

WTFU: The Manifesto of The Nobodies

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Last night I dreamed that I was being “entertained” at the mansion of some neo-liberal, neo-fascist, technocratic multi-billionaire, who had me forcibly brought there, “His wonders to perform.” It angered me. Correspondingly, it reminded me of an anger-inspired piece I’d originally written in 2023, which I decided to update for 2025: “WTFU: The Manifesto of The Nobodies.”

“WTFU,” pronounced “what-foo,” means *wake the fuck up*:¹ and that’s what I’m urging us all to do in this manifesto. Kantians and others will have already recognized

¹ I know this, because in November 2016, coinciding not altogether accidentally with the election of Donald Trump to his first term as POTUS, I created a now-defunct, and indeed spectacularly unsuccessful, political organization called *The WTFU Party*. Luckily, however, a written record of its year-long existence remains for the benefit of posterity, self-published under the “Mr Nemo” (literally, “Mr Nobody”) pseudonym—appropriately enough, in the context of the present manifesto (Hanna/Nemo, 2017). I thought briefly about

that WTFU is a pithy, pungent contemporary equivalent of Immanuel Kant's famous or notorious answer to the question, "What is Enlightenment?":

Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from their own self-incurred immaturity. Immaturity is the inability to make use of one's own understanding without direction from another. This immaturity is self-incurred when its cause lies not in lack of understanding but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere aude! Have the courage to use your own understanding! is thus the motto of Enlightenment. (Kant, 1784/1996: p. 17, Ak 8: 35, translation modified slightly)

But sadly and even tragically, if you're a card-carrying member of the global juggernaut social institution I call *the mechanistic leviathan*—i.e., if you're a *somebody*—then it's going to be *ideologically impossible* for you to do it on your own. Instead, *only the nobodies* will have the power to do it. Let me explain what I mean.

Rational human animals are, necessarily, *social* animals who create and belong to *social institutions*. Social institutions *shape people's lives*, by means of at least partially causing, determining, forming, and normatively guiding the *essentially embodied minds*, the *caring* (i.e., desires, emotions, and feelings), and the *choices and actions* of those who belong to or are directly affected by those social institutions, for worse or for better (Hanna and Maiese, 2009; Maiese and Hanna, 2019). In turn, by an *ideology*, I mean any individually-held or collectively-held *system of beliefs*, together with what Otto Paans and I call *thought-shapers* (Hanna and Paans, 2021), that configure people's thoughts by means of at least partially causing, determining, forming, and normatively guiding the thinking, imagination, memory, sense perception, and theoretical or practical reasoning of those who belong to or are directly affected by the social institutions that generate and promote those ideologies, again for worse or for better.

As the contemporary world's leading examples of a life-shaping social institution and its thought-shaping ideology, let's consider now the global juggernaut social-institutional and ideological framework consisting of technocratic corporate capitalism, together with its social-institutional matrix, neoliberal democratic or non-democratic coercive authoritarian nation-States, together with what I call *the military-industrial-university-digital complex*,² and *their governing elites*, including, for example, technocratic

resurrecting The WTFU Party after Trump's second election as POTUS in November 2024, but quickly foresaw its inevitable failure in the current Trumpist context.

² This of course riffs on a famous phrase in US President Dwight D. Eisenhower's "Farewell Address" in 1961:

corporate capitalist enterprises like the Tesla Corporation, technocratic corporate capitalist multi-billionaires and/or politicians like Elon Musk and Donald Trump, and also leading professional academic philosophers and scientists at the world's top-ranked universities. For terminological convenience, and borrowing a famously evocative term, together with a famously thought-shaping image, both of them displayed on the title-page of the first edition of Thomas Hobbes's highly influential 1651 treatise, *Leviathan*, pictured immediately below—



(Hobbes, 1651/1968)

—let's call this social-institutional framework, *the mechanistic leviathan*. I think that it's self-evident that the mechanistic leviathan is the contemporary world's leading example

[The] conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence—economic, political, even spiritual—is felt in every city, every statehouse, every office of the federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists, and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals so that security and liberty may prosper together. (See, e.g., Wikipedia, 2025, underlining added)

of what Michelle Maiese and I have called *a destructive, deforming social institution* (Maiese and Hanna, 2019: esp. ch. 3).

Correspondingly, it's morally and sociopolitically very useful to distinguish in a much more finegrained way, with respect to *any* given social institution, between (i) *governors or leaders* of that social institution, (ii) *administrators or organizational bureaucrats* of that social institution, (iii) *officers or operatives* of that social institution, especially *coercive enforcement officers or operatives* of that social institution, (iv) *rank-&-file agential members* of that social institution, (v) *dependent or otherwise passive non-agential members* of that social institution, (vi) *non-agential ideological fellow travellers* of that social institution, (vii) *scapegoats, targets, or victims* of that social institution, and (viii) *covert or overt nonconformists, rebels, or resisters* of that social institution. In other words, categories (i) to (viii) specify *the different basic ways that people can belong to, be members of, or participate in*, social institutions, although in the cases of the last two categories (vii) and (viii), only very unwillingly.

These finegrained distinctions are particularly important when making judgments about degrees of blame and individual or group moral responsibility in cases of destructive, deforming social institutions and their malign or even near-satanically evil effects. For example, consider the classical, notorious case of the Nazis and Nazi Germany from the mid-1930s to 1945. Was everyone who either lived in Nazi Germany at some point between the mid-30s and 1945, or sympathized with them during that period, and didn't at some point during that period either voluntarily exit or flee Nazi Germany or engage in active resistance to the Nazis, equally blameworthy and responsible for the multitude of near-satanically evil actions of the Nazi State over those fifteen years? Obviously not, on pain of falling into a moralistic and indeed morally fanatical conception of blame and moral responsibility. On the contrary, the degrees of blame and moral responsibility for the near-satanically evil actions of the Nazi State over that period run from highest to lowest or even null, according to the categories (i) to (viii) of how people can belong to, be members of, or participate in, social institutions.

This finegrained scheme of categories can then be generalized to destructive, deforming social institutions of *all* kinds. For example, I think it's self-evident that technocratic corporate capitalist multi-billionaires and/or politicians like Musk and Trump, and also leading professional academic philosophers and scientists at the world's top-ranked universities, all belong to the categories (i) to (iii), as they apply to the mechanistic leviathan, of governors or leaders, administrators or organizational bureaucrats, and officers or operatives. Let's call them, together with those who fall under category (iv), i.e., the category of rank-&-file agential members, *card-carrying members* of the mechanistic leviathan. Therefore, Musk, Trump, and the other card-carrying

members of the mechanistic leviathan, whether today or yesteryear, should all be correspondingly *most* blamed and *most* held responsible for the mechanistic leviathan's disastrous and malign effects worldwide—for example, existentially catastrophic climate change (IPCC, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2025)—according to the system of degrees of blame and moral responsibility running from highest to lowest. In other words, to put it more bluntly and pointedly, insofar as they fall under category (i), technocratic corporate capitalist multi-billionaires and/or politicians like Musk and Trump are *the biggest assholes in the world today*, which, in view of all the *other* assholes who are card-carrying members of the mechanistic leviathan, is really saying something.

Now, by *the mechanistic worldview* (see, e.g., Hanna and Paans, 2020; Torday, Miller Jr, and Hanna, 2020; Hanna and Paans, 2020; Hanna, 2024a), I mean the worldview which says that everything in the cosmos, especially including you, I, and the folks next door, not to mention also their dog and cat, is either a formal machine, like a digital computer, or else a natural machine, like a steam engine or an automobile, or both, for example, that iPhone on wheels, the Tesla automobile. Just as Tesla automobiles are powered by “ecologically friendly” electric engines (thereby providing bragging rights for sanctimonious “eco-smart” rich people, looking down on all those “dirty” gas-guzzling “eco-stupid” miscreants in regular cars and trucks) and by onboard digital computers, so too the mechanistic leviathan is powered by the ideology of the mechanistic worldview. Correspondingly, here's a two-part ideological necessity:

1. Necessarily, *the more that* leading professional academic philosophers and scientists at the world's top-ranked universities publicly profess their belief in the mechanistic worldview, *then the more funding, high social status, and other ever-increasing professional academic incentives* they'll get from the mechanistic leviathan.
2. Again necessarily, *the more that* the mechanistic leviathan is ideologically validated by the leading professional academic philosophers and scientists at the world's top-ranked universities who publicly profess belief in the mechanistic worldview, *then the more secure the mechanistic leviathan's sociocultural and sociopolitical control and dominance over everyone else in the world will be.*

Therefore, given the immense “intellectual capital” and sociopolitical power of the mechanistic leviathan and its card-carrying members, then basically it's going to be ideologically impossible for humankind to make any moral or sociopolitical progress, no matter how rationally unjustified and immoral the mechanistic leviathan actually is, and no matter how disastrous and malign its sociocultural and sociopolitical control and dominance over everyone else in the world, actually is.

Is there any way out of this ideological impossibility? I'd been cudgelling my brains about this for years (see, e.g., Hanna/Nemo, 2017), when finally something occurred to me. Let's consider Friedrich Engels's *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (Engels, 1845/1958), a truly brilliant sociopolitical study and a literary masterpiece in the same league and mode as Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (Gaskell, 1848/1997) and Charles Dickens's *Hard Times* (Dickens, 1854/2003), that captures the essence of what I'll call *real socialism*, without either the mechanistic ideology of later Marx's and/or later Engels's dialectical materialism or the coercive authoritarian totalitarianism of Leninist, Trotskyist, or Stalinist communism. For me, real socialism is the same as what I call *broadly Kantian dignitarian morality and sociopolitics*, which says, **first**, that all people are essentially *not* machines, but instead and diametrically on the contrary, all people essentially *are* rational, human, conscious, caring, cognizing, self-conscious, freely agential living organisms, i.e., *human real persons*, who innately possess capacities for free will and practical agency, **second**, that *human dignity* is the absolute, non-denumerably infinite, intrinsic, and objective value of human persons as ends-in-themselves, **third**, that everyone is universally obligated to treat everyone else, and themselves *with sufficient respect for their human dignity*, and **fourth**, that the goal of politics is to reject and devolve all coercive authoritarian social institutions, and then freely to create and sustain all and only constructive, enabling social institutions *that incorporate sufficient respect for human dignity*, and thereby make it really possible *for all people to satisfy their true human needs* (Hanna, 2018a, 2018b, 2018c, 2022: ch. 5; Hanna and Maiese, 2019: esp. chs. 6-7; Hanna, 2023a, 2023b).

Granting me, for the purposes of this essay, that four-part definition of real socialism as broadly Kantian dignitarian morality and sociopolitics, and by analogy with Engels's argument in *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, then I think it's arguable that there's a genuine, independent alternative to the ideological impossibility, that will have its philosophical, scientific, moral, and sociopolitical origin and energy-source in some contemporary 21st century social-institutional analogue of the oppressed industrial proletariat in the mid-to-late 19th century. Let's call this contemporary 21st century social-institutional analogue of the 19th century industrial proletariat, the *nemos*, the *no-names*, or the *nobodies*. Self-evidently, the nobodies typically fall under categories (vii) and (viii) of those who belong to the mechanistic leviathan, namely, either as scapegoats, targets, or victims of the mechanistic leviathan, or as covert or overt nonconformists, rebels, or resisters of the mechanistic leviathan, although they do also sometimes fall under category (v), the dependent or otherwise passive non-agential members, as free-riding or fainéant/foot-dragging mechanistic leviathan-ers who are effectively indistinguishable from nobodies.

Unlike the 19th century industrial proletariat, however, the 21st century social institution of the nobodies isn't constituted by a single socioeconomic class. Moreover, obviously, the specific ways in which the nobodies are being oppressed in the 21st century differ in kind from the specific ways in which the industrial proletariat were oppressed in the 19th century. But in any case, the social institution of the nobodies brings together all those who don't fall under categories (i) to (iv) and (vi) of the different basic ways of belonging to the mechanistic leviathan. So everyone who isn't a major or even a minor big-name, that is, who isn't a somebody, is a nemo, no-name, or nobody. Above all, the nobodies are, as individuals, sociopolitically obscure and weak; hence they're all commonly and derisively branded "losers" by the big-winning but also robotically conformist card-carrying members of the mechanistic leviathan. The social institution of the nobodies comprises people of all ages, genders, ethnicities, races, and socioeconomic classes, including not only (i) the contemporary *lumpen* proletariat—for example, homeless people (including people who live in their RVs or cars), and petty criminals, but also (ii) millennials and Gen Z-ers who don't have or even really want jobs and are living off their parents, often enough in their parents' (or single parent's) basements, and ordinary jobworkers of all kinds below the management levels, usually without college degrees or much higher education—they may have started to pursue some higher education, but then dropped out—as well as (iii) some professional academics who *aren't* leading scholars at the world's top-ranked universities, but perhaps only members of the professional academic precariat, i.e., "adjunct" or "contingent" faculty, or even full-time tenured faculty, but working only at "no-name" colleges or universities, and also (iv) retired people from various socioeconomic classes, mostly living off social security, together—if they're lucky—with some modest personal savings or modest pension income.

So, my world-historical idea is that humankind's only hope for philosophical, scientific, moral, and sociopolitical progress beyond the ideological impossibility that's generated by belonging to the mechanistic leviathan is for the nobodies—who live, move, and have their being outside the mechanistic leviathan—to develop an independent set of genuine alternatives, including their own constructive, enabling, life-shaping social institutions and their own independent thought-shaping counter-ideology (Maiese and Hanna, 2019; Maiese et al., 2023; Hanna and Paans, 2022; Hanna, 2023b).

For example, the mechanistic worldview is categorically opposed by the *neo-organicist worldview*, which says that the cosmos is fundamentally *non-mechanical* and that on the contrary, everything in the cosmos fundamentally *flows, grows, repose, and then repurposes*, and also that all mechanical systems are *nothing but systematic abstractions from organic systems* (Hanna and Paans, 2020; Torday, Miller Jr, and Hanna, 2020; Hanna and Paans, 2020; Hanna, 2024a). And the *neo-Hobbesian morality and politics* of the

mechanistic leviathan—which says that human animals are *essentially egoistic, mutually antagonistic, and decision-theoretic “moist robots”*—is also categorically opposed by real socialism, i.e., by broadly Kantian dignitarian morality and sociopolitics. So too, people’s widespread false belief that digital technology can equal or surpass the capacities and achievements of human intelligence, which I call *the myth of artificial intelligence*, aka the myth of AI, is also categorically opposed by what I call *dignitarian neo-luddism with respect to digital technology* (Hanna, 2024b, 2025).

Therefore, just as the mechanistic leviathan is ideologically fueled and powered by the mechanistic worldview, neo-Hobbesian morality and politics, and the myth of AI, so too, in radical opposition to these three malign ideologies, the nobodies *can be* and *should be* wholeheartedly inspired and motivated by the neo-organicist worldview, by real socialism or broadly Kantian dignitarian morality and sociopolitics, and by dignitarian neo-luddism with respect to digital technology. In these ways, fundamental philosophical, scientific, moral, and sociopolitical progress for humankind will then have its origin and energy-source *outside* categories (i) to (iv) and (vi) of the basic ways of belonging to the mechanistic leviathan—with category (v) as a mixed bag containing free-riding or fainéant/foot-dragging mechanistic leviathan-ers, sometimes effectively indistinguishable from nobodies—and *inside* the social institution of the nobodies.

Individually, we nobodies are obscure, weak, and “losers”; but collectively, we nobodies can change the world for the better and perhaps even the best:

Nobodies of the world unite! You have nothing to lose but your anonymity!

And then, once all of us nobodies have actually united and we’ve successfully discarded our anonymity and acquired our own names, and—for a radical change—the card-carrying members of the mechanistic leviathan *finally* aren’t either abusing us or ignoring us:

WTFU!³

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