

Beyond Democracy, Or, Why Shooting The CEOs of Venal Healthcare Corporations Won't Solve The Healthcare Hell Problem

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(Marcetic, 2024)

Enlightenment is the human being's emergence from his 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)

1. Introduction

As I write this, during the week immediately preceding Christmas 2024, it has become self-evident to any reasonable person that, given the results of the November 2024 Presidential election in USA, a decisive victory by the bigot and demagogue Donald Trump, and given the widespread democratic popularity of extreme right wing and neo-fascist political movements worldwide, *democracy in*

general, and liberal democracy in particular, especially neoliberal democracy, is deeply questionable. As I wrote in “Trump, Truth, and Logic,”

[t]he fundamental flaw in democracy and democratic politics is the malign manipulability of people’s beliefs by means of intentional illogic, misinformation, and sophistry. (Hanna, 2024a: p. 1)

A glaring example of this fundamental flaw is the profoundly wrongheaded idea that given a huge moral and sociopolitical problem like the radically insufficient and unfair healthcare system in the USA, which I call *healthcare hell*, the right response is to shoot the CEO of the venal corporation UnitedHealthcare (NYT, 2024a; Marcetic, 2024). Not only is owning, carrying, or using a gun in and of itself rationally unjustified and immoral because it violates respect for human dignity (Hanna, 2024b). But it’s also patently “gun crazy” to turn a gun-toting assassin into a folk hero (NYT 2024b). So it’s more than merely reasonable to look for post-democratic alternatives right here and now: it is morally and politically imperative to do so.

As I’m understanding it, the thesis of *philosophical anarchism* says that there is *no* adequate rational justification for political authority, the State, or any other State-like institution; and, correspondingly, the thesis of *political anarchism* says that we should *reject* and *exit* the State and other State-like institutions, in order to create and belong to a real-world universal ethical community, in a world in which there are no States or other State-like institutions. More specifically, I think that a highly original, politically radical, and if not revolutionary, then at least robustly State-resistant, State-subversive, and even outright civilly-disobedient, and yet at the same time, fully morally principled version of *anarchism* that I somewhat longwindedly call *dignitarian existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarcho-socialism*, or for short, *dignitarian anarchism*, very naturally flows from Kant’s moral philosophy, his philosophy of religion, and his political anthropology, or, in a word, from existential Kantian moral theology (Wolff, 1970/1998; Hanna, 2018).

Roughly, the idea is that if we take Kant’s famous injunction *to have the moral courage to use your own understanding*, and apply this morally courageous act not merely to “the public use of reason” (that is, to intellectual activity, writing, and speech or self-expression in the broad sense of “free speech”), but also to our individual choices, our individual agency, our shared social life, and especially to what Kant quite misleadingly calls “the private use of reason” (that is, to our social lives as functional role-players, or functionaries, within the State, including, for example, citizenship or public office), then the result is dignitarian existential Kantian cosmopolitan anarcho-socialism. Then and only then, in my opinion, can we understand the last sentence of “What is Enlightenment?” as it

truly ought to be understood, namely as formulating a vision of *radical* Kantian enlightenment:

When nature has unwrapped, from under this hard shell [of the “crooked timber of humanity” (Kant, 1784/2007: p. 113, Ak 8: 23)], the seed for which she cares most tenderly, namely the propensity and calling to *think* freely, the latter gradually works back upon the mentality of the people (which thereby gradually becomes capable of *freedom* in acting) and eventually even upon the principles of *government*, which finds it profitable to itself to treat the human being, *who is now more than a machine*, in keeping with his dignity. (Kant, 1784/1996: p. 22, Ak 8: 41-42)

In this essay, I do three things. **First**, I argue for dignitarian anarchism (section 2). **Second**, I motivate, spell out, and defend a political methodology I call *Quasi-Federalism* and a corresponding procedural political principle I call *Devolutionary and Dynamic Anti-Oppression* (sections 3). **Third**, I argue directly against democracy, and more specifically, against liberal democracy, especially including neoliberal democracy, and then describe how we can replace democratic political theory with a dignitarian anarchist theory of post-democratic social dynamics (section 4). And **fourth**, I apply this dignitarian anarchist theory of post-democratic social dynamics to the problem of healthcare hell (section 5).

2. The Core Argument for Dignitarian Anarchism

Ironically, just as Kant himself defended the death penalty, so too, he defended Statism in his political philosophy, as formulated in the “Doctrine of Right,” the first part of the *Metaphysics of Morals*. But just as he was simply mistaken about the death penalty, *so too Kant’s own Statist, neo-Hobbesian liberal political philosophy was simply mistaken* (for more on this point, see also Hanna, 2017). On the contrary, dignitarian anarchism is true on dignitarian *moral and sociopolitical* grounds alone (Hanna, 2023a, 2023b).

1. Dignitarian anarchism says that there is no adequate rational justification for political authority, the State, or any other State-like institution, and that we should reject and exit the State and other State-like institutions, in order to create and belong to a real-world, worldwide ethical community, aka *humanity*, in a world without any states or state-like institutions.
2. All human persons, aka *people*, are (i) 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, aka *kindness*, as well as their own well-being and happiness.

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

4. By *political authority* I mean the existence of a special group of people, aka *government*, with the power to coerce, and the right to command other people and to coerce them to obey those commands as a duty, no matter what the moral content of these commands might be.

5. 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 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).

6. By *the State or State-like institution* I mean any social organization that not only claims political authority, but also actually possesses the power to coerce, in order to secure and sustain this authority.

7. And by *the problem of political authority* I mean: "Is there an adequate rational justification for the existence of the State or any other State-like institution?"

8. This problem applies directly to *all* kinds of political authority, States, and State-like institutions, from pharaohs, pre-Socratic tyrants, Athenian military dictatorships, caesars, kings, popes, and emperors, to constitutional monarchies, communist states, fascist states, religious fundamentalist states, capitalist liberal democracies, provincial or city governments, military organizations, business corporations, and universities—basically, any institution with its own army, navy, air-force, police-force, or armed security guards.

9. If it is rationally unjustified and immoral for *ordinary people* to undermine or violate the dignity of other people by commanding them and coercing them to obey those commands as a duty, then it must also be rationally unjustified and immoral for *governments* to undermine or violate the dignity of people by commanding them and coercing them to obey those commands as a duty, no matter how those governments got into power.

10. But all governments claim political authority in precisely this sense.

11. Therefore, there is no adequate rational justification for political authority, States, or other State-like institutions, and dignitarian anarchism is true, on dignitarian moral and sociopolitical grounds alone.

To make this core argument even clearer, here is the same argument, by way of a fundamental analogy.

1. It's been well known ever since Plato's Socratic dialogue, the *Euthyphro*, that what is called *Divine Command Ethics* is rationally unacceptable.

2. Divine Command Ethics says that God's commands are good and right, just because God says that they are good and right, and God has the divine power to impose these commands on people, no matter what the moral content of these commands might be.

3. But this means that God can command *anything*, including commands that undermine or violate of the dignity of people, which is rationally unjustified and immoral.

4. So Divine Command Ethics is rationally unacceptable.

5. Correspondingly, *Statist Command Ethics* says that governments' commands are good and right, just because governments say that they are good and right, and they have the coercive power to impose these commands on people, no matter what the moral content of these commands might be.

6. In other words, *governments* play exactly the same functional and logical role in Statist Command Ethics as *God* does in Divine Command Ethics.

7. So, just as in Divine Command Ethics, God can command *anything*, including commands that undermine or violate of the dignity of people, so too in Statist Command Ethics, governments can command *anything*, including commands that undermine or violate the dignity of people.

8. Therefore, Statist Command Ethics is just as rationally unacceptable as Divine Command Ethics, and again, dignitarian anarchism is true on dignitarian moral and sociopolitical grounds alone.

This conclusion might still seem incredible to you. But please consider this.

Since the time of the pharaohs and pre-Socratic tyrants, humanly-created States and other State-like institutions have explicitly claimed to possess political authority, and then have proceeded to use the power to coerce, especially the power of primary coercion, frequently of the most awful, cruel, and monstrous kinds, thereby repressing, detaining, imprisoning, enslaving, torturing, starving,

maiming, or killing literally billions of people, in order to secure their acceptance of these authoritarian claims. Even allowing for all the other moral and natural evils that afflict humankind, it seems very likely that there has never been a single greater cause of evil, misery, suffering, and death in the history of the world than the coercive force of States and other State-like institutions.

Now imagine a world *without* States or other State-like institutions, in which all the members of humanity freely form various dignity-respecting sub-communities built on kindness, mutual aid, personal enlightenment and rational enlightenment, and the pursuit of authentic happiness, and then freely link them all together in a worldwide network of partially overlapping sub-communities, aka *the worldwide human web*, aka *the Kosmopolis*. Isn't that an infinitely better world than the world of States? To make this moral intuition fully vivid, simply listen (again) to John Lennon's "Imagine."

Jesus preached the ethical gospel of universal human love. Yet he also reportedly said:

Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's. (Matthew 22: 20-22, *King James Bible*)

By a crucially important contrast, dignitarian anarchism says:

If Caesar and God can command things that undermine or violate our moral obligation to treat everyone everywhere with sufficient respect for their human dignity, then why should we render *anything* unto them? *Render unto humanity the things that respect human dignity.*

But is it not obvious that *this* is the ethical gospel of universal human love? Like Kant, who was simply mistaken about the death penalty and also about Statism, Jesus too was simply mistaken about rendering unto Caesar and God. But that is also irrelevant to my argument. Leaving aside Kant's mistakes about the death penalty and Statism, and leaving aside Jesus's mistakes about rendering unto Caesar and God, *just like Kant himself—and John Lennon too, for that matter—Jesus was implicitly a dignitarian anarchist*. I conclude that we should reject and exit the State and other State-like institutions, in order to create and belong to a real-world, worldwide ethical community, humanity, in a world without any States or State-like institutions.

3. Anti-Oppression, Quasi-Federalism, and How to Construct "The World As It Could Be Made."

In part 2 of his little-known book, *Proposed Roads to Freedom* (Russell, 1918), Bertrand Russell discusses many concrete social and political issues, and proposes a number of concrete solutions, in line with his favored doctrine, "Guild

Socialism,” which is a federalist development of Kropotkin-style social anarchism. And in the last chapter, “The World As It Could Be Made,” he quite lyrically describes a normative vision of a categorically politically better world: as it were, John Lennon’s “Imagine” for 1918. In fact, it turns out that Lennon’s political views were actually strongly influenced by Russell’s views, via Paul McCartney (Michaels, 2008).

One thing that’s very striking about Russell’s arguments is his consistent avoidance of a priori reasoning, abstraction, and even minimal formalization. It is as if, in this book, he found great intellectual relief from the relentless abstractions and formal-logical reasoning patterns of *Principles of Mathematics* (1903), *Principia Mathematica* (1910), *Problems of Philosophy* (1912), the aborted *Theory of Knowledge* project (1913), *Our Knowledge of the External World* (1914), and even *An Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy* (1918), written in Brixton Prison, about which he later wrote in his *Autobiography*:

I found prison in many ways quite agreeable. I had no engagements, no difficult decisions to make, no fear of callers, no interruptions to my work. I read enormously; I wrote a book, “Introduction to Mathematical Philosophy”... and began the work for “Analysis of Mind.” (Russell, 1967-1969/1975: p. 256)

As a consequence, however, Russell’s political solutions in *Proposed Roads to Freedom* are *too* concrete—too much embedded in a certain historical-social context: Europe and England, circa 1918, at the end of The Great War. This fact makes Russell’s excellent ideas less directly applicable to the USA and the rest of the world, circa 2024, not to mention the future world, than they should be.

But here I can help Russell out with *some procedural principles of Kantian ethical anarchism*, as follows.

First, by an *institutional structure*, I mean

an ordered set of moral principles shared in common by a group of people, with a collective aim, guiding their mutual interactions.

Or, in other words, an institutional structure is *a social network of moral principles designed to further some collective aim*.

Second, by *oppression*, I mean the following:

A person or a group of people are oppressed if and only if their actual condition falls below what would be minimally sufficient to meet the moral demands of respect for their human dignity.

Third, by *oppression with respect to X*, I mean the following:

A person or group of people are oppressed with respect to X if and only if their actual condition falls below what would be minimally sufficient to meet the moral demands of respect for their human dignity with respect to X.

So, for example, young black men in the USA in 2024 have been *oppressed with respect to treatment by the police*: in the USA in 2024, the police have been and are treating young black men violently in ways that fall substantially below what would be minimally sufficient to meet the moral demands for respect for their human dignity with respect to police treatment.

Fourth, *Federalism* says:

States should introduce a series of mediating institutional structures between government and the individual, each of which and all of which have specifically ethical aims and rational justifications.

Fifth, *Quasi-Federalism* says:

Humankind should introduce a series of mediating institutional structures between government and the individual, each of which and all of which have specifically dignitarian anarchist aims and rational justifications.

Sixth, *Quasi-Federalism* operates according to a recursive¹ procedural principle that I call the principle of *Devolutionary and Dynamic Anti-Oppression*, aka DDAO:

Suppose that a State or Statelike institutional structure *SS* exists. Then *SS* should be replaced by a series of new institutional structures, each one of which simultaneously represents a definite step in the direction of the devolutionary deconstruction of *SS* and also a definite step in the direction of the dynamic construction of a non-oppressive condition, in a post-State world, for all the people affected by *SS*.

According to DDAO, in a normative sense, each new institutional structure simultaneously represents a definite “left to right” *decrease* in Statist coercion and also a definite “right to left” *increase* in individual and collective non-oppression. So each new structure is dual and *enantiomorphic* (i.e., mirror-reflected) in a categorically normative sense. More generally, we should always be looking to

¹ A recursive principle is a principle that, starting with a “ground level” or “zero” case as input, is successively applied to the result of each prior application until a certain desired output is constructed. So, e.g., the arithmetic principle that determines counting to ten in the natural number series is a recursive principle.

design and create new institutional structures that have this normatively dual, enantiomorphic character, i.e., they satisfy DDAO.

Here's a brief example of how DDAO can be applied.

For each armed police force in the USA, we create a new devolutionary/dynamic *Police Force Regime 1* in which no police officers normally carry guns or ever use other violent solutions to policing problems (left to right devolution of the State) and all police officers normally engage in community policing and consistently practice non-violent solutions to policing problems, although they still carry nightsticks and have some training in the martial arts (right to left construction of a non-oppressive condition for young black men, and others, in a post-State world). Then, as soon as it can be implemented, for each armed police force in the USA, starting with *Police Force Regime 1*, we create should be a new devolutionary/dynamic *Police Force Regime 2* in which no police officers normally carry nightsticks or ever use other violent solutions to policing problems (left to right devolution of the State) and all police officers normally engage in community policing and consistently practice non-violent solutions to policing problems, although they still have some training in the martial arts (right to left construction of a non-oppressive condition for young black men, and others, in a post-State world). And so-on, until *Police Regime N* is reached, in which police treatment of young black men in the USA fully meets or exceeds the minimal demands of respect for their human dignity, in a post-State world (see also Vitale, 2017).

Here are two crucial further points about real-world applications of DDAO.

First, in applying DDAO, we are always drawing directly on *fully embedded social know-how* about the actual operations of the relevant institutional structures,² and thereby also always using phenomenologically self-evident moral intuition to guide us in knowing how each new institutional structure simultaneously represents a definite *decrease* in Statist coercion and also a definite *increase* in individual and collective non-oppression.

Second, obviously, no change in institutional structures occurs independently of simultaneous changes in *other* institutional structures, since there are multiple dependency relations not only *within* institutional structures but also *between* and *among* institutional structures. So, for example, in the police oppression example, obviously, in order to make each recursive change in the institutional structures constituting police forces, we would also simultaneously have to make corresponding, relevant changes in other social-institutional

² This is also what James C. Scott, borrowing the Greek term for Odysseus's non-discursive social and political insight in the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*, calls "metis" in *Seeing Like a State* (Scott, 1998).

structures, for example, in the local government administration regimes that control police forces.

4. Post-Democratic Social Dynamics: DDAO, *Concordar*, and *Carnival*

In section 3, I defined “institutions” in terms of shared ordered sets of ethical principles and collective aims. Now by a “collective aim” I mean *an essentially embodied, action-oriented, desire-based emotive shared set of basic ideals and values* (Hanna and Maiese, 2009: ch. 5), or what the Brazilians call *concordar*: a shared heart. It is also what Samuel Alexander calls “sociality” and what Jan Slaby calls “relational affect” (see Alexander, 1920: vol. 2, pp. 31-37; and Slaby, 2016). The basic idea is that once we realize that from the standpoint of the philosophy of mind, emotions are *neither* merely “in the head” *nor* inherently passive, but on the contrary are essentially embodied, first-person experiences of *desiderative caring*, directly expressed as dispositions to move one’s body in various ways, then we can also clearly see that all emotions are immediately manifest in the world and fully shareable with others.

Concordar is vividly obvious in the deeply important yet still everyday human phenomena of sexuality and love, religious rituals, revivalist meetings, team sports, rock music concerts, and all kinds of dancing, for example, hip-hop dancing. In all of these group activities, *concordar* exists not only among and between *active participants or performers*, but also among and between *audiences or viewers*, and also among and between *active participants or performers and audiences or viewers*. These phenomena clearly show that *concordar* can be the source of tremendous personal and social liberation, intense bodily and spiritual enjoyment, and morally authentic happiness—as well, of course, as considerable amounts of shallow or morally trivial happiness, “just having fun.” *Concordar* is equally vividly obvious, however, in the bonding rituals of business corporations, cults, and terrorist organizations, in angry political demonstrations and protests, in jingoistic political spectacles, in military rituals and spectacles, in mob hysteria, and in mob violence. The latter phenomena all clearly show that *concordar* can also be the source of tremendous psychological and social oppression, and evil.

What I want to concentrate on is *concordar* with respect to *the Highest Good*, aka “the sole and complete good,” in the dignitarian sense. As I show in *Kant, Agnosticism, and Anarchism*, this is essentially bound up with radically agnostic religious experience (Hanna, 2018: part 1). The dual conception of social dynamics according to DDOA and *concordar* enables us to contrast dignitarian

anarchism sharply with democracy in general and with liberal democracy in particular, especially including neoliberal democracy.

Very confusingly for most people, especially including political scientists, who can't even come to an agreement on the definition of "democracy" (Cummings, 2017), there are at least *three* substantively different concepts of democracy at play in contemporary politics, not only in the USA but also worldwide: (i) democracy as the rule of the majority of all the people qualified to vote, who then hand over the control of coercive power to an elected or appointed minority, aka *majoritarian-representative democracy*, (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, aka *libertarian democracy*, and (iii) democracy as the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance to human oppression, aka *ethical-emancipatory democracy* (Hanna, 2024c). Notoriously, however, the three concepts of democracy are *mutually logically independent*, in that they do not necessarily lead to or follow from one another.

First, 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 elected by a majority of German voters in 1932–1933 (Wikipedia, 2024a).

Second, it is also really possible that what is decreed by the majority of the people qualified to vote is a system in which an elected or appointed powerful minority of those people can actually override 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 also whenever the Supreme Court votes either to sustain or strike down laws in decisions that don't reflect what the majority of Americans actually believe or want.

Third 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 in 2016, via the multiple-Party system, the Primaries, and psychologically-manipulative uses of social media and the internet (see, e.g., Schreckinger, 2016; Benkler et al., 2017).

In my opinion, the only independently morally and politically acceptable concept of democracy is the *third* concept, *ethical-emancipatory democracy*: democracy as the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance to human oppression. Nevertheless, *if we conjoined the second and third concepts*, i.e., an open process of critical discussion and critical examination of opinions and social institutions, and the unfettered expression of different opinions and lifestyles, all guided by and for the sake of the unwavering commitments to universal respect for human dignity and autonomy, and universal resistance to human oppression, then we could also derive a compound morally and politically acceptable concept of democracy that is driven by the demands of the third concept.

Now, the USA claims that it's an ethical-emancipatory democracy. Nevertheless, the existence and Constitutional entrenchment of the social institutions of the Electoral College and the Supreme Court entail that it actually *isn't*. Or, more to the point, majoritarian-representational democracy and libertarian democracy, as actually practiced in the USA, are rationally unjustified and immoral.

On the contrary, therefore, politics is all about respect for human dignity, ending/reducing human oppression, mutual aid/kindness, and radical enlightenment, universally and worldwide. So coercive power vested in the people is no better than any other kind of Statist coercive power. Moreover, and more specifically, liberal democracy essentially requires *conformity, consensus*, and, short of the ideal of *total consensus* (sometimes called "direct democracy"), majority rule and voting. In direct democracy, the minority can determine the governmental control of coercive power. But *the tyranny of the minority* is no better than *the tyranny of the majority*: both are tyranny, hence both are rationally unjustified and immoral. *So any anarchism that is based on direct democracy is merely another form of Statism.*

In dignitarian anarchism, however, based as it is on DDAO and *concordar*, we share collective basic ideals and values, and yet we also fully allow for a multiplicity of human differences in bodily coloration, configuration, and natural operation, language, and ethnicity, and for a multiplicity of spontaneous variations of opinion and lifestyle under those basic ideals and values, that I call *creative self-expression*. Hence dignitarian anarchism is directly opposed to the conformity, consensus, majority rule, and voting that are essentially characteristic of liberal democracy. All these treat people like mere factory products or machines; by means of these, they rule and apply coercive power by treating people as sheer aggregates of human bodies more or less accidentally collected inside bordered sub-regions of the Earth—where the borders are sometimes also walls with barbed wire on top, and passage across which is

highly restricted, and enforced by well-armed, trigger-happy guards—and by monitoring and surveillance systems based on the omnipresence of CCTVs and sheer numbering (e.g., social security numbers in the USA, or CPF numbers and Federal Police identity cards in Brazil), alone; and they suppress or even kill creative self-expression.

In post-democratic Kantian dignitarian anarchist social dynamics, the (neo)liberal democratic mechanisms of conformity, consensus, majority rule, and voting will all be *gradually devolved out of existence* and simultaneously dynamically replaced by an indefinitely large number of partially overlapping, shared human *sentimental journeys*, that is, by an indefinitely large number of partially overlapping, shared human non-oppressive, freely-chosen, yet collective DDAO-guided processes of forming and acting on the basis of *concordar*. So, given DDAO and *concordar*, since we share collective basic ideals and values in our collective creation of a better world, and since we yet also fully allow for a multiplicity of human differences in bodily coloration, configuration, and natural operation, language, and ethnicity, as well as a multiplicity of spontaneous variations of opinion and life style under those aims, creative self-expression, then this sentimental journey will be like free-style collective dancing combined with wholehearted respect for all humanity: that is, it will be like Brazilian *carnival* at its very best.

By sharp contrast, as a direct consequence of the (neo)liberal democratic obsession with conformity, consensus, majority rule, and voting, the multiplicity of natural human differences in bodily coloration, configuration, and natural operation, language, and ethnicity, *are feared and hated* (racial, linguistic, ethnic, and sexual discrimination); and spontaneous variations of opinion and lifestyle *are taken to be offensive and legally punished* (intolerance). In (neo)liberal democracies everywhere, but paradigmatically in the USA, people fear and hate the racial, linguistic, ethnic, and sexual Other; they do not tolerate the multiplicity of creative self-expression; they do not have *concordar*; and they do not freestyle dance together in the Kantian ethical anarchist sense. More generally, they oppress people in the name of (neo)liberal democracy: they demand consensus and conformity while paying sanctimonious lip-service to the First Amendment; they march up and down to the jingoistic, martial, patriotic music of John Philip Sousa; they wave flags; they put their right hands over the mechanical blood-pumps where their hearts should be; they take offense at anything they cannot turn into a mirror image of themselves; and they summarily publicly shame or otherwise punish anyone who dances to the beat of a different drummer, who breaks rank, or who steps out of line. But *taking offense* is at best morally trivial, and if it is substituted for moral principles grounded on respect for universal human dignity, then it is positively evil, dignity-undermining, and oppressive. Offense-based/comfort-level-based so-called “morality” is nothing but *coercive*

moralism that is either *the tyranny of the majority* or *the tyranny of the minority*, and both are equally tyranny. What matters above all, morally and politically, is ending/reducing oppression, *not* guaranteeing that *either* the majority *or* the minority obsessively impose their personal comfort-levels on others, coercively backed up by The Law of the Land.

So, sharply contrary to (neo)liberal democracy, according to dignitarian anarchism, tolerance is fully allowing for the multiplicity of spontaneous variations of creative self-expression under DDAO and *concordar*; and above all, it is never confusing what is merely *offensive*, or *comfort-level-disrupting*, with *oppression*. Hence (neo)liberal democratic so-called “anti-discrimination” and “tolerance,” under the aura-surrounded, taboo-protected labels of equality and diversity, are nothing but inauthentic, phony, or bullshit so-called “anti-discrimination” and so-called “tolerance,” both of them rationally unjustified and immoral. And this is precisely because in the paradigmatically (neo)liberal-democratic USA, “equality” and “diversity” actually function as weapons for oppressing people—for example, people living in grinding poverty and without adequate healthcare (see section 5 below)—and for violating the dignity of anyone who has a bodily coloration, configuration, or natural operation, language, ethnicity, opinion, or lifestyle that fails to conform to the rule of law imposed by the tyranny of the majority or the tyranny of the minority.

5. Healthcare Hell and Universal Free Healthcare

In a Wiki-nutshell, this is what I call *healthcare hell in the USA*:

The US life expectancy in 2010 was 78.6 years at birth, up from 75.2 years in 1990; this ranks 42nd among 224 nations, and 22nd out of the 35 OECD countries, down from 20th in 1990. In 2021, US life expectancy fell to 76.4 years, the shortest in roughly two decades. Drivers for this drop in life expectancy include accidents, drug overdoses, heart and liver disease, suicides and the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2019, the under-five child mortality rate was 6.5 deaths per 1000 live births, placing the US 33rd of 37 OECD countries.

While not as high in 2015 (14) as in 2013 (18.5), maternal deaths related to childbirth have shown recent increases; in 1987, the mortality ratio was 7.2 per 100,000. As of 2015, the US rate is double the maternal mortality rate in Belgium or Canada, and more than triple the rate in Finland as well as several other Western European countries. In 2019, Black maternal health advocate and Parents writer Christine Michel Carter interviewed Vice President Kamala Harris. As a senator, in 2019 Harris reintroduced the Maternal Care Access and Reducing Emergencies (CARE) Act which aimed to address the maternal mortality disparity faced by women of color by training providers on recognizing implicit racial bias and its impact on care. Harris stated:

We need to speak the uncomfortable truth that women—and especially Black women—are too often not listened to or taken seriously by the health care system, and therefore they are denied the dignity that they deserve. And we need to speak this truth because today, the United States is 1 of only 13 countries in the world where the rate of maternal mortality is worse than it was 25 years ago. That risk is even higher for Black women, who are three to four times more likely than white women to die from pregnancy-related causes. These numbers are simply outrageous.

Life expectancy at birth for a child born in the US in 2015 is 81.2 (females) or 76.3 (males) years. According to the WHO, life expectancy in the US is 31st in the world (out of 183 countries) as of 2015. The US's average life expectancy (both sexes) is just over 79. Japan ranks first with an average life expectancy of nearly 84 years. The US ranks lower (36th) when considering health-adjusted life expectancy (HALE) at just over 69 years. Another source, the Central Intelligence Agency, indicates life expectancy at birth in the US is 79.8, ranking it 42nd in the world. Monaco is first on this list of 224, with an average life expectancy of 89.5.

A 2013 National Research Council study stated that, when considered as one of 17 high-income countries, the US 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 US at the bottom of the list for life expectancy in high-income countries. Females born in the US in 2015 have a life expectancy of 81.6 years, and males 76.9 years; more than three years less and as much as over five years less than people born in Switzerland (85.3 F, 81.3 M) or Japan (86.8 F, 80.5 M) in 2015. (Wikipedia, 2024b)

In view of the self-evidently 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 too, but is also infinitely superior to the healthcare hell that exists in the USA, then I ask you: how did this happen? Well, consider this:

In the United States, healthcare is largely provided by private sector healthcare facilities, and paid for by a combination of public programs, private insurance, and out-of-pocket payments. The U.S. is the only developed country without a system of universal healthcare, and a significant proportion of its population lacks health insurance. The United States spends more on healthcare than any other country, both in absolute terms and as a percentage of GDP; however, this expenditure does not necessarily translate into better overall health outcomes compared to other developed nations.[6] Coverage varies widely across the population, with certain groups, such as the elderly and low-income individuals, receiving more comprehensive care through government programs such as Medicaid and Medicare. (Wikipedia, 2024b)

So the self-evidently obvious answer to that question is this: healthcare hell in the USA is the direct result of *corporate capitalism in the USA*, in the form of privately-

owned healthcare providers, privately owned healthcare insurance companies like UnitedHealthcare, and rich doctors.

What is to be done? Elsewhere I have argued that we should demand, wholeheartedly work towards, and ultimately implement, as the first three parts of a six-part realistic, collective altruist project in post-capitalist neo-utopian global ethics and politics, from dignitarian anarchist point of view (Hanna, 2018: part 3, 2023b), these three radical proposals—

1. *Truly Generous Universal Basic Income* (TGUBI):

Anyone 21 years of age or over and living permanently in the US, who has a personal yearly income of \$80,000 USD or less, and who is mentally and physically capable of requesting their UBI, would receive \$40,000 USD per year, with no strings attached.

2. *A 15-Hour Workweek for Universal Basic Jobs* (FHW-for-UBJs):

Anyone 18 years of age or older who is living permanently in the US, 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 \$40,000.00 USD, for *no more than* fifteen hours of work per week.

3. *Universal Free Higher Education Without Commodification* (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.

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

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

And here are two individually excellent and conjointly decisive reasons for implementing UFH, together with TGUBI, FHW-for-UBJs, *and* HEWC.

First, although it is true that, under the system of TGUBI together with FHW-for-UBJs and HEWC, not only would no one ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again, forever; not only would no one who is mentally and physically capable of working ever have to be either unemployed or do a shit job instead of pursuing their lifework, forever; not only would no one who has

completed a high school education ever be denied access to higher education again, forever; nevertheless, *if UFH were not also simultaneously implemented*, then most people living permanently in the USA would *still* suffer the slings and arrows of healthcare hell.

Second, therefore, under the collective system of TGUBI, FHW-for-UBJs, HEWC, *and* UFH, not only would no one ever suffer from poverty or economic oppression again, forever; not only would no one who is mentally and physically capable of working ever have to be either unemployed or do a shit job instead of pursuing their lifework, forever; not only would no one who has completed a high school education be denied access to higher education again, forever; but also *healthcare hell in the USA would be ended, forever*.

6. Conclusion

Therefore, for all these reasons, *we must reject and exit democracy in general and liberal democracy in particular, especially neoliberal democracy*, and create “the world as it could be made” for ourselves, by means of DDOA and dignitarian anarchism.³

³ I’m grateful to Elizabeth Hanna for encouraging me to write about the healthcare hell problem in the contemporary context of Trump’s recent re-election as President of the USA in early November together with the assassination of UnitedHealthcare’s CEO in early December.

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