–58; and A. Honneth, *Pathologies of Reason: On the Legacy of Critical Theory*, trans. J. Ingram (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2009).

Mere Reason: you merely substitute *capitalism* for *organized religion*, and then you've got Marx's theory of alienation.

In Kantian terminology, commodification systematically exterminates all human *dignity* or *Würde* and all human moral *faith* or *Glaube*: therefore *it is the genocide of all human moral and spiritual values*.

In this section, I want to focus specifically on (i) commodification as it applies to *higher education*, and (ii) what I call *open philosophy* as model for *higher education without commodification*.

Then I also want to tie these directly to *Utopia Now*, to the **Universal Public Education** (UPE) component I've mentioned several times in passing, and also to the FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs component I discussed in section IV, especially its concept of *life-work*, as opposed to *job-work*.

Commodification in Higher Education, Professional Academic Philosophy, and Open Philosophy

Serious critics of commodification in higher education in general, or in professional academic philosophy in particular, include Schopenhauer,¹³ Nietzsche,¹⁴ William James,¹⁵ Robert Paul Wolff,¹⁶ Jeff Schmidt,¹⁷ Jane Jacobs,¹⁸ William Deresiewicz,¹⁹ and the pseudonymous anarcho-philosophers at *Against Professional Philosophy*.

As I mentioned in section II, *collective intelligence* is an emergent property of human or otherwise animal mindedness, that is constituted by the cognitive capacities and cognitive activities of a group of (e.g.) people *as* a group, especially including group-reasoning, group brain-storming and innovation, the social production of written texts and other kinds of social media, group deliberation, and participatory decision-making.

¹³ A. Schopenhauer, "On University Philosophy," in A. Schopenhauer, *Parerga and Paralipomena*, trans. S. Roehr and C. Janaway (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2014), pp. 125-176.

¹⁴ F. Nietzsche, "On the Future of Our Educational Institutions," trans. J.M. Kennedy (London: Toulis, 1910), available online at URL = < <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28146/28146-h/28146-h.htm>>.

¹⁵ W. James, "The PhD Octopus," *Harvard Monthly* (1903).

¹⁶ R.P. Wolff, *The Ideal of the University* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1969), esp. chs. 2-4.

¹⁷ J. Schmidt, *Disciplined Minds* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000).

¹⁸ J. Jacobs, *Dark Age Ahead* (New York: Vintage, 2004), ch. 3.

¹⁹ W. Deresiewicz, *Excellent Sheep* (New York: Free Press, 2015); and W. Deresiewicz, "The Neoliberal Arts: How College Sold its Soul to the Market," *Harper's* (September 2015); available online at URL = < <http://harpers.org/archive/2015/09/the-neoliberal-arts/>>.

And as I also mentioned in section II, recent work in cognitive psychology, social psychology, and organizational studies shows that collective wisdom, or a relatively high level of group coordination, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity (aka constructive *Gemeinschaft*), is determined by high levels of socially-open, non-hierarchical, free-thinking, and non-conformist, but at the same time also mutually comfortable, mutually communicative, mutually respectful/principled, relaxed, mutually sensitive, mutually supportive, and highly dialogical collaborative activities within groups, and is *not* a function of high average IQ levels among the group's individual members.

On the other hand, what I will call *collective stupidity*, or a relatively low level of group coordination, creativity, problem-solving, and productivity, and correspondingly a relatively high level of group dysfunctionality (aka destructive *Gemeinschaft*), is determined by high levels of socially-closed, top-down organized, conformist, but at the same time mutually antagonistic and competitive, coercive, arrogant, non-collaborative, zero-sum, winner-takes-all, debating-society-style, gaming-the-system-style activities within groups, independently of high average IQ levels amongst the group's individual members.

In other words, groups made up *entirely of people with very high IQs* can manifest very high levels of collective stupidity.

An aggravated, extreme manifestation of collective stupidity is what I'll call *institutional sociopathy*.

This is when groups of people working inside State institutions or state-like institutions, including bureaucracies of all kinds, gangs, and cults, stop asking whether what they are doing is morally right or wrong, and concentrate entirely on efficient ways of implementing group policies and imposing the directives of the group's governing elite on people who cannot fight back or push back.

At the same time, however, the individuals who belong to institutionally sociopathic groups, as individuals, may be otherwise quite normal, sane, and socially well-adjusted.

They still love their partners, their children, and their dogs, etc.

The real-life, catastrophic paradigm of institutional sociopathy, of course, was the Nazi bureaucracy's increasingly effective, increasingly satanic "solutions" to the "Jewish question."

Eichmann, at least as portrayed by Hannah Arendt in *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, was the perfect “company man” or “Establishment Man,” in the modern world’s most evil, murderous example of institutional sociopathy.

But in a more mundane sense, virtually all contemporary college and university administrations and academic departments operate on the assumption that effectively implementing various higher-administration-mandated, state-mandated, or Federally-mandated policies and directives, without any critical reflection whatsoever on the rational justifiability or moral permissibility of those policies and directives, as applied to the members of their academic communities, is their be-all and end-all.

So in that sense, these contemporary professional academic communities, the intellectual arm of *the military-industrial-university complex* that drives contemporary neoliberal democratic states, also manifest institutional sociopathy, and at the very least, *high levels of collective stupidity*.

In turn, it is obvious enough that professional academics, taken one-by-one, and in general, are highly intelligent people, “the smartest kids in class,” all the way from kindergarten to graduate school.

And, judging by *average GRE scores across all disciplines*, *physicists and philosophers* are the most intelligent professional academics: physicists top out the quantitative scores across all disciplines and also have relatively high analytical/verbal scores; whereas philosophers top out the analytical/verbal scores across all disciplines and also have relatively high quantitative scores.

But as Schmidt’s *Disciplined Minds* clearly shows, and as longstanding personal experience in professional academic philosophy also fully confirms, to the extent that a group is more and more “professionalized,” and therefore has increasingly levels of what Schmidt calls *ideological discipline*, the more they are, collectively, stupid, and even institutionally sociopathic, endlessly contributing to a downwards spiral of destructive *Gemeinschaft*, while, at the same time, all-too-busily promoting their own professional careers, slithering up “the greasy pole” of professorial and/or administrative promotion, reward, and status.

Since, as Z at *Against Professional Philosophy* has persuasively argued, professional academic philosophers are now *hyper-disciplined minds*, it follows that they are, as regards their collective intelligence, *hyper-stupid*.

The most urgent questions before us, therefore, are:

(i) how can this catastrophic trend towards professional academic philosophical collective stupidity be reversed?, and

(ii) how can contemporary philosophers move towards the kinds of collective wisdom variously imagined, e.g., in Plato's Socratic dialogues; in Kant's conception of enlightenment, fully realized as the "ethical community" of his later religious writings; in Kropotkin's *Mutual Aid*; or in the early Russell's vision of "the world as it could be made"?

Or otherwise put:

(iii) how can contemporary philosophers move from where they are now, in a downward-spiralling condition of destructive *Gemeinschaft*, to a radically different condition in which they begin to achieve high levels of socially-open, non-hierarchical, free-thinking, and non-conformist, but at the same time also mutually comfortable, mutually communicative, mutually respectful/principled, relaxed, mutually sensitive, mutually supportive, and highly dialogical collaborative philosophical activities within groups?

Here are two ideas, simple distillations of the many themes and topics explored by *Against Professional Philosophy*.

First, get rid of graduate schools, MA and PhD degrees, and philosophy departments *altogether*, and replace them with a network of interlinked *open philosophy communities*, each such community created and sustained by voluntary association, team-spirit, and a shared sense of authentic, serious philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling and mission, that combine dialogue, research, writing, publishing, teaching, and grassroots social activism, whose members are widely distributed spatiotemporally, in many different countries, continents, and time-zones, and who are therefore also fully *cosmopolitan* thinkers, doing real (i.e., authentic, serious) philosophy without borders.

Second, get rid of professional academic philosophy journals, presses, and the rest of the professional academic publishing racket *altogether*, and replace them with a cosmopolitan, border-less, worldwide network of interlinked *open philosophy online sites and platforms* for dialogue, research, writing, publishing, teaching, and grassroots social activism, that are severally and collectively organized and run by the worldwide network of open philosophy communities.

The conjunction of these two ideas is what I'll call *open philosophy*.

My thesis is that if and only if open philosophy *can be* implemented by contemporary philosophers, and precisely to the extent that open philosophy *actually is* implemented by contemporary philosophers, will they exit their current condition of professional academic philosophical collective stupidity and destructive *Gemeinschaft*, including institutional sociopathy, and finally begin to achieve a condition of philosophical *collective wisdom* and constructive *Gemeinschaft*, in the spirit of Socrates, Kant, Kropotkin, and early Russell.

Utopia Now, Open Philosophy, and Higher Education Without Credentialing, aka HEWC

In sections I to IV above, I've argued that we should demand, wholeheartedly work towards, and ultimately implement, as the first two parts of a six-part realistic, collective altruist project in contemporary utopian global ethics and politics, from an existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist point of view, these radical proposals—

1. *Universal Basic Income (UBI):*

- Anyone 21 years of age or over and living permanently in the USA, who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000.00 USD per year, with no strings attached.

2. *A 15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs (FHW-for-UNBJs):*

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

Therefore, anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000.00 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

The rationale behind the three-year gap between (i) being offered an eco-job at 18 and (ii) beginning to receive their UBI at 21, *is that every young adult who has finished high school will have the option of pursuing three years of part-time or full-time higher education for its own sake after high school, before making longer-term decisions about what I called job-work and life-work.*

Here are a few more details about UBI and eco-jobs.

- The UBI is to be paid by a monthly stipend check.
- Eco-job income is not taxed.
- For all individual yearly incomes of \$50,000.00 USD or under, no tax will be levied; hence for someone receiving their UBI and also doing an eco-job, no income tax will be levied.
- For all individual non-eco-job incomes, for every \$1.00 USD earned above the standard UBI of \$25,000.00 USD, the monthly UBI stipend is reduced by 50 cents, until the recipient's UBI is reduced to zero; hence for those individuals with yearly non-eco-job incomes equal to or under \$50,000.00 USD, the maximum UBI + non-eco-job income sum is always \$50,000.00 USD.
- For all individual yearly incomes over \$50,000.00 USD, for every \$10,000.00 USD earned, that surplus income is taxed at the rate of 1%, with the highest surplus income tax rate being 50%; hence the maximum surplus 50% tax rate starts at individual yearly incomes of \$550,000.00 USD, and applies to all higher surplus incomes.

Moreover, as I argued in section IV, this is the concept of *human work*:

- human work is any form of *creative or productive rational human agency*,
- every human worker is a *real human person*, inherently possessing *human dignity*, and not a mere instrument or a mere thing,
- there are two basic kinds of human work, namely *job-work* and *life-work*,
- job-work, in general, is whenever a human worker receives wages in return for creation or production,

- job-work, specifically according to FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, is the part-time means by which the person *earns an adequate living-wage* doing something productive and useful for humanity,
- *life-work* is some creative, meaningful activity (aka a *project*), or a series of such activities (aka *projects*), pursued as a full-time, or almost full-time, lifetime calling, and
- *the basic function of job-work is to enable and support life-work*, although one's job-work could also be chosen as one's life-work.

It is crucial to note, again, that life-work is an exceptionally broad category, including anything from raising children or otherwise caring for other people, to carpentry and other sorts of craftsmanship, to playing games or sports, to making or performing music, to painting or sculpting, to writing literature of any kind, to making movies, to studying and writing history, to philosophy.

What is essential to life-work is that it involves creative, meaningful activity.

Therefore, life-work substantially overlaps with the category of human *play*, which is often falsely opposed to human work.

On the contrary, insofar as play is creative and meaningful, it can *also* be life-work.

In section I, I also noted that I'm assuming that *Universal Public Education* (UPE)—universal free access for all human persons of any age to good public education up to the end of high school—already exists in most countries, and needs no further justification.

And where UPE does not already exist, it would automatically become a necessary part of the *Utopia Now* package, thereby making it a seven-part package.

Now I want to make a proposal about the radical reform of education at colleges and universities, which I call *Higher Education Without Credentialing* (HEWC).

What do I mean by HEWC?

HEWC is the generalization of open philosophy, as a model, to *all parts* of what has been traditionally called “liberal arts education,” but which Deresiewicz so aptly calls

the neoliberal arts, that is, commodified higher education at contemporary colleges and universities, whether undergraduate or graduate.

More specifically, HEWC would make available to everyone, beyond their high school education, a free, three-year minimum, optional (but also open-ended beyond those three years, as a further option), part-time or full-time UPE program in the so-called “liberal arts,” and also in some of the so-called “STEM” fields, including the humanities, the fine arts, the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences.

For many or even most people, their HEWC would fall between (i) the end of their high school education at age 18 and the corresponding availability of eco-jobs, and (ii) the beginning of their UBI at age 21.

But HEWC *would be open to anyone with a high school degree, no matter how old they are, provided they are mentally and physically capable of doing the program.*

Some people would opt to do HEWC part-time, along with eco-jobs, while others would opt to do HEWC full-time, either with or without their UBI.

HEWC would involve no credentialing whatsoever, and in particular, no degrees or diplomas.

Therefore, the current system of job-oriented education, or job-training, with credentialing—e.g., business school, education school, law school, medical school, engineering school, social work school, forestry school, architecture school, communications and media school, film school, etc., etc., and technical-vocational schools of all kinds—*would be entirely independent of HEWC and subject to the standard service-industry fee-structure of all such institutions.*

HEWC would *NEITHER prepare people for job-work, NOR be a necessary condition of any sort of job or job-work.*

The HEWC system would consist in a series of open-enrollment courses offered by HEWC instructors, either in person or online.

HEWC instructors would normally belong to at least one *open research community*, modelled on *the open philosophy communities* described earlier in this section, each one consisting of some voluntarily-associated, like-minded people wholeheartedly engaged in individual or collective research projects together with one another, belonging to a worldwide network of such groups—although this is not *strictly required*, merely *highly recommended*.

HEWC instructorship would fall under the general rubric of *eco-ed jobs*, hence each HEWC instructor would receive a yearly salary of \$25,000.00 for a 15-hour workweek teaching HEWC courses in some HEWC subject(s), over and above her/his \$25,000.00 UBI.

Anyone could become a HEWC instructor, provided that (i) they meet the requirements for any eco-job, and (ii) either they already have a PhD in the subject for which they propose to work as a HEWC instructor or they have already taught a minimum of 28 courses (= 7 years x 4 courses per year, roughly the same as what is required for tenure in most academic departments currently) in that subject.

Every HEWC instructor would be free to design her/his HEWC courses as s/he sees fit, provided that s/he assigns some written or performed coursework, to be submitted by a certain date falling within the same calendar year as the course.

HEWC instructors would make analytical-critical comments on all written or performed coursework, but there would no grades or other systematized method of evaluation.

Students would *complete* a given HEWC course if and only if they have finished the assigned coursework by the date determined by the HEWC instructor.

Students can take as many or as few HEWC courses in a given calendar year as they want to.

At the end of every calendar year, HEWC students receive a list of the HEWC courses they have completed during that year; but there is no official record of uncompleted courses.

All HEWC courses will fall under one of three classifications: (i) introductory, (ii) advanced, (iii) research-level.

Students may take advanced HEWC courses in a given subject if and only if they have completed a specified number and kind of introductory courses in that subject; and students may take research-level HEWC courses if and only if they have completed a specified number and kind of advanced courses in that subject.

The classification-level and specific requirements for any given HEWC course will be determined by the HEWC instructor for that course.

Students enroll in a given HEWC course by formally declaring their intention to take the course, to that course's instructor.

The enrollment for a given HEWC course is fixed by a certain date to be determined by the HEWC instructor, and after that date no one can take that course until the next time it is offered.

Nevertheless audits are also permitted, provided that the HEWC instructor agrees.

There are no official HEWC course evaluations by students: if students don't like a course, the instructor, the subject, or the assigned coursework, they can either formally declare their intention to drop the course, by informing the HEWC instructor, or else, they can implicitly declare their intention to drop the course by simply not submitting the assigned coursework.

The HEWC system has two basic purposes.

The **first** purpose of the HEWC system is to enable people to pursue higher education for its own sake, for three years minimum, but also for their entire lives, if they want to, as an integral part of their life-work.

The underlying two-part thought here is:

(i) that an essential part of *Utopia Now* is *our collective self-liberation from commodification* and, correspondingly, *our collective active recognition of human moral and spiritual values*, and

(ii) that higher education pursued for its own sake will substantially promote and sustain this collective self-liberation and active recognition.

And the **second** purpose of the HEWC system *is to dismantle and end the professional academy as we know it*, and above all *to liberate intellectual inquiry, the pursuit of knowledge, the pursuit of aesthetic/spiritual experiences of all kinds, and the pursuit of creative art from their commodification*, so that all of these can return, in a suitably updated way, to the classical Socratic/Platonic, Kantian, and Schillerian²⁰ ideals of free, dialogical, enlightened, aesthetic/spiritual, and creative artistic higher education.

²⁰ See F. Schiller, "Letters on the Aesthetic Education of Humanity," (trans. of the title modified slightly) available online at URL = <<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/6798/6798-h/6798-h.htm>>.

VI. Healthcare Hell and Universal Free Healthcare

Healthcare Hell in the USA

The United States life expectancy of 78.4 years at birth, up from 75.2 years in 1990, ranks it 50th among 221 nations, and 27th out of the 34 industrialized [OECD](#) countries, down from 20th in 1990.[5][6] Of 17 high-income countries studied by the [National Institutes of Health](#) in 2013, the United States had the highest or near-highest prevalence of obesity, car accidents, [infant mortality](#), heart and lung disease, sexually transmitted infections, adolescent pregnancies, injuries, and homicides. On average, a U.S. male can be expected to live almost four fewer years than those in the top-ranked country, though notably Americans aged 75 live longer than those who reach that age in other developed nations.[7] A 2014 survey of the healthcare systems of 11 developed countries found the US healthcare system to be the most expensive and worst-performing in terms of health access, efficiency, and equity.[8]

[Gallup](#) recorded that the uninsured rate among U.S. adults was 11.9% for the first quarter of 2015, continuing the decline of the uninsured rate outset by the Affordable Care Act.[15] A 2004 [Institute of Medicine](#) (IOM) report said: "The United States is among the few industrialized nations in the world that *does not guarantee access* to health care for its population." A 2004 [OECD](#) report said: "With the exception of Mexico, Turkey, and the United States, all [OECD countries](#) had achieved universal or near-universal (at least 98.4% insured) coverage of their populations by 1990." Recent evidence demonstrates that lack of health insurance causes some 45,000 to 48,000 unnecessary deaths every year in the United States.[16][17] In 2007, 62.1% of filers for bankruptcies claimed high medical expenses. A 2013 study found that about 25% of all senior citizens declare bankruptcy due to medical expenses, and 43% are forced to mortgage or sell their primary residence.[18]

Of 17 high-income countries studied by the [National Institutes of Health](#) in 2013, the United States was at or near the top in [infant mortality](#), heart and lung disease, sexually transmitted infections, adolescent pregnancies, injuries, homicides, and rates of disability. Together, such issues place the U.S. at the bottom of the list for life expectancy. On average, a U.S. male can be expected to live almost four fewer years than those in the top-ranked country.[7]

The [U.S. Census Bureau](#) reported that 49.9 million residents, 16.3% of the population, were uninsured in 2010 (up from 49.0 million residents, 16.1% of the population, in 2009).[24][25] According to the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO), the United States spent more on [health care per capita](#) (\$7,146), and more on health care as percentage of its [GDP](#) (15.2%), than any other nation in 2008.[26] The United States had the fourth highest level of government health care spending per capita (\$3,426), behind three countries with higher levels of GDP per capita: Monaco, Luxembourg, and Norway.[26] A 2001 study in five states found that [medical debt](#) contributed to 46.2% of all [personal bankruptcies](#) and in 2007, 62.1% of filers for bankruptcies claimed high medical expenses.[27] Since then, health costs and the numbers of uninsured and underinsured have increased.[28] A 2013 study found that about 25% of all senior citizens declare bankruptcy due to medical expenses.[18]

The [U.S. pays twice as much as Canada yet lags behind other wealthy nations](#) in such measures as [infant mortality](#) and [life expectancy](#). Currently, the U.S. has a higher infant mortality rate than

most of the world's industrialized nations.[nb 1][29] In the United States life expectancy is 42nd in the world, after some other industrialized nations, lagging the other nations of the G5 (Japan, France, Germany, U.K., U.S.) and just after Chile (35th) and Cuba (37th).[30]

Life expectancy at birth in the U.S., 78.49, is 50th in the world, below most developed nations and some developing nations. Monaco is first with 89.68. Chad is last with 48.69. With 72.4% Americans of European ancestry,[31] life expectancy is below the average life expectancy for the European Union.[32][33] The World Health Organization (WHO), in 2000, ranked the U.S. health care system as the highest in cost, first in responsiveness, 37th in overall performance, and 72nd by overall level of health (among 191 member nations included in the study).[34][35] In 2008 the Commonwealth Fund, an advocacy group seeking greater government involvement in US healthcare, then led by former Carter administration official Karen Davis,[36] ranked the United States last in the quality of health care among similar countries,[37] and notes U.S. care costs the most.[38]

The United States ranks close to the bottom compared to other industrialized countries on several important health issues affecting mortality: low birth weight and infant mortality, injuries and murder, teen pregnancy and STDs, HIV and AIDS, deaths resulting from drug overdoses, obesity and diabetes, heart disease, COPD, and general disability.[39]

A 2004 Institute of Medicine (IOM) report said: "The United States is among the few industrialized nations in the world that *does not guarantee access* to health care for its population." [40] A 2004 OECD report said: "With the exception of Mexico, Turkey, and the United States, all OECD countries had achieved universal or near-universal (at least 98.4% insured) coverage of their populations by 1990." [41] The 2004 IOM report observed "lack of health insurance causes roughly 18,000 unnecessary deaths every year in the United States", [40] while a 2009 Harvard study conducted by co-founders of Physicians for a National Health Program, a pro-single payer advocacy group, estimated that 44,800 excess deaths occurred annually due to lack of health insurance. [42]²¹

WtF?

In view of the overwhelmingly obvious two-part fact that *universal free healthcare*, aka "single payer healthcare," is not only *the norm amongst industrialized countries*, hence it *could be easily afforded by the USA*, but is also infinitely superior to the *healthcare hell* that exists in the USA, then I ask you: *WtF?*

Well, consider this:

Health care in the United States is provided by many distinct organizations.[1] Health care facilities are largely owned and operated by private sector businesses. 58% of US community hospitals are non-profit, 21% are government owned, and 21% are for-profit.[2] According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the United States spent more on health care per capita

²¹ Wikipedia, "Health Care in the United States."

(\$8,608), and more on health care as percentage of its GDP (17.2%), than any other nation in 2011. 64.3% of which was paid for by the government in 2013.[3][4]²²

So the overwhelmingly obvious answer to the WTF? question is this:

Privately-owned healthcare providers, privately owned healthcare insurance companies, and rich doctors in the USA *are making out like bandits and don't give a damn about us.*

Wait! I think I hear the phrase "American exceptionalism" springing to many lips.

But, please don't give me that bullshit:

American exceptionalism as applied to healthcare (or anything else) is nothing but a self-serving cognitive illusion for fat cats, and everyone who isn't in the grip of a cognitive illusion knows it.

Now as I have pointed out twice already, President Trump, who received 46.1% of the popular vote, is a billionaire—a greedy, ruthless, nativist, bigoted, demagogue billionaire.

Do you really think that, over the next 4 or 8 years, he and all the other rich people in the Trump governing elite are even going to *attempt* to fix healthcare hell in the USA?

Yet again, *hell no*. Of course not.

Even [Obamacare](#), which, sadly, *is nothing but a pathetic band-aid for a gushing national wound*, is going to be *repealed* by the Trump administration and governing elite *as soon they can politically manage to do it*, and then, strategically, *dismantled after the mid-term elections*.

So, for as long as Trump is POTUS and nothing is done to fix healthcare hell, unless you're rich or have a high-income job, well above the median yearly household income of \$56,516 USD (according to [the US Census Bureau Report on Income and Poverty in the USA for 2015](#)), *we're screwed*.

²² Wikipedia, "[Health Care in the United States](#)."

Universal Basic Income, a Fifteen-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs, Eco-Jobs, HEWC, and Universal Free Healthcare

According to my **Universal Basic Income** (UBI) proposal:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000.00 USD per year, with no strings attached.

Moreover, over and above UBI, I am also proposing a *15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs* (FHW-for-UNBJs), which says:

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

Thus anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000.00 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

Here are a few more details about UBI and eco-jobs.

- The UBI is to be paid by a monthly stipend check.
- Eco-job income is not taxed.
- For all individual yearly incomes of \$50,000.00 USD or under, no tax will be levied; hence for someone receiving their UBI and also doing an eco-job, no income tax will be levied.
- For all individual non-eco-job incomes, for every \$1.00 USD earned above the standard UBI of \$25,000.00 USD, the monthly UBI stipend is reduced by 50 cents, until the recipient's UBI is reduced to zero; hence for those individuals with yearly non-eco-job incomes equal to or under \$50,000.00 USD, the maximum UBI + non-eco-job income sum is always \$50,000.00 USD.
- For all individual yearly incomes over \$50,000.00 USD, for every \$10,000.00 USD earned, that surplus income is taxed at the rate of 1%, with the highest surplus

income tax rate being 50%; hence the maximum surplus 50% tax rate starts at individual yearly incomes of \$550,000.00 USD, and applies to all higher surplus incomes.

And as a natural follow-up to FHW-for-UNBjs/eco-jobs, I am also proposing *Universal Free Higher Education Without Credentialing* (HEWC), which says:

- Everyone would be offered, beyond their high school education, a free, three-year minimum, optional (but also open-ended beyond those three years, as a further option), part-time or full-time universal public education program in the so-called “liberal arts,” and also in some of the so-called “STEM” fields, including the humanities, the fine arts, the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences.
- For many or even most people, their HEWC would fall between (i) the end of their high school education at age 18 and the corresponding availability of eco-jobs, and (ii) the beginning of their UBI at age 21.
- But HEWC *would be open to anyone with a high school degree, no matter how old they are*, provided they are mentally and physically capable of doing the program.

Now what about healthcare? According to my *Universal Free Healthcare* (UFH) proposal:

- Every human person living permanently in the USA will receive free lifelong healthcare.

Two Decisive Reasons for Implementing UFH, Together With UBI and FHW-for-UNBjs/Eco-Jobs

First, although it is true that, under the system of UBI together with eco-jobs, *no one would ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again*, and also *no one who is capable of working and who wants to work would ever be unemployed again*, nevertheless, *if UFH were not implemented starting in 2021*, then most people living permanently in the USA *would still suffer from healthcare hell*.

Second, under the collective system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBjs/eco-jobs, and UFH, *not only would no one ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again*, and also *no one who*

is capable of working and who wants to work ever be unemployed again, forever, but also healthcare hell in the USA would be ended forever.

VII. Cultural Conflict, Closed Borders, 2-Phase Universal Open Borders, and Empathy Politics

“Okay,” [Rick] said, nodding. “Now consider this. You’re reading a novel written in the old days before the war. The characters are visiting Fisherman’s Wharf in San Francisco. They become hungry and enter a seafood restaurant. One of them orders lobster, and the chef drops the lobster into the tub of boiling water while the characters watch.”²³

Tyrell: “Is this to be an empathy test? Capillary dilation of the so-called blush response? Fluctuation of the pupil. Involuntary dilation of the iris...”

Deckard: “We call it Voight-Kampff for short.”²⁴

Cultural Conflict and Identity Politics

By *cultural conflict* I mean the mutual antagonism that arises between groups of people with different skin color, different languages, different ethnicity, different religions or religious traditions, different gender, different sexuality, different age groups or generations, different social castes, different economic classes, different political parties, and so-on, or who simply live in different places from one another.

Such conflict ranges all the way from mutual distrust and insults, to mutual coercion including threats of violence or actual violence, to systematic mutual or one-way persecution including imprisonment, torture, and murder, to war, “ethnic cleansing,” mass murder, or genocide.

The very idea of cultural conflict, in any one of its instances, implies the existence of a centered group, *Us*, that is the *agent* and first participant in a given cultural conflict, and an external group, or set of groups, that is the *target* and second participant in that conflict, *Them*.

Let’s call the agent-group, *Our People*, and the target-group or set of groups, *Other People*.

²³ P.K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?* (New York: Ballantyne, 1968).

²⁴ *Blade Runner*, directed by R. Scott, 1982.

To the extent that *Our People* have Our own (relatively) unique political practices and policies, that set Us apart from Them, the *Other People*, these practices and policies jointly constitute an *identity politics*.

Identity Politics of the Right, Identity Politics of the Left, and Trump's Political Meat-and-Potatoes

Now The Age of Trump is going to last *at least 4 years*, perhaps *8 years*.

Throughout the 2016 Presidential election campaign and especially since Trump's election, the following highly disturbing cultural and social fact has become vividly manifest.

On the one hand, we find President-Elect Trump's Republican, nativist, racist, anti-feminist, right-neoliberal, *Know-Nothings*, unified by their identity-politics.

And on the other hand, we find President-Reject Hillary Clinton's Democratic, anti-nativist, anti-racist, pro-feminist, left-liberal, *Social Justice Warriors*, unified by *their* identity-politics.

Indeed, the 2016 USA Presidential election was, at bottom, *all about cultural conflict*, as Mark Lilla's controversial Op-Ed piece in the *New York Times* published only ten days after Trump's election, on 18 November 2016, "[The End of Identity Liberalism](#)," clearly shows.

Trump's Know-Nothings fear and hate foreigners, people with different skin color, people with different languages, people with different ethnicity, people with different religions or religious traditions, and people with different sexuality, and above all, *they fear and hate Clinton's Social Justice Warriors*.

And, in return, above all, Clinton's Social Justice Warriors *fear and hate Trump's Know-Nothings*.

In short, *there is fear and hatred everywhere in the USA, cultural conflict everywhere, and it is all fundamentally driven by identity politics, whether of the right or the left*.

As I have pointed out three times already, President Trump, who received 46.1% of the popular vote, is a billionaire—a greedy, ruthless, nativist, bigoted, demagogue billionaire.

Do you really think that, over the next 4 or 8 years, he and all the other rich people in the Trump governing elite are even going to *attempt* to fix cultural conflict in the USA?

Yet again, with feeling: *hell no*.

Of course not.

Trump, his governing elite, the Republican Party, and the alt-right zealots *desperately need cultural conflict* in order to unify the Know-Nothings by means of identity politics: *it's their political meat-and-potatoes*.

So, for as long as Trump is POTUS and nothing is done to fix cultural conflict in the USA, *we're all screwed*.

Universal Open Borders, in 2 Phases, as the Surprising Solution to the Problem of Cultural Conflict

According to my **Universal Basic Income** (UBI) proposal:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over and living permanently in the USA, who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000 USD per year, with no strings attached.

Over and above UBI, I am also proposing a *15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs* (FHW-for-UNBJs), which says:

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

Thus anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

Here are a few more details about UBI and eco-jobs.

- The UBI is to be paid by a monthly stipend check.

- Eco-job income is not taxed.
- For all individual yearly incomes of \$50,000.00 USD or under, no tax will be levied; hence for someone receiving their UBI and also doing an eco-job, no income tax will be levied.
- For all individual non-eco-job incomes, for every \$1.00 USD earned above the standard UBI of \$25,000.00 USD, the monthly UBI stipend is reduced by 50 cents, until the recipient's UBI is reduced to zero; hence for those individuals with yearly non-eco-job incomes equal to or under \$50,000.00 USD, the maximum UBI + non-eco-job income sum is always \$50,000.00 USD.
- For all individual yearly incomes over \$50,000.00 USD, for every \$10,000.00 USD earned, that surplus income is taxed at the rate of 1%, with the highest surplus income tax rate being 50%; hence the maximum surplus 50% tax rate starts at individual yearly incomes of \$550,000.00 USD, and applies to all higher surplus incomes.

As a natural follow-up to FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, I am also proposing *Universal Free Higher Education Without Credentialing* (HEWC), which says:

- Everyone would be offered, beyond their high school education, a free, three-year minimum, optional (but also open-ended beyond those three years, as a further option), part-time or full-time universal public education program in the so-called "liberal arts," and also in some of the so-called "STEM" fields, including the humanities, the fine arts, the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences.
- For many or even most people, their HEWC would fall between (i) the end of their high school education at age 18 and the corresponding availability of eco-jobs, and (ii) the beginning of their UBI at age 21.
- But HEWC *would be open to anyone with a high school degree, no matter how old they are*, provided they are mentally and physically capable of doing the program.

And in addition to UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and HEWC, I am also proposing *Universal Free Healthcare* (UFH), which says:

- Every human person living permanently in the USA will receive free lifelong healthcare.

Furthermore, I am also proposing *2-Phase Universal Open Borders* (2P-UOB):

- **Phase 1:** Starting in 2021, there will be universal open borders with Canada and Mexico, and everyone who moves across those borders and then claims residence in the USA, will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA* and also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the USA*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents to depend on the current availability of (i) adequate funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the USA, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the USA and elsewhere in the world.*
- **Phase 2:** Also starting in 2021, the USA, Canada, and Mexico will collectively form a *Global Refugee Consortium (GRC)*, with three-way open borders to *any political refugee, economic refugee, or asylum seeker from anywhere in the world (aka "global refugees")*, who will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA, Canada, or Mexico*, and also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the three GRC countries*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents, and the precise distribution of new residents among the three members of the GRC, to depend on the current availability of (i) funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the three GRC countries, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the GRC and elsewhere in the world.*

It is crucial to note that *Phase 2* of 2P-UOB, and the corresponding creation of the GRC, *presuppose that USA, Canada, and Mexico, by 2021, will have each implemented social systems equivalent to UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, HEWC, and UFH.*

An Obvious Objection and My Reply

Here is an obvious objection to 2P-UOB, which I will call *The Inevitability of Cultural Conflict*:

Since people are by nature egoistic and mutually antagonistic, then whenever they group together and become an Us, they will naturally and inevitably engage in cultural conflict with *Them*, the *Other People*. So universal open borders with Canada and Mexico, or to global refugees, will *never* work, precisely because

they would *inevitably lead to even more and greater cultural conflicts than already exist*, and perhaps even *lead to war*. Therefore, *the USA should always have (more or less) closed borders to everyone, forever*.

And here is my reply to that objection.

Obviously, cultural conflict exists, and has existed in varying degrees, from minor, to moderate, to major, to intense, all the way to catastrophic, near-satanically evil, holocaust levels, as long as real human persons have existed.

Nevertheless, not only is it simply *false* that people are *by nature*, or even *inevitably by culture*, egoistic or self-interested and mutually antagonistic, but also the very *belief* that people are, as widespread as it may be, *is nothing more and nothing less than a self-serving cognitive illusion that directly serves the interests of Trump and his governing elite*.

In other words, Trump and his governing elite *desperately need you to believe in The Inevitability of Cultural Conflict and closed borders, precisely because it's their political meat-and-potatoes*.

It is self-evident that people are most inclined to cultural conflict with others, via their identity politics, *when they're already very angry, anxious, bitter, or frightened about other things, for whatever reasons* — e.g. poverty and economic oppression, being unemployed or having to do a shit job, or healthcare hell — *and then they project those powerful negative emotions onto Other People*.

In so doing, *Our People* thereby *cognitively demonize and stigmatize the Other People*, then *actively fear and hate the Other People*, or even, in the most extreme cases, *cognitively de-humanize the Other People*, by seeing them as wild beasts or vermin, or even as human garbage or human offal, fit only to be eliminated and exterminated.

Nevertheless, these are all *strictly extreme, pathological situations*, and almost infinitely far from being the *normal situation* between different cultural groups.

Of course, there are always some difficulties and tensions.

Consider, e.g., the most obvious cases of all, men and women, or older people and younger people.

Nevertheless, it is not all uncommon for *sharply* different cultural groups, even a *multiplicity* of sharply different cultural groups, to get along just fine, all things considered, to their great mutual benefit, with only the ordinary sorts of “human, all too

human” problems, *whenever the larger economic, social, and political backgrounds are appropriately supportive.*

Real-world examples of this abound: happy marriages and other intimate partnerships, happy families, good camaraderie and friendships across even sharply different cultural groups, good working relationships across even sharply different cultural groups, etc., etc.

Indeed, *the city of Toronto, Canada*, is an excellent real-world example of all of this.

I am *not* saying that people are perfect in Toronto or anywhere else: *infinitely far from it!*

But the essential point is *that people of even sharply different cultural groups CAN and often DO get along pretty well, given the right background-setting of economic, social, and political support, e.g., Toronto.*

The amazing thing, then, is how often we forget or overlook this absolutely self-evident fact.

Therefore, *the very best thing that could possibly be done in the face of cultural conflict in the USA* is to create a two-phase UOB situation in which

- everyone in the USA, Canada, and Mexico is moving freely across borders between the three countries and living wherever they want to,
- global refugees are given universal safe-haven in the Global Refugee Consortium (GRC) consisting of the USA, Canada, and Mexico, and therefore
- people from all over the USA, Canada, Mexico, and global refugees from the rest of the world, can thereby all actually see each other, hear each other, and interact as neighbors, without wire fences, walls, or fear of any sort of persecution or violence,
- so that everyone is committed to universal respect for human dignity, and also has a universal basic income, a 15-hour workweek for non-bullshit jobs/eco-jobs, and universal free healthcare.

Thus the *surprising solution* to the problem of cultural conflict in the USA is—

- universal open borders with Canada and Mexico (UOB phase 1), and

- universal open borders to global refugees, via the GRC consisting of the USA, Canada, and Mexico (UOB phase 2), with both of these
- only in the context of the appropriately supportive economic, social, and political background of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, HEWC, and UFH.

Closed borders are therefore not only *not* a reasonable response to the problem of cultural conflict, *they're one of the basic causes of cultural conflict itself.*

Empathy Politics, Not Identity Politics

In Philip K. Dick's brilliant classic science-fiction novel, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, and again in Ridley Scott's equally brilliant classic science-fiction film *Blade Runner*, it is philosophically highly insightful and significant that *the Voight-Kampff test* for telling *human persons* apart from "replicants" or *androids*, is an *empathy* test.

Indeed, the psychological capacity for empathy is *an essential capacity of all human persons*.²⁵

In turn, the key to understanding my surprising solution to the problem of cultural conflict, namely 2P-UOB, is what I call *empathy politics*, which is the diametric opposite of *identity politics*.

Frequently it is said that the alternative to the corrosive influence of identity politics, which emphasizes *difference, exclusion, and exceptionalism*, is a politics of *commonality or universality, and shared interests and values*.

That is true, but still too superficial.

What lies at the ground of a politics of commonality and universality is *respect for human dignity*.

In turn, what evokes and sustains respect for human dignity is the emotion of *empathy*: the ability to mirror the feelings and emotions of other people inside oneself.

²⁵ See, e.g., R. Hanna and M. Maiese, *Embodied Minds in Action* (Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 2009); and M. Maiese, *Embodiment, Emotion, and Cognition* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

This doesn't mean that you have to *agree with other people*, or even to *like other people, particularly*: all you have to do is to be able to *understand their feelings and emotions*, and to *respect them*.

Empathy is inherently outward-looking, not inward-looking, self-absorbed, navel-gazing, or narcissistic.

Empathetic people are naturally inclined towards generosity, graciousness, kindness, and tolerance, and, at a minimum, towards politeness, and *not* towards arrogance, callousness, cruelty, rudeness, or intolerance.

Creating and cultivating personal and cultural *practices of empathy* are therefore *the moral and political antidote to the morally and politically poisonous and pathological influence of identity politics*.

Q: What do I mean by *practices of empathy*?

A: There are obviously many different ways of opening yourself to other minds, other languages, other nations, other traditions, and other ways of living and being human: studying their history, reading their literature, watching their movies, etc., etc.

But above all, what I mean is that *we should all engage in frequent domestic and foreign travel, including actually living in many different places, all over the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the rest of the world*.

That way, once all sorts of different people are actually our next door neighbors, then we will naturally and inevitably see *how ordinary everyone really is, everywhere*, hence *we will all be able to empathize with them and respect them as human persons with dignity, just like us*.

But in order to make frequent domestic and foreign travel, and living in different places, all over the USA, Canada, Mexico, and the rest of the world really possible for most people, we need *the two-phase UOB system*, together with UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, HEWC, and UFH.

Two Decisive Reasons for Implementing 2P-UOB Together With UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/Eco-Jobs, HEWC, and UFH

First, although it is true that, under the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, HEWC, and UFH, *no one would ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again, no one who is capable of working and who wants to work would ever be unemployed again, no one who*

wants a higher education would ever be denied one, and no one would ever suffer from healthcare hell again, nevertheless, if two-phase UOB were not implemented starting in 2021, then most people living permanently in the USA would still suffer from cultural conflict and the pathology of closed borders.

Second, under the collective system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, HEWC, UFH, and two-phase UOB, not only would no one ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again, not only would no one who is capable of working and who wants to work ever be unemployed again, forever, not only would no one who wants a higher education ever be denied one, and not only would healthcare hell in the USA would be ended forever, but also cultural conflict in the USA and the pathology of closed borders would be ended forever.

VIII. The Second “Peculiar Institution,” Gun Violence, and Universal No-Guns

Two Original Sins

Framed in Biblical terms, the birth of the USA in 1776 was attended by *two original sins*.

The **first** original sin was what John C. Calhoun later infamously called *the “peculiar institution” of slavery in the USA*.

Here are some things that Calhoun said about slavery:

I hold that in the present state of civilization, where two races of different origin, and distinguished by color, and other physical differences, as well as intellectual, are brought together, the relation now existing in the slaveholding States between the two, is, instead of an evil, a good — a positive good ... I may say with truth, that in few countries so much is left to the share of the laborer, and so little exacted from him, or where there is more kind attention paid to him in sickness or infirmities of age. Compare his condition with the tenants of the poor houses in the more civilized portions of Europe — look at the sick, and the old and infirm slave, on one hand, in the midst of his family and friends, under the kind superintending care of his master and mistress, and compare it with the forlorn and wretched condition of the pauper in the poorhouse ... I hold then, that there never has yet existed a wealthy and civilized society in which one portion of the community did not, in point of fact, live on the labor of the other.²⁶

The “peculiar institution” of slavery was the primary cause of the US Civil War; and although it was abolished by Lincoln in 1865, its evil consequences have been experienced throughout US history right up to today — as *the Black Lives Matter movement* vividly demonstrates.

²⁶ Wikipedia, “John C. Calhoun.”

Slavery is morally abhorrent because it treats human persons as mere instruments and mere things, and directly violates their human dignity.

And the **second** original sin was what I call *the second “peculiar institution,”* that is, *the right to own and use guns in the USA*, entrenched in the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution, ratified in 1788, which says this:

A well regulated militia being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.

Fast-forwarding now to the second decade of the 21st century, here are some contemporary facts about gun violence:

[Gun violence](#) results in thousands of deaths and injuries in the United States annually.[1]

According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), in 2013, there were 73,505 nonfatal firearm injuries (23.23 per 100,000 U.S. citizens);[2] 11,208 homicides (3.5 per 100,000);[3] 21,175 suicides;[4] 505 deaths due to accidental/negligent discharge of a firearm; and 281 deaths due to firearms-use with “undetermined intent”, [4] included in a total of 33,636 deaths due to “Injury by firearms”, [4] or 10.6 deaths per 100,000 people.[4] Of the 2,596,993 total deaths in the US in 2013, 1.3% were related to firearms.[1][5] The ownership and control of guns are among the most widely debated issues in the country.

In 2010, according to the [United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](#), 67% of all homicides in the U.S. were committed using a firearm.[6] According to the [FBI](#), in 2012, there were 8,855 total firearm-related homicides in the US, with 6,371 of those attributed to handguns.[7] In 2012, 64% of all gun-related deaths in the U.S. were suicides.[8] In 2010, there were 19,392 firearm-related suicides, and 11,078 firearm-related homicides in the U.S.[9] In 2010, 358 murders were reported involving a [rifle](#) while 6,009 were reported involving a [handgun](#); another 1,939 were reported with an unspecified type of firearm.[10]

Firearms were used to kill 13,286 people in the U.S. in 2015, excluding suicide.[11] Approximately 1.4 million people have been killed using firearms in the U.S. between 1968 and 2011.[11]

In 2010, gun violence cost U.S. taxpayers approximately \$516 million in direct hospital costs.[12]

Gun violence is most common in poor urban areas and frequently associated with [gang violence](#), often involving male juveniles or young adult males.[13][14] Although mass shootings have been covered extensively in the media, mass shootings account for a small fraction of gun-related deaths[15] and the frequency of these events steadily declined between 1994 and 2007, rising between 2007 and 2013.[16][17]²⁷

²⁷ Wikipedia, “[Gun Violence in the United States.](#)”

Correspondingly, here is a simple but decisive argument *against* guns and the 2nd Amendment, and *for* gun abolitionism.

(I'll also provide a fully detailed version of this argument two sub-sections below.)

1. Coercion is forcing people to do things, by using violence or the threat of violence.
2. Coercion is always rationally unjustified and immoral, because it treats people as mere instruments and mere things, and directly violates their human dignity.
3. The primary functions of guns is coercion.
4. Therefore, owning and using guns is rationally unjustified and immoral.
5. But the 2nd Amendment to the US Constitution entrenches the right to own and use guns.
6. Therefore, the 2nd Amendment is rationally justified and immoral, and should be repealed.
7. Therefore, *gun abolitionism* is rationally justified, morally right, and what we ought to do.

And here is another argument.

Have you ever wondered how many people have been killed by guns within the borders of the USA since 1776?

Since 1968, more than 1.5 million people have been killed by guns.

Since the American Revolution, 1.4 million people have died in wars on US soil, most of them by means of guns.

OK. That's close to 2.9 million people killed by guns over a period spanning roughly one-quarter of US political history, i.e., roughly 60 years.

Now, how many people were killed by guns in the USA during the 192 years between 1776 and 1968, but not in wars?

Let's say, conservatively, 3 million people.

That would mean that the total number of people killed by guns in the history of the USA is roughly the same as the number of people murdered by the Nazis during the Holocaust, i.e., somewhere between 5 and 6 million.

If gun violence is not a fundamental source of human oppression in the USA, then nothing is.

So I am saying that slavery is morally abhorrent, and, for logically independent but also highly analogous reasons, that gun violence is morally abhorrent too.

Therefore, just as we abolished slavery, so we should abolish the ownership and use of guns too.

Moreover, the morally half-hearted and politically expedient 21st century so-called “liberal” doctrine of *gun-control* is strictly analogous to the morally half-hearted and politically expedient pre-Civil War so-called “progressive” doctrine of *abolishing slavery in all states except where it already existed*.

If slavery is wrong, then it's wrong everywhere, and should be abolished everywhere; if gun violence is wrong, then owning and using guns is wrong everywhere, and should be abolished everywhere.

The fact that some gun-owners don't actually kill other people or themselves with their guns no more morally counts against the abolition of guns than the fact that some slave-owners treated their slaves well morally counted against the abolition of slavery.

Now here are some of the things the current President of the USA, Donald Trump, has said about guns:

No limits on guns; they save lives

Q: Are there any circumstances that you think we should be limiting gun sales of any kind in America?

TRUMP: No. I am a 2nd amendment person. If we had guns in California on the other side where the bullets went in the different direction, you wouldn't have 14 or 15 people dead right now. If even in Paris, if they had guns on the other side, going in the opposite direction, you wouldn't have 130 people plus dead. So the answer is no....²⁸

²⁸ “Fox Business 2016 Republican 2-Tier Debate” (Jan 14, 2016).

Make concealed-carry permits valid across all states

I have a concealed-carry permit that allows me to carry a concealed weapon. I took the time and the effort to get that permit because the constitutional right to defend yourself doesn't stop at the end of your driveway. That doesn't apply just to me either. It applies to all our driveways or front doors.

That's why I'm very much in favor of making all concealed-carry permits valid in every state. Every state has its own driving test that residents have to pass before becoming licensed to drive. Those tests are different in many states, but once a state licenses you to drive, every other state recognizes that license as valid.

If we can do that for driving — which is a privilege, not a right — then surely we can do that for concealed carry, which is a right, not a privilege. That seems logical to me.²⁹

Now doesn't that vividly remind you of John C. Calhoun defending slavery?

Guns R Us

The gun and ammunition industry in the USA is *an exceptionally big business, with an annual revenue of \$13.5 billion USD*.

And doesn't that make you wonder who *really* benefits from the continued existence of the second "peculiar institution"?

Against Guns

I'm now going to argue again, this time in full detail, that

- not only (i) owning or possessing and using guns, but also (ii) the Second Amendment, are both rationally unjustified and immoral.

In order to do that, however, and for clarity's sake, I'll quickly introduce some terminology.

By *coercion* I mean:

- either (i) using violence (e.g. injuring, torturing, or killing) or the threat of violence, in order to manipulate people according to certain purposes of the coercer (primary coercion), or (ii) inflicting appreciable, salient harm (e.g. imprisonment, termination of employment, large monetary penalties) or

²⁹ D. Trump "[Crippled America](#)," (Nov 3, 2015): 110.

deploying the threat of appreciable, salient harm, even if these are not in themselves violent, in order to manipulate people according to certain purposes of the coercer (secondary coercion).

So all coercion is *manipulation*.

Therefore, whether it is primary or secondary, coercion should be carefully distinguished from what I will call *minimal sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force*:

- as a last resort, only either using the smallest sufficiently effective level of violence or threat of violence, or deploying the smallest sufficiently effective threat of appreciable, salient harm, in order to defend against, protect against, or prevent, oneself or someone else being primarily or secondarily coerced, or having their rational human dignity directly violated.

All human persons, aka *people*, are

- absolutely intrinsically, non-denumerably infinitely valuable, beyond all possible economics, which means they have *dignity*, and (ii) autonomous rational animals, which means they can act freely for good reasons, and above all they are (iii) morally obligated to respect each other and to be actively concerned for each other's well-being and happiness, as well as their own well-being and happiness.

Therefore it is rationally unjustified and immoral to undermine or violate people's dignity, under any circumstances.

People have dignity as an *innate endowment of their rational humanity*.

Dignity is neither a politically-created right, nor an achievement of any sort.

Nor can anyone *lose* their dignity by thinking, choosing, or acting in a very morally or legally bad way.

The primary function of guns *is for their owners/possessors or users to manipulate, threaten, or kill other people for reasons of their own, namely, coercion*.

That coercion really and truly *is* the primary function of guns, is clearly proven by [the history of firearms](#).

Indeed, that coercion really and truly is the primary function of guns is even *explicitly stated* by [the history of guns provided by the American Firearms Institute](#), who of course would be exceptionally unwilling to admit *anything* they thought would be somehow prejudicial to the pro-gun, pro-Second Amendment movement.

Notice that I said that the *primary function* of guns is coercion.

Please do not let the fact that guns can have secondary or tertiary functions, say, for hunting non-human animals, or for recreational shooting, or for holding doors closed on windy days, conceptually confuse you.

Notice too, that if it turns out that owning/possessing and using guns according to their primary function is rationally unjustified and immoral, then owning/possessing and using guns according to their secondary and tertiary functions will be equally rationally unjustified and immoral.

If it is rationally unjustified and immoral for you to own/possess and use a bomb that would blow up the Earth, then it is equally rationally unjustified and immoral for you to own/possess and use that bomb for hunting non-human animals, for recreational bombing, or for holding doors closed on windy days.

Now *arbitrarily coercing* other people is rationally unjustified and immoral because it undermines and violates their dignity.

Notice that I said "*arbitrarily coercing* other people."

That means manipulating, threatening, or killing other people

- either (i) for no good reason or
- (ii) for no reason at all, much less a good reason.

"For no good reason" does not imply *that there could be a good reason for coercion*: all manipulation is inherently bad.

People who act coercively either have bad *motivating* reasons for so acting (e.g., selfishness), or simply coerce *without a reason*, in a spontaneously bad way.

And please do not let the fact that in some circumstances *minimal sufficiently effective, last-resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force* is rationally justified and morally permissible, conceptually confuse you.

Therefore, since it fully permits arbitrary coercion, owning/possessing and using guns is rationally unjustified and immoral, other things being equal.

Notice, again, that I said *other things being equal*.

Please do not let the fact that under some special critical (in the sense of “involving a crisis”) conditions, when other things are not equal, when all else has failed, and when the only way to stop someone doing something horrendously immoral, and in direct violation of human dignity — e.g., rape, torture, murder, mass murder, genocide — to you, to someone else, or to many other people, that it is rationally justified and morally permissible *to use a gun for the purposes of minimal sufficiently effective, last-resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force* against that evil person, conceptually confuse you.

No one may permissibly *own or possess* a gun, but sometimes, under some special critical conditions, it is morally permissible to *use* one.

But this permissible use is *only* for last-resort, defensive, preventive, and protective purposes: it is *never* morally permissible to use a gun for coercion.

One very important moral and political consequence of the preceding argument is its direct bearing on the Second Amendment to the US Constitution, already quoted above but worth repeating, which says this:

A well regulated Militia, being necessary to the security of a free State, **the right of the people to keep and bear Arms, shall not be infringed.**

In other words, focusing on the material in boldface, the Second Amendment says that “the people,” i.e., all Americans, have the moral and legal right “to keep and bear arms,” i.e., the moral and legal right to own/possess and use guns, *unconditionally*.

This means that *the Second Amendment fully morally and legally permits arbitrary coercion*.

The further historical question of whether the original intention of the Second Amendment was to establish a legal right to own/possess and use guns for militias only, or for all Americans, is irrelevant.

But arbitrary coercion is rationally unjustified and immoral.

Therefore the Second Amendment is rationally unjustified and immoral.

More generally, no one, which includes all Americans, and *which especially includes all members of the police and the army*, i.e., the “Militia,” has the moral right “to keep and bear arms,” i.e., *to own/possess and use guns*, other things being equal.

Universal Basic Income, 15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs, Eco-Jobs, Universal Free Healthcare, 2-Phase Universal Open Borders, HEWC, and Universal No-Guns

According to my *Universal Basic Income* (UBI) proposal:

- Anyone 21 years of age or over and living permanently in the USA, who has a personal yearly income of \$50,000.00 USD or less, and who is capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$25,000.00 USD per year, with no strings attached.

Over and above UBI, I am also proposing a *15-Hour Workweek for Understaffed Non-Bullshit Jobs* (FHW-for-UNBJs), which says:

- Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the USA, who has completed a high school education, and is mentally and physically capable of doing a job, would be offered an *eco-job*, paying a yearly wage of \$25,000.00 USD, for fifteen hours of work (three 5-hour days) per week.

Therefore, anyone 21 years of age or older with a high-school degree and who is also mentally and physically capable of working, would have a guaranteed yearly income of at least \$50,000.00 USD if they chose to do an eco-job.

Here are a few more details about UBI and eco-jobs.

- The UBI is to be paid by a monthly stipend check.
- Eco-job income is not taxed.
- For all individual yearly incomes of \$50,000.00 USD or under, no tax will be levied; hence for someone receiving their UBI and also doing an eco-job, no income tax will be levied.
- For all individual non-eco-job incomes, for every \$1.00 USD earned above the standard UBI of \$25,000.00 USD, the monthly UBI stipend is reduced by 50 cents,

until the recipient's UBI is reduced to zero; hence for those individuals with yearly non-eco-job incomes equal to or under \$50,000.00 USD, the maximum UBI + non-eco-job income sum is always \$50,000.00 USD.

- For all individual yearly incomes over \$50,000.00 USD, for every \$10,000.00 USD earned, that surplus income is taxed at the rate of 1%, with the highest surplus income tax rate being 50%; hence the maximum surplus 50% tax rate starts at individual yearly incomes of \$550,000.00 USD, and applies to all higher surplus incomes.

As a natural follow-up to FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, I am also proposing *Universal Free Higher Education Without Credentialing* (HEWC), which says:

- Everyone would be offered, beyond their high school education, a free, three-year minimum, optional (but also open-ended beyond those three years, as a further option), part-time or full-time universal public education program in the so-called "liberal arts," and also in some of the so-called "STEM" fields, including the humanities, the fine arts, the social sciences, mathematics, and the natural sciences.
- For many or even most people, their HEWC would fall between (i) the end of their high school education at age 18 and the corresponding availability of eco-jobs, and (ii) the beginning of their UBI at age 21.
- But HEWC *would be open to anyone with a high school degree, no matter how old they are*, provided they are mentally and physically capable of doing the program.

In addition to UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and HEWC, I am also proposing *Universal Free Healthcare* (UFH), which says:

- Every human person living permanently in the USA will receive free lifelong healthcare.

And I am also proposing *2-Phase Universal Open Borders* (2P-UOB):

- *Phase 1:* Starting in 2021, there will be universal open borders with Canada and Mexico, and everyone who moves across those borders and then claims residence in the USA, will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA* and

also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the USA*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents to depend on the current availability of (i) adequate funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the USA, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the USA and elsewhere in the world.*

- **Phase 2:** Also starting in 2021, the USA, Canada, and Mexico will collectively form a *Global Refugee Consortium (GRC)*, with three-way open borders to *any political refugee, economic refugee, or asylum seeker from anywhere in the world (aka “global refugees”)*, who will receive *temporary or permanent residence in the USA, Canada, or Mexico*, and also *full membership in the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/eco-jobs, and UFH in the three GRC countries*, with the precise number of new temporary or permanent residents, and the precise distribution of new residents among the three members of the GRC, to depend on the current availability of (i) funding for UBI, eco-jobs, and UFH , and (ii) adequate living accommodation, in the three GRC countries, provided that *all new residents also fully respect the human dignity of everyone else in the GRC and elsewhere in the world.*

Finally, I am also proposing **Universal No-Guns (UNG)**, which says:

- No one in the USA, *including police, internal security forces of all kinds, armies, and intelligence forces of all kinds, has the moral right to possess or use guns of any kind, for any purpose whatsoever, because the primary function of guns is coercion, and coercion is immoral.*
- UNG would be implemented *by repealing the Second Amendment to the US Constitution in 2021 and then universally banning the possession or use of guns thereafter.*

Many countries already seriously restrict the possession and use of guns, with significant benefits for all involved; therefore UNG would radically extend and increase those benefits.

It is of course obvious that UNG would have to be implemented in very carefully-designed stages, *so as to ensure a non-violent, safe transition from gun-free sub-zone1 to gun-free sub-zone2, etc.*

Whenever I describe the very idea of UNG to American acquaintances and friends—including the most thoughtful, open-minded, left-leaning, or politically radical among

them—they initially or typically get a wide-eyed, horrified look on their faces, shake their heads convulsively, and say that repealing the Second Amendment is “impossible.”

As they do this, I’m vividly reminded of the mind-controlled characters in *The Manchurian Candidate* who, when questioned, automatically intone that “Raymond Shaw is the kindest, bravest, warmest, most wonderful human being I’ve ever known in my life,” even when they know in their hearts that this is completely false.

So it is important to point out explicitly what every American already knows in their hearts, namely, that *there is a perfectly clear and effective democratic procedure for repealing Constitutional Amendments; and that other Amendments have actually been repealed: so in that sense, repealing the Second Amendment is actually easy and not in any way “impossible.”*

The people of the USA created and instituted the Second Amendment; and the repeal process is written into the Constitution itself; *therefore, the people of the USA can repeal the Second Amendment.*

I know full well that pro-gun, pro-Second Amendment people are very apt to fulminate against those who disagree with them, in an attempt to silence the anti-gun “public enemies,” [even to the point of threatening to shoot them, or actually shooting them.](#)

But that these pro-gun, pro-Second-Amendment people would be willing to shoot people for disagreeing with them and rationally defending the contrary, in view of the *First Amendment*, which politically protects *freedom of expression*, only provides a *further self-evident proof of the political goodness and rightness of UNG.*

Two Decisive Reasons for Implementing UNG Together With UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs/Eco-Jobs, HEWC, UFH, and 2-Phase UOB

First, although it is true that, under the system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJs, eco-jobs, UFH, and two-phase UOB, *no one would ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again, no one who is capable of working and who wants to work would ever be unemployed again, no one who wants a higher education would ever be denied one again, no one would ever suffer from healthcare hell again, and no one would ever suffer from cultural conflict and the pathology of closed borders again, nevertheless, if UNG were not implemented starting in 2021, then everyone living permanently in the USA would still be constantly at risk of being coerced or killed by guns.*

Second, under the collective system of UBI, FHW-for-UNBJS, eco-jobs, UFH, two-phase UOB, and UNG, *not only would no one ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again,*

not only would *no one who is capable of working and who wants to work ever be unemployed again, forever*, not only would *no one who wants a higher education ever be denied one again*, not only would *healthcare hell in the USA would be ended forever*, and not only would *cultural conflict and the pathology of closed borders in the USA be ended forever*, but also *gun violence in the USA would be ended, forever*.

IX. Nothing Will Be Left Unaffected: Marriage Reform

It is more than merely reasonable to think that implementing the six-part *Utopia Now* package *will not leave any other important social facts unaffected*.

A leading example is marriage.

Under *Utopia Now*, it would be highly reasonable to conceive of marriage as strictly a consensual moral bond for interpersonal mutual love and mutual caring, including natural or adopted children, with minimal legal requirements and implications.

Anyone 18 years of age or over who is capable of consenting would be able to marry anyone else just by mutually consenting.

Polygamy would be legalized: hence marriage could involve any number of people, provided they were all 18 years of age or older and mutually consented.

Divorce, in turn, would be declarative and unilateral: hence anyone who is capable of making a divorce declaration would be able to divorce any or all their spouses just by officially stating this.

Care of children of marriages ended by divorce would be arranged by mutual or mediated negotiation.

X. Nothing Will Be Left Unaffected 2: Abolishing Crime-&-Punishment

MIRANDA: O, wonder!
How many goodly creatures are there here!
How beauteous mankind is! O brave new world,
That has such people in't!³⁰

Under *Utopia Now*, given UNG, gun violence will no longer exist.

³⁰ W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, act v, scene 1, line 185 ff.

And without gun violence, America will truly be a *brave, new world* in Shakespeare's original *utopian* sense—the sense optimistically and unironically intended by Miranda, not Aldous Huxley's mid-20th century pessimistic, ironic, *dystopian* sense.

Just how brave and just how new?

In a fascinating *New York Times* article, [“Power and Punishment: Two New Books About Race and Crime,”](#) Harvard professor Khalil Gibran Muhammed accurately and movingly describes what I'll call *The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America*:

Two new books offer timely and complementary ways of understanding America's punitive culture and, in the process, stark pleas to abolish it. In “Locking Up Our Own,” James Forman Jr. explains how and why an influx of black “firsts” took the municipal reins of government after the civil rights movement only to unleash the brutal power of the criminal justice system on their constituents; in “A Colony in a Nation,” Chris Hayes shows that throughout American history, freedom — despite all the high-minded ideals — has often entailed the subjugation of another....

Drawing heavily on personal experiences as a white kid growing up in the crack-era Bronx and attending a magnet school on the border of East Harlem, much of Hayes's book unfolds along the axis of two “distinct regimes” in America. One for whites, what he calls the Nation; the other for blacks, what he calls the Colony. “In the Nation, you have rights; in the Colony, you have commands,” Hayes explains. “In the Nation, you are innocent until proven guilty; in the Colony, you are born guilty.”....

Many historians have long noted that black folk are simultaneously overpoliced and underprotected. Hayes writes that violence by police or by gangs are “two sides of the same coin.” As such, the Nation evinces a peculiar circular logic: The harm black people do to one another “justifies” the harm the state does in their name. By contrast, the premium on white victimization in the Nation is “painfully clear to people living in the Colony,” Hayes writes. “White lives matter, and it hardly needs to be spoken.”

In other words, what has happened in America—the wages of its original sin of slavery—is that coercive, punitive laws applying to everyone, whether white or non-white, are then specifically applied in a brutal, discriminatory way to non-white people, especially black people.

Notice, moreover, that the very idea of a “criminal act” is defined wholly in terms of *the coercive, punitive laws that forbid that act, backed up by the threat of legal violence and legal punishment*: without the coercive, punitive law that forbids an act, there is no such thing as a “criminal act” that violates that law, and therefore no ground whatsoever for legal violence or legal punishment.

Now in America, when anyone, especially non-white people and extra-especially black people, *react against* the coercive, punitive laws that are used to criminalize them, imprison them, or kill them — whether by police gun violence or by capital punishment — by committing even more “crimes,” then this fact, which has actually been caused and created by the coercive, punitive laws and their brutal, discriminatory application, is self-servingly used as a sufficient reason to create and justify *harsher, more coercive, more punitive laws*, that are then applied to everyone, but in an increasingly brutal, discriminatory way to non-white people and especially black people.

On top of that, as the two books discussed by Professor Muhammed show, it is *not only white people in America* who create and self-servingly “justify” these harsher, more coercive, more punitive laws, that are then applied to everyone, but in an increasingly brutal, discriminatory way to non-white people, and especially black people: it is also *non-white people, and especially black people, who do this very same thing to other non-white, and especially black, people.*

This bizarre, tragic, sociopolitical twist by which *oppressed people become themselves the oppressors of other oppressed people* is simply yet another case, here extended over a whole generation of post-Civil-Rights-era, non-white, and especially black, law-makers and law-enforcement officers, of *internalizing the oppressor.*

Here is how Professor Muhammed eloquently concludes his article:

Taken together “A Colony in a Nation” and “Locking Up Our Own” compel readers to wrestle with some very tough questions about the nature of American democracy and its deep roots in racism, inequality and punishment. Both authors find hope in a shared vision of a future society that protects human dignity and seeks accountability rather than vengeance. “What would the politics of crime look like in a place where people worried not only about victimization but also about the costs of overly punitive policing and prosecution?” Hayes asks. Forman imagines redefining our core values: “What if we strove for compassion, for mercy, for forgiveness? And what if we did this for everybody, including people who have harmed others?”

Because, finally, there may be no pathway to end mass incarceration without reconsidering our handling of all crimes, not just nonviolent ones. Fifty-three percent of all state prisoners are serving time for violent offenses, most commonly robbery. Racism and mass incarceration are systemic problems, but both Forman and Hayes show that the solution will lie not only with policy changes but with individual changes of heart too.

Forman recalls that a 16-year-old he defended was saved from incarceration by the testimony of the victim, who told the judge he didn’t want the teenager to be sent to prison. A system built to make “teeth rattle,” as described by Atlanta’s first black mayor, Maynard Jackson, is not a system capable of transformation; we need to build a new foundation. We need to choose to do it. “Mass

incarceration,” Forman writes, “was constructed incrementally, and it may have to be dismantled the same way.”

I could not agree more.

More precisely, all punishment is coercive.

And coercion is immoral because it inherently involves treating people as mere means or mere things in order to promote various ends of the coercer.

Hence *all punishment is immoral*, whether its purported justification is retributive, deterrent, rehabilitative, or restitutive.

Moreover, “crimes” are so-defined in relation to coercive, punitive laws.

But all coercive, punitive laws are immoral.

Therefore “crime-&-punishment” systems, whether in America or in any other modern state, are also immoral.

So let me now “wrestle with some very tough questions about the nature of American democracy and its deep roots in racism, inequality and punishment,” by going directly to the heart of the matter, and raising this amazingly hard question:

How can we go about dismantling The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America?

Here are two radical thoughts in that direction.

First, as I argued in section VIII, given UNG, we will have universally abolished the possession and use of guns, *especially including their possession and use by the police*.

Believe it or not, *there are five other countries in which police do not use guns — Iceland, Ireland, Britain, New Zealand, and Norway* — and yet everything works out well.

Above all, in abolishing the possession and use of guns in the USA, we would thereby *end gun violence*, which is an essential feature of The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America.

Second, and most importantly, *we will de-criminalize everything, and shut down all prisons, by simply getting rid of all coercive, punitive laws*.

Non-coercive, non-punitive laws would still be acceptable, important, and even necessary for society: but their purpose would be solely to provide wise, apt guidelines for creating, operating, and sustaining all and only constructive, enabling social institutions for our mutual aid, benefit, and self-realization, guided above all by universal respect for human dignity and universal resistance against human oppression.

The obvious objection to what we have just argued is this:

Supposing that these radical proposals for dismantling The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America were enacted, then how then could we ever defend and protect innocent people against the bad acts of bad people or prevent these bad acts from happening?

Here's my reply.

Although all coercion is rationally unjustified and immoral, nevertheless, as I've argued in section VIII, *minimal sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force is morally permissible*, precisely because its fundamental aim is to support and sustain human dignity.

Correspondingly, I contextually define "minimal sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force" as follows:

A rational human agent X is using minimal sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force if and only if X, as a last resort, only either uses the smallest sufficiently effective level of violence or threat of violence, or deploys the smallest sufficiently effective threat of appreciable, salient harm, in order to defend against, protect against, or prevent, X her/himself, or someone else, being coerced, or having their human dignity directly violated.

In view of that, when people are threatened, or about to be harmed, by bad people, we not only *morally can* but also *morally should* protect and defend those people against those bad people, and prevent this harm from happening.

But this protection, defense, and prevention would *not* involve crime-&-punishment, and, other things being equal, would *never* involve guns or incarceration.

This leads me to a doctrine I call *Crime-&-Punishment Anarchism*.

Crime-&-Punishment Anarchism rejects The Crime-&-Punishment Machine, whether in America or anywhere else, from top to bottom.

Now The Crime-&-Punishment Machine is a monstrous, Leviathan-size fusion of

- (i) institutionalized vengeance,
- (ii) Utilitarian social engineering, and
- (iii) Statism.

Correspondingly, this monstrous fusion is directly reflected in the retributive, deterrent, rehabilitative, and restitutive philosophical theories of punishment.³¹

Therefore, under *Utopia Now*, in order to reject the very idea of crime-&-punishment, and along with that, in order to dismantle The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America, or anywhere else, the core assumptions of (i) institutionalized vengeance, (ii) Utilitarian social engineering, and (iii) Statism must *all* be rejected.

Moreover, under *Utopia Now*, we'll make three radical counter-offers to those rejected assumptions.

Instead of institutionalized vengeance, we'll counter-offer institutionalized *forgiveness*.

This means that in a post-crime-&-punishment world, there would be no coercive, punitive laws, hence there would be *no guilt under the law*.

It also means that since there would be no criminalization, there would also be *no criminals*.

Instead of Utilitarian social engineering, we'll counter-offer *Kantian existential responsibility*.

This means providing a social-institutional backdrop that makes it really possible for people *to take responsibility*, and change their lives for the better, in pursuit of principled authenticity, which includes serious commitments to respect for human dignity, resisting oppression, and mutual aid, hence a serious commitment to helping victims.

³¹ See, e.g., D. Boonin, *The Problem of Punishment* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2008).

And instead of Statism, we'll counter-offer *existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism*.³²

In a post-crime-&-punishment world, there would be no legal violence, especially including no capital punishment.

There would be no guns, hence no gun violence, hence no legal gun violence on the part of the police.

And there would be no prisons, hence no mass incarceration.

The protection of the innocent, and of people generally, from being threatened or harmed by bad people, would be guaranteed by the principle of minimal sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive moral force.

It remains true that when *other things were not equal*, and things had reached a crisis situation, such that the well-being or lives of people were imminently threatened, or they were on the verge of being harmed, then we would have to use some minimally sufficiently effective, last resort, defensive, protective, and preventive means for neutralizing gun violence or other forms of violence, or for temporarily restraining someone.

But, again, legal gun violence, especially by the police, capital punishment, and prisons would all be abolished.

And in this way, *the racist, discriminatory use of police gun violence, capital punishment, and prisons, whether in America or anywhere else, would also all be abolished.*

Hence the violence-neutralizing or temporary restraining that would sometimes be necessary in crisis situations, would be as infinitely far from The Crime-&-Punishment Machine in America as *utopia now* is from *earthly hell*.

XI. On Cognitive Walls

Does what I've been proposing feel bad, disobedient, and shocking to you, *even if you're able to understand, and also, in some sense, rationally accept my arguments?*

³² See note 3 above.

If so, then there's a psychological reason for this, that I'm going to explore in this section.

As Robert Frost famously and rightly wrote, "[something there is that doesn't love a wall.](#)"

When President Donald Trump called for [the construction of a *physical wall* along the southern US border in order to exclude and persecute Mexicans](#), or [when he signed an executive order creating a *legal wall* in order to exclude and persecute travelers, immigrants, or refugees from predominantly Muslim countries](#), those acts were and are both rationally unjustifiable and immoral, if what I've argued about culture wars and open borders in section VI is correct.

But there is another kind of wall that is even more morally insidious and pernicious: what I call a *cognitive wall*.

A cognitive wall is an entrenched or habitual belief, memory, stereotypical mental image, feeling, or emotion that acts as an effective screen against reality and the truth as it actually presented by sense perception, reliable testimonial evidence, or rational argument.

A simple, morally benign example of a cognitive wall is the fact that ordinary, healthy people with normal stereoscopic vision all have their noses right in the middle of their visual fields, yet normally don't see them at all.

Hence the familiar admonishing comment, "it's as plain as the nose on your face!"

Of course, the nose-blindness phenomenon can be easily corrected by someone else's touching (or punching) your nose, or by self-consciously touching your own nose, crossing your eyes inwards, or looking in a mirror.

Nevertheless other cases of cognitive walls, by sharp contrast, are not only extremely hard to correct, but also morally malignant.

Take, for example, the sociological and psychological phenomena known as *the persistence of false beliefs* and *the backfire effect*, that you can learn more about [here](#) and [here](#).

In "[Why Are People So Averse to the Facts?](#)" Tristan Bridges writes this:

Facts about all manner of things have made headlines recently as the Trump administration continues to make statements, reports, and policies at odds with things we know to be true. Whether it's about the size of his inauguration crowd, patently false and fear-mongering inaccuracies about transgender persons in bathrooms, rates of violent crime in the U.S., or anything else, lately it feels like the facts don't seem to matter. The inaccuracies and misinformation continue despite the earnest attempts of so many to correct each falsehood after it is made. It's exhausting. But why is it happening?....

There is more than one reason this is happening. But, one reason I think the alternative facts industry has been so effective has to do with a concept social scientists call the "[backfire effect](#)." As a rule, misinformed people do not change their minds once they have been presented with facts that challenge their beliefs. But, beyond simply not changing their minds when they should, research shows that they are likely to become more attached to their mistaken beliefs. The factual information "backfires." When people don't agree with you, research suggests that bringing in facts to support your case might actually make them believe you less. In other words, fighting the ill-informed with facts is like fighting a grease fire with water. It seems like it should work, but it's actually going to make things worse.

To study this, Brendan Nyhan and Jason Reifler (2010) [conducted a series of experiments](#). They had groups of participants read newspaper articles that included statements from politicians that supported some widespread piece of misinformation. Some of the participants read articles that included corrective information that immediately followed the inaccurate statement from the political figure, while others did not read articles containing corrective information at all.

Afterward, they were asked a series of questions about the article and their personal opinions about the issue. Nyhan and Reifler found that how people responded to the factual corrections in the articles they read varied systematically by how ideologically committed they already were to the beliefs that such facts supported. Among those who believed the popular misinformation in the first place, more information and actual facts challenging those beliefs did not cause a change of opinion — in fact, it often had the effect of strengthening those ideologically grounded beliefs.

In other words, the backfire effect shows that cognitive walls, especially those concerning false beliefs, memories, stereotypical mental images, feelings, or emotions are *self-reinforcing*.

The more you try to confront a person's cognitive walls with contrary correct facts, the higher and thicker he builds his walls, without even knowing what he is doing and fully convinced that he is in the right.

So cognitive walls are the basic vehicles of self-induced, self-deceiving mental slavery.

The reason for this, clearly, is that a person's cognitive walls are essentially of two kinds:

- (i) walls concerning his sense of individual identity as a person, and

(ii) walls concerning his sense of group identity as a card-carrying member of some important social community or institution.

Breaking through or tearing down those cognitive walls in any way, therefore, would mean that he would have to undertake a fundamental change of heart or a fundamental shift in group allegiance – in effect, *a cognitive revolution* – and most people are desperately afraid of doing this.

Paradoxically, moreover, as George Orwell's *1984* and [the psychological literature on "mind control"](#) clearly show,

(i) although cognitive walls themselves not only *can be* but also almost always *are* coercively compelled or imposed from the outside, most often without our even realizing it,

(ii) nevertheless breaking through or tearing down cognitive walls is a *self-conscious act of free will* whereby the subject takes moral responsibility for who he is as an individual or as a social being, hence it cannot be coercively compelled or imposed from the outside.

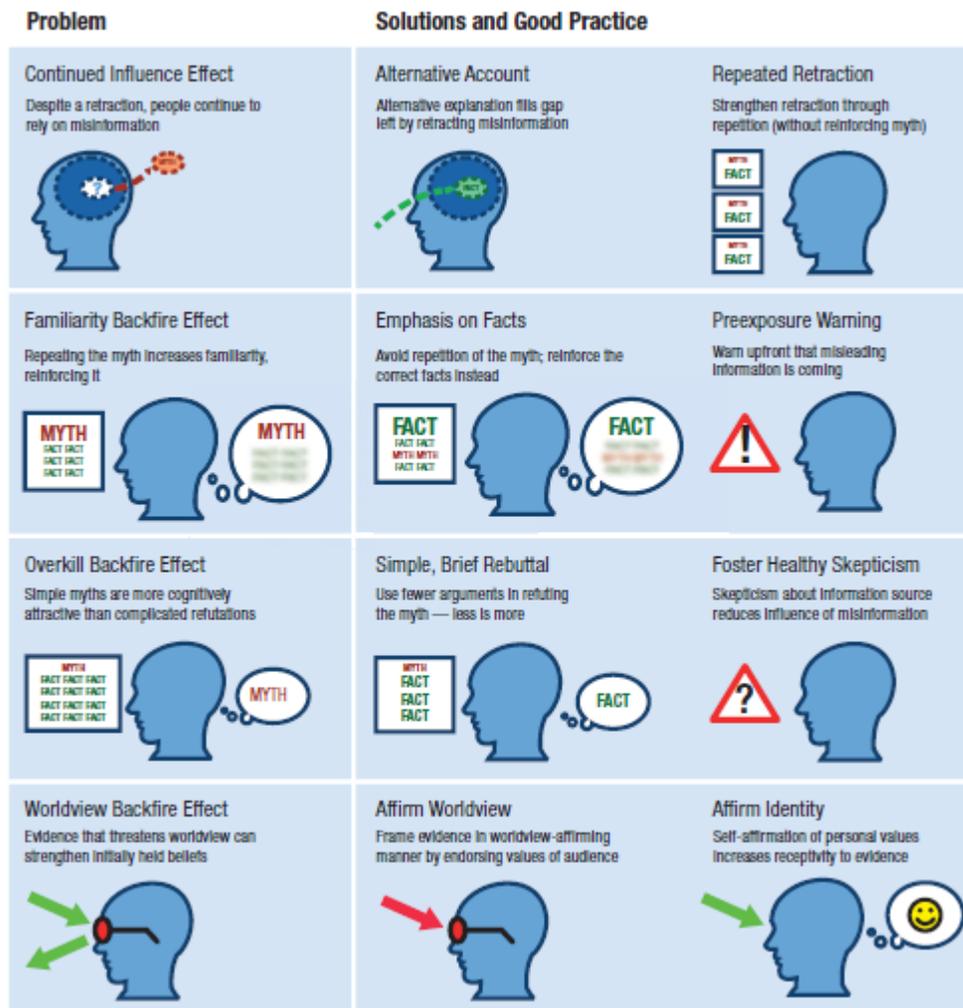
Self-liberation from mental slavery can only be encouraged, or primed, by a public process of critical, radically enlightening self-education in which the students and educators are reciprocally learning from and teaching each other.

That being so, what can be done about breaking through and tearing down the rationally unjustified and immoral physical, legal, and cognitive walls in a contemporary context?

First, we must clearly recognize that cognitive walls are the underlying psychological causes of Trump's physical and legal walls.

Second, therefore, if we want to resist Trump's physical and legal walls in a way that is truly effective, then we will have to address their underlying causes, people's cognitive walls, by means of a public process of critical, radically enlightening self-education in which the students and the educators are reciprocally learning from and teaching each other.

Putting this same basic point graphically, here is what Stephan Lewandowsky and his co-researchers propose in ["Misinformation and Its Correction: Continued Influence and Successful Debiasing"](#):



Third, above all, as educators, rationally responding to the backfire effect by “affirming worldview” and “affirming identity” means that cognitively and morally resisting Trump’s physical and legal walls is only the initial step in the public process of radically enlightening reciprocal self-education.

All the really important work will lie in reaching out *not only* to the people who voted for Trump and who falsely believe in his physical or legal walls, *but also* to all those those *other* people who demonize, fear, and hate such people—and in both cases, reaching out with empathy, critical insight, a passionate concern for all humanity, rational self-discipline, and infinite intellectual and moral patience.

The existence of cognitive walls and our burning need for cognitive revolution and a public process of mutual cognitive self-liberation do not obey traditional political party divisions.

Or if they have any party affiliation at all, then it's only to what the 18th century French radical Enlightenment philosophers—Voltaire, Diderot, and Rousseau—called “[the party of humanity](#).”

And this was intended as both *a rejection of all traditional political parties*, and also *an assertion of passionate universal respect for human dignity and rage against human oppression*.

I'll explore the source of that passion and rage in the next section.

XII. Real-World Spirituality and *Utopia Now*³³

A great many objections will be raised against *Utopia Now*; and it is also fully conceivable that, if this project were to become widespread, then attempts would be made to coerce and silence its proponents.

Q: How could we then respond to this new surge of *counter-enlightenment*?

A: By means of what I call *real-world spirituality* and *real* (i.e., *authentic, serious*) *philosophy*

According to Wikipedia,

Millennials (also known as the **Millennial Generation** or **Generation Y**, abbreviated to **Gen Y**) are the demographic cohort between [Generation X](#) and [Generation Z](#). There are no precise dates for when the generation starts and ends. Demographers and researchers typically use the early 1980s as starting birth years and use the mid-1990s to the early 2000s as final birth years for the Millennial Generation.

As a May 2015 [New York Times](#) article, “[Human Contact in the Digital Age](#),” correctly points out, many Millennials are seriously involved in a search for some sort of spirituality without traditional organized religion (aka *without church*) plus or minus God (aka +/- *God*).

For convenience, I will call this spirituality without church +/- God, *real-world spirituality*.

Most people alive today are Baby Boomers, Gen X-ers, Millennials, or Gen Z-ers.

³³ I'm very grateful to Andrew Chapman and Addison Ellis for their help with this section.

I myself am a Boomer, and, like so many other of my contemporaries in the four post-World War II generations, I do indeed care deeply about the issues, questions, and problems of real-world spirituality discussed in that *NY Times* article.

But I am *also* someone who is pursuing real philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling.

And as such, I have been trying to work out a way for contemporary philosophers to think about real-world spirituality, after I came to the sad conclusion that, by and large, contemporary professional academic philosophers do not care *at all* about real-world spirituality, in that they arrogantly ignore it in their professional research and almost never publicly even say anything about it, except to sneer at it.

They Scholastically fuss about abstract theology, proofs for the existence of God, moral theology, the problem of evil, theism vs. atheism—yes.

But they arrogantly ignore or sneer at the religious issues that so many real people really care about.

It is yet another clear and distinct indicator of [the poverty of contemporary professional academic philosophy](#).

So I am going to have to dare to think and speak for myself about real-world spirituality.

It is evident in our daily interpersonal dealings – moral, practical, romantic, or work-related – that all people care very seriously about *human dignity*.

Caring for human dignity, or simply *humanity*, is not only an other-regarding attitude, but a deeply personal and inward attitude.

That is, we experience ourselves as having dignity, a quality irreducible to any process of number-crunching, calculation, or instrumentalization.

To instrumentalize humanity is to turn creatures with human dignity into *mere means* to some other end; or, to use them as *mere things*.

Thus, we are not simply calculating and calculable objects of the world; we are beings who care.

In the modern European philosophical tradition, we find similar notions at work in, e.g., Kant (“respect for human beings as ends-in-themselves”), Marx (“species-being”), and Heidegger (“care”).

Above all, however, the world’s great religions have all implicitly or explicitly understood this notion.

Nevertheless, it is important to distinguish clearly between the *doctrines* of religion, on the one hand, and the *institutions* of religion on the other.

For centuries, the institutions, both because of their sociopolitical omnipresence and because of their monopolies on moral dialogue, were able to exert doctrinal dominance without having to justify their doctrines rationally or even to make these doctrines clear, distinct, and coherent.

Moreover, with the rise of the “demand-for-justification” classical Enlightenment attitude of the 17th and 18th centuries, and the advent of the “question-all-inherited-authority” post-Enlightenment free-thinking of the 19th and 20th centuries, not only did both religious institutions and religious doctrines for the first time become the sorts of things it made any sense at all to evaluate, but also the sharp distinction between doctrines and institutions of religions was for the first time made evident.

I think that classical Enlightenment thinking has had two fundamental ideological effects on people.

First, the classical Enlightenment replaced the religious picture of our place in the world, and of ourselves, with one in which all of reality is composed of physical bits that together compose bigger physical stuff that interacts with other physical stuff via relations of cause and effect.

Everything, including you and me, is the same deep down: it is all just physical bits.

This picture of our place in the world and of the world itself is known as *natural mechanism*, the position that the natural world is just a giant and complex physical machine that gets from one moment to the next by past states of the machine causing present states of the machine causing future states of the machine.

To understand causes is to understand everything about how we got from earlier to now, and how we will get from now to later.

And to understand the tiniest physical bits is to understand everything about the ultimate nature of reality and our place in it.

18th century polymath Pierre LaPlace, a well-known steward of “the scientific conception of the world,” gives us a remarkably clear and distinct picture of natural mechanism:

We may regard the present state of the universe as the effect of the past and the cause of the future. An intellect which at any given moment knew all of the forces that animate nature and the mutual positions of the beings that compose it, if this intellect were vast enough to submit the data to analysis, could condense into a single formula the movement of the greatest bodies of the universe and that of the lightest atom; for such an intellect nothing could be uncertain and the future just like the past would be present before its eyes (LaPlace, *A Philosophical Essay on Probabilities*).

I will call the classical Enlightenment thesis that natural mechanism is self-evidently true (together with some other theses³⁴) *scientism*.

Second, the classical Enlightenment convinced us that we are all inherently inclined to act first and foremost in our own interests and, often, against the interests of others, either by nature (as in Hobbes) or in our degraded current social condition (as in Rousseau).

Hence we all need to be protected from each other by a social contract that creates a sovereign state authority possessing the power to coerce us in order to obey its commands, whether those commands are moral, that is, consistent with human dignity, or immoral, inconsistent with human dignity.

I will call the classical Enlightenment thesis that we are essentially self-interested and mutually antagonistic, and therefore need the social contract in order to create a sovereign, coercive state authority in order to pacify us, *authoritarianism*.

Clearly, scientism and authoritarianism are fully complementary theses: scientism tells us (e.g., by means of social Darwinism, “selfish gene” theory, or neurobiology) that human beings are, essentially, egoistic and warlike; and authoritarianism tells us that *because* people are essentially egoistic and warlike natural machines, then we can achieve individual or collective satisfaction *only if* governments have the right to impose commands and laws on us, backed up by force or threats of force, whether or not those commands are morally acceptable.

³⁴ See Hanna, *Kant, Nature, and Humanity*, part 1.

In other words, the great Leviathan-machine of state authority is urgently required precisely in order to pacify and regulate all the otherwise fractious and unregulated smaller machines, us.

Looked at this way, *scientistic authoritarianism* is the fundamental existential problem to which so many Boomers, Gen X-ers, Millennials, and Gen Z-ers, are desperately trying to find the solution by means of real-world spirituality—a search for meaning in what so often seems to be a meaningless, cold, and lost world.

In order to solve this existential problem, I believe, real-world spiritual seekers of the post-World War II era need to do two things in order to counteract the two fundamental ideological effects of the classical Enlightenment.

- **First**, we need to stop blindly feeling and thinking that nature is inherently deterministic and mechanical: instead, we must open our minds to the possibility that nature, whether in non-living complex systems or in sentient life and sapient humanity, is shot through with purposive activity.
- **Second**, and correspondingly, we need to stop blindly feeling and thinking that human nature is fundamentally egoistic and warlike, and that in order to create a better world for ourselves, the only possible solution is to become better-oiled robots of authoritarian states, relentlessly making and spending money, relentlessly acquiring material goods, endlessly amusing ourselves, like a sickness unto death.

When the Boomer generation became disaffected with Soviet-style communism, the “New Left” sprang up—it contained an ideology, a history, an orthodoxy, and an “experiment in living” that reflective young people could either buy into or could define themselves against.

But the post-Boomer generations, it seems, do not have a New Left.

The short-lived *Occupy Wall Street* movement, by collectivizing people while also fighting against a social order that has allowed the law to classify corporations as people, came close to releasing, at least in Millennials, their latent active altruism and latent passions for mutual aid and resisting human oppression.

But it also tragically confused these with the simple rejection of *global corporate capitalism*, aka “Wall Street,” while leaving many or even most people’s self-alienating blind faith in scientistic authoritarianism untouched.

What real philosophers, can and should contribute here is the conceptual clarity and sharp focus that non-philosophers so badly need, by looking for ways to convey *the revolt against scientific authoritarianism and the liberation of our better selves*, in terms that all contemporary real-world spiritual seekers can immediately grasp and take to heart.

In short, real philosophers can and should show us how we can systematically replace the mentally enslaving dogmas of the *classical Enlightenment* with the spiritually emancipatory ideas of the *radical enlightenment*.³⁵

This philosophical process of systematic replacement, in turn, *if taken to heart*, amounts to a process of *spiritual conversion*.

One simple way of conveying this heartfelt process of spiritual conversion, I believe, can be found in a synthesis of what these two very different people, [Chris Stedman, the leader of Yale's Humanist Community](#), , and [Chuck D., the leader of Public Enemy and founding member of Prophets of Rage](#), are already pursuing separately: *humanism* and *constructive rage*.

By "humanism" and "constructive rage," then, I mean:

- **first**, "rage against the machine," clearly understood as *rage against scientism*,
- **second**, *rage against authoritarianism*,
- **third**, *rage against human oppression*, and
- **fourth** and finally, *rage for humanity*, the idealistic passion for collective altruism and mutual aid.

And can I provide a more concrete illustration of what I mean by all this?

Yes.

All post-World War II real-world spiritual seekers *could be gathering together right now* to talk about humanism, constructive rage, and how to bring about **Utopia Now**.

³⁵ See note 3 above.

XIII. Free Speech and Emancipatory Speech

Free speech is the liberty of unfettered expression in opinion, thought, and lifestyle, hence the liberty to engage in what John Stuart Mill called “experiments of living,”³⁶ aka *experiments in living*, and above all the liberty to express edgy, challenging beliefs and ideas by means of talk, writing, or any other communicative medium.

Free speech has many important values, including scientific truth, aesthetic beauty, profound artistic or philosophical insight, and authentic self-realization — and their pursuit.

But the highest value of free speech is manifest when we exercise the liberty to engage in peaceful criticism of and protests against violations of respect for human dignity and human oppression, and in peaceful resistance against immoral uses of power.

This morally and politically exemplary kind of free speech is not merely “speaking truth to power,” because, over and above truth per se, it is also *ethically*-driven and peacefully *rebellious*.

It is, therefore, *emancipatory* speech.

There are three serious contemporary problems about free speech.

The **first** serious problem is that by virtue of his Presidential Oath of Office, which he took on 20 January 2017, Donald Trump was required to “preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United States”; and the First Amendment to the US Constitution says that “Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press”; yet Trump tweeted this on 17 February 2017: “The FAKE NEWS media (failing [@nytimes](#), [@NBCNews](#), [@ABC](#), [@CBS](#), [@CNN](#)) is not my enemy, it is the enemy of the American People!”

In other words, Trump spoke out publicly, in his role as President, against the freedom of the press, thereby violating his Oath of Office.

The **second** serious problem is that, following in Trump’s faulty footsteps, others have also begun to restrict and suppress freedom of speech.

In a New York Times article on 29 March 2017, “[Hungary Plan That Could Shutter Soros’s University Is Called ‘Political Vandalism’](#),” Palko Karasz writes this:

³⁶ J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1978), ch. III, p. 54.

A law put forward by the Hungarian government would force a university founded by the Hungarian-American financier and philanthropist [George Soros](#) to shut its doors, the school's top official said on Wednesday.

The move, according to observers, was the latest development in a crackdown on free expression and liberal values under Prime Minister [Viktor Orbán](#), who has embraced President Trump and vociferously denounced Mr. Soros, a billionaire who is a frequent target of attacks by the right-wing news media in both the United States and Europe.

The school, the Central European University, opened in Mr. Soros's native Budapest in 1991, not long after the fall of communism and the start of [Hungary's](#) uneven transition to democracy. The school is known as a center for research in the social sciences, with programs led by internationally prominent educators.

The university has also given a platform to dissident voices, particularly in the period since Mr. Orbán, who helped popularize the term "illiberal democracy," came to power in 2010. Proponents of illiberal democracy place majority rule over civil liberties and minority rights, and they say that financiers like Mr. Soros are part of an elite capitalist class that puts cosmopolitan values over national interests.

This article was followed up on 2 April 2017 by Michael Ignatieff's New York Times Op Ed piece, "[Academic Freedom, Under Threat in Europe.](#)"

And in a Reuters article on 30 March 2017, "[U.N. Experts See 'Alarming' U.S. Trend Against Free Speech, Protest,](#)" Tom Miles writes this:

Nineteen U.S. states have introduced bills that would curb freedom of expression and the right to protest since Donald Trump's election as president, an "alarming and undemocratic" trend, U.N. human rights investigators said on Thursday.

Concerns for free speech in the United States have risen in part because of the Republican Trump's antagonistic relations with prominent U.S. media, which he has branded "the enemy of the American people" as it has reported on policy missteps and dysfunction in his administration.

The push for stricter laws on expression has come as Trump's liberal foes have pursued public protest against his policies on issues ranging from immigration to abortion and climate change.

Maina Kiai and David Kaye, independent U.N. experts on freedom of peaceful assembly and expression respectively, said in a statement that the state bills were incompatible with international human rights law.

"The trend also threatens to jeopardize one of the United States' constitutional pillars: free speech," they said in a statement, calling for action to reverse such legislation.

"From the Black Lives Matter movement, to the environmental and Native American movements in opposition to the Dakota Access oil pipeline, and the Women's Marches, individuals and organizations across (American) society have mobilized in peaceful protests," Kiai and Kaye said.

They said it was their fundamental right to do so, but that bills in Republican-governed states like Indiana, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan and Missouri sought to stop them exercising that right.

But the **third** serious problem is that, clearly, neither Trump nor his followers—not to mention many other people—have the slightest idea about either (i) what adequately justifies free speech or (ii) what the moral and political limits of free speech really are.

In *On Liberty*, chapter II, Mill famously attempts to provide an adequate justification of free speech on Utilitarian grounds.

But Mill's attempt fails, since it is always possible that the greatest happiness of the greatest number of people, relative to that historical context and relative to what we are capable of doing by way of action in that context, will consist, precisely, in our collectively restricting and suppressing free speech.

Mill tries to finesse this problem by re-defining the concept of utility:

I regard utility as the ultimate appeal on all ethical questions; but it must be utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being.³⁷

Nevertheless, Mill's "utility in the largest sense, grounded on the permanent interests of man as a progressive being" is *nothing like* the concept of utility as he defines it in *Utilitarianism*:

The creed which accepts as the foundations of morals "utility" or the "greatest happiness principle" holds that actions are right in proportion as they tend to promote happiness; wrong as they tend to produce the reverse of happiness. By happiness [i.e., utility] is intended pleasure and the absence of pain; by unhappiness [i.e., disutility], pain and the privation of pleasure.... [P]leasure and freedom from pain are the only things desirable as ends; and ... all desirable things ... are desirable either for pleasure inherent in themselves or as means to the promotion of pleasure and the prevention of pain.³⁸

Now it is of course possible to refine the Utilitarian concept of "happiness" or "utility" by defining it in terms of preference-satisfaction, or whatever.

But no matter how the concept of utility is refined, when it is understood in terms of *the greatest happiness principle*, it always picks out a certain class of "felicific" or happiness-making consequences for as many people as possible, relative to that agent-centered historical context.

³⁷ Mill, *On Liberty*, Introduction, p. 10.

³⁸ J.S. Mill, *Utilitarianism* (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 1979), ch. II, p. 7.

That being so, then the Utilitarian concept of utility has nothing inherently to do either with any person's "permanent" —i.e., *innate, universal, unconditional*—interests or with any person's nature as a "progressive being," which is necessarily underdetermined by, although still consistent with, her actual or possible happiness: namely, a person's nature as a *being capable of radical enlightenment in the Kantian sense*.³⁹

Another classical attempt to justify free speech can be discerned in the U.N. experts' reference to "one of the United States' constitutional pillars: free speech," quoted in Miles's Reuters article.

This in turn implies the thesis that the very idea of a modern liberal democracy, as per the USA, requires free speech.

Indeed, this thesis is explicitly stated in the first paragraph of Ignatieff's New York Times Op Ed Piece:

Academic freedom [of speech] is a cornerstone of democracy and a free society. As Montesquieu argued in "The Spirit of the Laws," a text the American founders revered, a free society is defined by robust self-governing institutions that regulate themselves under the law and pursue their objectives without interference from government.

Nevertheless, just as Trump, his supporters, and many other people do not have the slightest idea about either what actually justifies free speech or what the moral and political limits of free speech really are, so too they do not have the slightest idea about what *democracy* really is.

In fact, there are at least *three* different concepts of democracy:

- (i) democracy as the rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote,
- (ii) democracy as the open process of critical discussion and critical examination of opinions and social institutions, and, simultaneously, the unfettered expression of different opinions and lifestyles, and
- (iii) democracy as the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance against human oppression.

Notice, particularly, that the fact or phenomenon of free speech initially shows up under the *second* concept of democracy.

³⁹ See note 3 above.

Notoriously, however, the three concepts of democracy are mutually logically independent, in that they do not necessarily lead to or follow from one another.

It is really possible that what is decreed by the majority of all the people qualified to vote is in fact morally evil and wrong, aka *the problem of the tyranny of the majority*—

and that is exactly what happened [when the Nazis were democratically elected by the German people in 1932–1933](#).

It is also really possible that what is decreed by the majority of the people qualified to vote is a system in which a powerful minority of those people can actually over-ride the majority, aka *the problem of the tyranny of the minority*—

and that is exactly what happens whenever the US Electoral College votes to elect someone, like Trump in 2016, who did not actually win the popular vote.

And finally, it is also really possible that there could be an open process of critical discussion and critical examination of opinions and social institutions, and simultaneously the unfettered expression of different lifestyles and opinions, which nevertheless leads to a situation in which universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance against human oppression, are in fact undermined and weakened, aka *the problem of an unconstrained, value-neutral process*—

and that is exactly what happened in the case of Trump's election, via the multiple-Party system, the Primaries, and psychologically-manipulative uses of [social media](#) and [the internet](#).

Therefore, the only morally and politically acceptable concept of democracy is the *third* concept: democracy as the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance against human oppression.

This in turn entails that free speech, even though it initially shows up under the *second* concept of democracy, is in fact adequately justified *only* under the *third* concept of democracy.

And that in turn entails that the *only* adequate justification of free speech is robustly non-consequentialist and “Left Kantian.”⁴⁰

⁴⁰ On Left Kantianism, see R.Hanna “Kant, Adorno, and Autonomy,” *Critique* (2017), available online at URL = <https://virtualcritique.wordpress.com/2017/07/05/robert-hanna-on-martin-shusters-autonomy-after-auschwitz/>.

Correspondingly, from a robustly non-consequentialist and Left Kantian point of view, the *only* moral and political limits of free speech are:

- (i) incitement to or triggering of violence,
- (ii) slander (i.e., malicious, false or at best half-true, and injurious speech) about individuals, and
- (iii) coercion, i.e., the immoral use of power to force others to obey our will.

In other words, the *only* moral and political limits of free speech are the very things that give free speech its highest value when we use it peacefully to criticize them, protest against them, and resist them, by means of *emancipatory speech*:

- (i) violations of respect for human dignity,
- (ii) human oppression, and
- (iii) immoral uses of power.

This means that merely being *offended* by someone else's speech is *not* a moral or political limitation on their free speech.

Thus *profane or scatological speech, erotic or otherwise sexual speech, shockingly religious or shockingly anti-religious speech, "politically incorrect" speech of any kind, politically subversive speech, and emancipatory speech of all kinds, are all fully morally and politically permissible, provided that this speech does not include incitement to or triggering of violence, slander about individuals, or coercion.*

Moreover, as the highest kind of free speech, emancipatory speech even transcends democracy, if democracy is taken according to its *first* concept, the rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote.

That is because the majority of all people qualified to vote, by means of their government, can collectively rule to restrict and suppress free speech, especially emancipatory speech.

But if emancipatory speech transcends the governmental rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote, then since the concept of the coercive social power of the vote-qualified majority of the people falls directly under the wider concept of the coercive social power of *all or some of the people, including one person only*, which are the limiting cases of "rule by the people," then emancipatory speech also implicitly transcends the

rule of *any* human government, and directly implies philosophical and political anarchism.

Then, when we combine this anarchist conclusion with the thesis that the only adequate justification of free speech is robustly non-consequentialist and Left Kantian, it follows that *emancipatory speech* is *anarcho-speech*, and also that its adequate justification flows naturally from *existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism*.⁴¹

XIV. Everyday Forms of Resistance

Non-Violent, Active, Public Resistance vs. Everyday Forms of Resistance

Because The Age of Trump is going to last *at least 4 years*, and perhaps *8 years*, this means that for the next 4 or 8 years, *things are going to be really, really bad for everyone except Trump, his rich governing elite, the Republican Party, and the alt-right zealots*.

By *oppression*, I mean *social or political actions or institutions that violate respect for human dignity by means of coercion, especially violent coercion*.

For example, *poverty in modern neoliberal capitalist democracies like the USA* is an oppression, precisely because our collective respect for human dignity morally requires that everyone have enough income, and also free access to adequate healthcare, so that they can freely live creative, meaningful, productive, useful lives; yet if people living in poverty or on the verge of poverty try to claim the basic income that is owed them simply by virtue of their human dignity, e.g., by stealing it or by engaging in the gangster-economy or underworld-economy of drugs, etc., then not only are they branded as criminals and thieves, and violently coerced by the police, they also fully expose themselves to gun violence.

So how can we resist the coming oppressions of The Age of Trump?

Now resistance to oppression is either *violent* or *non-violent*.

Famous examples of violent resistance to oppression include the French Revolution starting in 1789, the European revolutions of 1848, the Mexican Revolution starting in 1910, the Russian Revolution of 1917, the Chinese Revolution of 1949, and hundreds of other revolutionary or at least violently resistant insurgencies in the 20th and 21st century.

⁴¹ See note 3 above.

Starting with the French Revolution, it is self-evident that violent resistance inevitably turns into *counter-oppression* and into some or another version of *The Terror*.

Therefore, only *non-violent resistance* is morally acceptable.

Obviously, in the USA at least, *the classic protest strategies of non-violent, active, public resistance* that were deployed during the 1930s IWW (aka “wobblies”) era, the late 1940s/early 50s Hollywood Ten era, the 1960s civil rights/Martin Luther King era, the 1970s Vietnam protest era, the 2010s Occupy Wall Street era, and, most recently, at Standing Rock, *are still available to us*: e.g., unions and strikes, Committees for the First Amendment, boycotts, demonstrations, occupations, sit-ins, walkouts, etc., etc.

But these classic protest strategies, for all their fanfare, noisiness, and media-driven fame or notoriety, are, sadly, usually very fleeting and without any long-term, significant impact — an almost literally Warholian 10 minutes of fame in the newspapers, TV news, online news, or your favorite social media.

Much more seriously, by engaging in classic protests against the coercive, authoritarian powers-that-be — aka *sticking it to The Man* — you yourself might very well end up *being expelled from your high school, college, or university, fired from your job, overtly or subtly blacklisted, imprisoned, or even* — as in the IWW strikes, civil rights protests, Kent State, and at Standing Rock — *seriously injured, tortured, or dead*.

Martin Luther King’s assassination in 1968 is a worldwide emblem of martyrdom resulting from the coercive, authoritarian repression of those who pursue classic protest strategies of non-violent, active, public resistance to oppression.

So if that kind of repression happens to *you*, as it almost always does to at least *some* of the resisters, then in the end what almost always happens is this: you’re expelled, fired, blacklisted, imprisoned, seriously injured, tortured, or dead, yet everyone else eventually goes back to business-as-usual, oppressing-as-usual, and being-oppressed-as-usual, and nothing really changes.

So it’s not at all unreasonable for you *to fear the possibly dire consequences of participating in classic protests whereby you (try to) stick it to The Man — in this case, Trump*.

For these reasons, I think *it’s high time that we radically re-think our strategies of non-violent resistance*, and seriously consider what the Yale political anthropologist James C. Scott, in his brilliant book from the mid-80s, *Weapons of the Weak*, calls *everyday forms of resistance*.

In the context of that book, Scott was talking specifically about Malay agrarian peasants in the 1960s and 70s.

But the social and political phenomenon that Scott was studying generalizes to any modern state, especially including *contemporary neoliberal democratic states like the USA*, and above all, to *The Age of Trump*, in which President Donald Trump, his rich governing elite, the Republican Party, and the alt-right zealots will not only be callously indifferent to, but also cynically exploit and directly benefit from, both individually and as a ruling class, widespread human oppression in the USA.

Now, according to Scott, everyday forms of resistance arise from

the prosaic but constant struggle between [oppressed people] and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them. Most of the forms this struggle takes stop well short of collective outright defiance. Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth. These Brechtian forms of class struggle have certain features in common. They require little or no coordination or planning; they often represent a form of individual self-help; and they typically avoid any direct symbolic confrontation with authority or with elite norms.... Everyday forms of resistance make no headlines. Just as millions of anthozoan polyps create, willy-nilly, a coral reef, so thousands of individual acts of insubordination and evasion create a political or economic barrier reef of their own. There is rarely any dramatic confrontation, any moment that is particularly newsworthy. And whenever, to pursue the simile, the ship of state runs aground on such a reef, attention is typically directed to the shipwreck itself and not to the vast aggregation of petty acts that made it possible.⁴²

Using everyday forms of resistance, we all can be a small but very real part of the giant coral reef on which Trump's coercive, authoritarian, repressive, oppressive ship of state runs aground.

Our Weapons of the Weak

So *how can we* engage in everyday forms of resistance in The Age of Trump?

In the text I quoted above, Scott lists "the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance slander, arson, sabotage, and so forth."

⁴² J.C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 1985), pp. 29 and 36, underlining added.

And a few paragraphs earlier, he also mentions “passive noncompliance, subtle sabotage, evasion, and deception.”⁴³

OK—that provides us with some good input.

So, updating “the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups” to The Age of Trump, here’s what I’m proposing.

- If you’re in poverty or otherwise economically oppressed, then *never* envy billionaires or other rich people, and *never* uncritically believe what they say, because
- *9 times out of ten it’s bullshit, and they’re just trying to screw you.*
- If you have a shit job, then *do it as badly as you possibly can without being specially noticed or reprimanded by your boss(es) or being fired.*
- If you have a shit job, then in your time off, *never* think about your job but instead *always* think about the people you love and like, and about the creative, meaningful, productive, useful activities you *really care about and enjoy doing*, or in any case *you would be doing if you could afford to quit your shit job.*
- Make *edgy, profane fun of Trump at every possible opportunity* in anonymous, pseudonymous, or in any case private, unmonitored, electronic-surveillance-protected (e.g., encrypted) blogging, e-mail, texting, online comments, or social media, because
- if anything really funny ever goes viral, then, given Trump’s titanicly inflated ego and narcissism, *it will at the very least seriously distract him and perhaps even literally drive him to the point of doing something overtly crazy and unconstitutional for which he can actually be impeached.*
- Sign *every single petition on [Change.org](https://www.change.org)* that is directly or indirectly contrary to the moral and social attitudes, moral and social beliefs, political doctrines, and political policies held by Trump, his rich governing, the Republican Party, or the alt-right zealots, because
- *this is just like voting against them roughly 300 times a year.*

⁴³ Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, p. 31.

- But more generally, vote *against* Trump, his rich governing elite, the Republican Party, and the alt-right zealots *in every single ballot initiative and election*.
- *Think lots and lots of angry, radical thoughts against* Trump, his rich governing elite, the Republican Party, and the alt-right zealots, and *for all the parts of Utopia Now*.
- Whenever you're having coffee, drinks, or meals with your good friends or family members, *talk lots* about all of the parts of *Utopia Now*.
- Vote *for* all of the parts of *Utopia Now* *in every single ballot initiative and election*.

XV. Singer & Me: *Utopia Now* versus *One World Now*

The era that followed the Treaty of Westphalia was the high-water mark of the independent sovereign state. Behind the supposed inviolability of state borders, liberal democratic institutions took hold in some countries, while in others, rulers carried out genocide against their own citizens or permitted their more favored citizens to do it to less favored ones. At intervals, bloody wars broke out between the independent states. Though we may look back on that era with some nostalgia, we should not regret its passing. Instead we should be developing the ethical foundations of the coming era of a single world community.⁴⁴

According to the blurb on its copyright page, Peter Singer's *One World Now*, published in late 2016, is "a substantially revised version of *One World*, the first edition of which was published in 2002."

I think that *One World Now*, both the book and the global ethical and political project described in it, are truly excellent and deeply important; yet also, from an existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist point of view, I think that they are ethically, politically, and more generally philosophically, misguided.

Singer's basic eight-part doctrine in *One World Now* is that

(i) we should adopt a *fully global perspective* on ethics and politics in order to address the most pressing problems of contemporary humanity, including *global climate change, poverty and its consequences, the global crisis of displaced people, and genocide* (chs. 1-4),

⁴⁴ P. Singer, *One World Now* (New Haven, CT: Yale Univ. Press, 2016), p. 224, underlining added.

(ii) where the ethical foundations are *specifically act-utilitarian and more generally consequentialist* (esp. pp. 178-191) and

(iii) the meta-ethical foundations are provided by *non-reductive biological ethical naturalism* (esp. pp. 13, and 127-128), and

(iv) the proposed political system *transcends national state sovereignty* (esp. chs. 4-5), in order to

(v) become a *single world community* (ch. 5, and p. 224), by means of

(vi) creating a *single coercive, interventionist, capitalist, neoliberal democratic world-state* (pp. 69-70, and chs. 4-5),

(vii) on a *Federalist model* (p. 225), that

(viii) *politically supervenes on the United Nations*.

More specifically, according to Singer, the United Nations

could remain open to all governments, irrespective of their form of government or observance of human rights, but it could replace the present General Assembly with a World Assembly consisting of delegates allocated to its member states in proportion to its population. The United Nations could then supervise democratic elections, in every member country, to elect this delegation. A country that refused to supervise the election of its delegation would have only one delegate, irrespective of its population. That system would provide experience in democracy for the citizens of most countries but would retain the inclusiveness that is an important feature of the United Nations.⁴⁵

I *fully agree* with (i), (iv), and (v).

And I also *quasi-agree* with (vii) and (viii), in the sense that I do think that Federalism as a political structure, *detached from statism itself, and deployed for specifically existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchist purposes*, can be an effective mechanism for devolving states and state-like institutions towards an ideally post-state world.⁴⁶

But I *sharply disagree* with (ii), (iii), and (vi).

Let me start with (vi).

⁴⁵ Singer, *One World Now*, pp. 171-172.

⁴⁶ See note 3 above.

If existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism is correct, then statism is rationally unjustified and immoral on Kantian ethical grounds, *no matter how a government obtains power*, including neoliberal democratic states.

Therefore, a neoliberal democratic *world-state* is no more rationally justified or morally right than any other kind of state.

The fundamental problem with statism, whether pre-modern tyranny, oligarchy, plutocracy, theocracy, and nation-statism of any sort, including totalitarian or non-totalitarian communism or fascism, or world-statism, lies in its fundamental claim *that we have an obligation to heed and obey the commands of governments, regardless of the moral content of those commands, simply because governments possess the coercive power to compel us to accept these commands*.

The problem is that the fundamental claim of statism *is self-evidently false*.

For, just as in Divine Command Ethics, a command is not rationally justified or morally right just because an all-powerful God commands it, so too in statism, a command is not rationally justified or morally right just because a coercive government commands it.

If a command is rationally unjustified and morally wrong, on independent (e.g., existential Kantian) ethical grounds, *then it is rationally unjustified and morally wrong, no matter what God or the government says*.

Therefore, statism in general is rationally unjustified and immoral, i.e., anarchism is true, and more specifically, *neoliberal democratic world-statism is also rationally unjustified and immoral*.

At one point, Singer even implicitly admits the cogency of this argument, as applied to democracy:

Democracy, in the sense of the rule of the majority, does not guarantee that human rights will be respected.⁴⁷

Here is how the Singerian enthymeme can be filled in.

Since “some degree of democracy,”⁴⁸ i.e., some degree of democracy under *the first concept of democracy* I spelled out in section XII, is also being used by Singer as the

⁴⁷ Singer, *One World Now*, p. 158.

⁴⁸ Singer, *One World Now*, p. 159.

criterion of moral legitimacy for states,⁴⁹ it follows by Singer's own admission that *no state is morally legitimate simply by virtue of its being democratic in the sense of the first concept of democracy, and therefore no state is morally legitimate simply by virtue of its being a state: that is, it follows that anarchism is true.*

Nevertheless, in the very next four sentences, without further argument or sign-posting, Singer also does an amazing philosophical switcheroo:

But a democratic process requires that the policies of government must be publicly defended and justified. They cannot simply be implemented from above. Although some of us may have the capacity to commit terrible crimes, many of us do have a moral sense, that is, a capacity to reflect on the rights and wrongs of what we are doing and what our rulers are doing. That capacity emerges in the public arena.⁵⁰

This truly *is* an amazing philosophical switcheroo, by which I mean that it is *a straight-up equivocation on the terms "democratic" and "democracy."*

Correspondingly, we need to remind ourselves explicitly of the three distinct concepts of democracy I spelled out in section XIII:

- (i) democracy as the rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote,
- (ii) democracy as the open process of critical discussion and critical examination of opinions and social institutions, and, simultaneously, the unfettered expression of different opinions and lifestyles, and
- (iii) democracy as the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance against human oppression.

In Singer's first sentence, "democratic" and "democracy" mean *socio-political facts flowing from the rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote*, i.e, he's talking about the first concept of democracy.

In the next four sentences, however, "democratic" and "democracy" mean *socio-political facts flowing from publicly open procedures and unfettered rational scrutiny, and from our individual and collective moral sense.*

In other words, in *those* four sentences, he's now talking about the *second* and *third* concepts of democracy, and he's also running those two concepts together.

⁴⁹ Singer, *One World Now*, pp. 156-159.

⁵⁰ Singer, *One World Now*, p. 158.

As I pointed out in section XIII, however, the three distinct concepts of democracy are not only mutually *non-synonymous*, but also, more importantly, they are *mutually logically independent of one another*: that is, each one can apply, while the other fails to apply.

Moreover, as I also argued in section XIII, the *only* concept of democracy that is adequately justified morally and politically is the third concept of democracy, which in turn flows smoothly *only* from non-consequentialism and “Left Kantianism,” that is, *only* from radical enlightenment in the Kantian sense, that is, *only* from existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism.

Therefore, Singer’s *actual*, yet rhetorically-hidden, criterion of moral and political legitimacy, covertly entails existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism.⁵¹

This brings me to Singer’s (ii) and (iii), namely his normative ethical commitment to act-utilitarianism and consequentialism, and his meta-ethical commitment to non-reductive biological ethical naturalism.

Obviously, this is not the place to undertake *either* full-dress critiques of act-utilitarianism, consequentialism, or non-reductive ethical naturalism *or* full-dress defenses of existential Kantian ethics, principled non-consequentialism, or ethical anti-naturalism.⁵²

So instead, I will restrict myself here to pointing up some untoward and seemingly knock-down consequences of Singer’s normative ethical and meta-ethical commitments for his global ethics and politics.

Now act-consequentialism in general says that everyone always ought to act in such a way as to bring about good consequences for as many people (or sentient beings) as possible, and act-utilitarianism specifically says that everyone always ought to act in such a way as to bring about pleasant, preference-satisfying, or happiness-producing

⁵¹ To be sure, there are some very tricky historical-philosophical issues here about correctly interpreting Kant’s own official, published political theory in relation to his ethics. But to go into these matters now would only muddy the waters of my argument. I do address them directly in R. Hanna, “Exiting the State and Debunking the State of Nature,” *Con-Textos Kantianos* 5 (2017), also available online at URL = <https://www.academia.edu/28725163/Exiting_the_State_and_Debunking_the_State_of_Nature_March_2017_version_>.

⁵² I’ve worked out full-dress critiques of act-utilitarianism, consequentialism, and non-reductive ethical naturalism, and also full-dress defenses of existential Kantian ethics, principled non-consequentialism, and ethical anti-naturalism, in *Kantian Ethics and Human Existence: A Study in Moral Philosophy*, forthcoming at *Rounded Globe*, URL = <<https://roundedglobe.com/>>.

and/or pain-reducing, preference-frustration-reducing, or unhappiness-reducing consequences for as many people (or sentient beings) as possible.

It is a classical objection to act-consequentialism and act-utilitarianism alike, that acting in strict accordance with them is not only perfectly consistent with, but might even require, a great many human rights violations, right up to genocide and other crimes against humanity.

Therefore, Singer's global ethics and politics, *even under conditions of perfect compliance*, are not only consistent with but might even require a great many human rights violations, right up to genocide and other crimes against humanity.

To put it more bluntly: according to act-consequentialism and act-utilitarianism, if, by "eliminating" *6 million people* (i.e., the number of deaths usually attributed to the Nazi Holocaust, including Jews, Roma, and other kinds of people despised by the Nazis), *very good consequences* could be brought about for, say, *100 million other people*, then we are not only morally permitted, but also morally obligated, *to commit genocide and other crimes against humanity*.

But that is clearly morally unacceptable and also makes a mockery of Singer's explicit strong commitment to preventing genocide and other crimes against humanity in chapter 4.

Finally, what about Singer's non-reductive biological ethical naturalism?

On the face of it, there is something philosophically odd about holding on the one hand, that

[the thesis that] a sizable number of human males have the potential to be perpetrators of genocide is, in view of the evidence from ethnology, anthropology, and history, highly plausible,⁵³

presumably because they/we are determined by evolutionary biology to be that way, while *also* holding, on the other hand, that *many of us* have a "moral sense" that can counteract this bio-determinism.

Now one way to reconcile these apparently misfitting claims is to hold that

⁵³ Singer, *One World Now*, p. 128.

(i) *many or most men* are biologically determined to selfishness, mutual antagonism, and violence—i.e., they are Hobbesian biochemical puppets, and also that

(ii) *a few men and almost all women* are not so determined but are actually capable of “forming mutually beneficial co-operative relationships,”⁵⁴ and also possess a “moral sense” upon which they can act—i.e., they are not Hobbesian biochemical puppets, but in fact morally good rational animals.

But this is *prima facie* absurd, even silly, and in effect reduces to the patently scientific, overtly sexist claim that, by virtue of *their* nasty biochemical constitution, almost all men are wicked, unsociable brutes, whereas by virtue of *their* nice biochemical constitution, almost all women are morally good, or at least kind, sociable creatures.

And that’s not all.

If non-reductive ethical naturalism is true, then the moral sense is *epiphenomenal and has no causal efficacy of its own*.

So even those lucky animals who are capable of acting on the dictates of their moral sense, *are actually naturally determined and not really free*.

Now at this point, we are verging on some very heavy-duty metaphysical issues about *freedom vs. natural determinism, incompatibilism vs. compatibilism, and soft determinism vs. (what I call) natural libertarianism*.

But obviously, as before in the case of fundamental issues in meta-ethics and normative ethical theory, this is not the place to undertake full-dress discussions of fundamental issues in the metaphysics of free will and practical agency.⁵⁵

Nevertheless, it seems very clear that any global ethics and politics grounded on act-consequentialism, act-utilitarianism, non-reductive ethical naturalism, and soft determinism has many *prima facie* serious problems that are *not* encountered by a view, like existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarchism, that is grounded on principled non-consequentialism, existential Kantian ethics, ethical anti-naturalism, and natural libertarianism.

⁵⁴ Singer, *One World Now*, p. 128.

⁵⁵ I’ve worked out a full-dress Natural Libertarian version of a Kantian theory of free will, practical agency, and persons in *Deep Freedom and Real Persons: A Study in Metaphysics*, forthcoming at *Rounded Globe*, URL = < <https://roundedglobe.com/> >.

So I conclude that the *Utopia Now* model of global ethics and politics is all-around ethically, politically, and more generally philosophically *superior* to Singer's model in *One World Now*, while also *sharing* Singer's admirably globalist ethical and political orientation.

XVI. Conclusion: Something for Real Philosophers to Do

In view of the rightness of *Utopia Now*, here is what real (i.e., authentic, serious) philosophers can do—

- **first**, carefully and critically examine every aspect and implication of *Utopia Now*, then collectively elaborate, refine, and reformulate it accordingly,
- **second**, using the collectively elaborated, refined, and reformulated version of *Utopia Now*, then respond rationally and fully to criticisms of it, whether by philosophers or non-philosophers, and
- **third**, become public advocates for *Utopia Now*, by means of hard-copy or online publications, teaching, public lectures or interviews, blogging, tweeting, texting, etc.

That seems like more than enough to keep all of us very busy for many years to come, in addition to pursuing all the other parts of real philosophy as a full-time, lifetime calling.

So life is short, although real philosophy is long, *and utopia can start right now*.