

YE ARE MANY, THEY ARE FEW!

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Introduction¹

*Rise, like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you:
Ye are many, they are few!*

Percy Bysshe Shelley wrote his poem *The Masque of Anarchy*, from which the above quotation is taken, in response to the Peterloo Massacre, which took place at St. Peter's field, Manchester on the 16th of August 1819. Cavalry soldiers of the government charged a crowd of 60,000 citizens who were peacefully assembled to ask for better representation in Parliament. They were suffering from unemployment and from famine produced by the Corn Laws. The cavalry slashed down hundreds of the protesters with their sabres, including women and children. Shelley's poem advocating non-violent resistance to tyranny was an inspiration to Thoreau, Tolstoy and Gandhi.

How do elites keep their monopoly on wealth and power?

This book tries to address the question of how oligarchs maintain their grasp on an excessive share of wealth and power when, as Shelley points out, the have-nots are many, while the powerholders are few. In trying to answer this question, it is interesting to look at the lives of some of the heroic figures who sympathized with the suffering of the poor and who have tried to make the world more equal. Out of the many possible choices, I have focused on Voltaire, Rousseau, John Locke, Joseph Johnson, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, the Marquis de Condorcet, William Blake, Thomas Paine, Percy Bysshe Shelley, Robert Owen, Henry David Thoreau, Count Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

¹This book makes use of my previously published book chapters and articles dealing with the problem of excessive economic inequality, but a considerable amount of new material has been added

Why did British aristocrats support Hitler?

One of the chapters in this book examines the question of why so many members of the British “establishment” supported Hitler’s rise to power. The evidence presented in the chapter points to the conclusion that they did so out of fear that the Russian revolution, or a similar socialist movement, would be repeated in the west, and that it would lead to a more equal society, thus robbing them of their power and wealth.

Racism

The recent worldwide protests following the murder of George Floyd have focused attention on the injustice of racism. Chapter 11 examines some horrifying historical examples.

Secrecy versus democracy

Can a government, many of whose operations are secret, be a democracy? Obviously this is impossible.

In a democracy, the power of judging and controlling governmental policy is supposed to be in the hands of the people. It is completely clear that if the people do not know what their government is doing, then they cannot judge or control governmental policy, and democracy has been abolished.

The recent extradition trial of Julian Assange for publishing government secrets has focused attention on this question. It is not only the freedom of Assange that is at stake, but the freedom of all journalists. These questions are discussed in Chapter 12 of the book.

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Chapter 1

IDEALS OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

1.1 The Age of Reason

Political philosophy of the Enlightenment

The 16th, 17th and 18th centuries have been called the “Age of Discovery”, and the “Age of Reason”, but they might equally well be called the “Age of Observation”. On every side, new worlds were opening up to the human mind. The great voyages of discovery had revealed new continents, whose peoples demonstrated alternative ways of life. The telescopic exploration of the heavens revealed enormous depths of space, containing myriads of previously unknown stars; and explorations with the microscope revealed a new and marvelously intricate world of the infinitesimally small.

In the science of this period, the emphasis was on careful observation. This same emphasis on observation can be seen in the Dutch and English painters of the period. The great Dutch masters, such as Jan Vermeer (1632-1675), Frans Hals (1580-1666), Pieter de Hooch (1629-1678) and Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), achieved a careful realism in their paintings and drawings which was the artistic counterpart of the observations of the pioneers of microscopy, Anton van Leeuwenhoek and Robert Hooke. These artists were supported by the patronage of the middle class, which had become prominent and powerful both in England and in the Netherlands because of the extensive world trade in which these two nations were engaged.

Members of the commercial middle class needed a clear and realistic view of the world in order to succeed with their enterprises. (An aristocrat of the period, on the other hand, might have been more comfortable with a somewhat romanticized and out-of-focus vision, which would allow him to overlook the suffering and injustice upon which his privileges were based.) The rise of the commercial middle class, with its virtues of industriousness, common sense and realism, went hand in hand with the rise of experimental science, which required the same virtues for its success.

In England, the House of Commons (which reflected the interests of the middle class),

had achieved political power, and had demonstrated (in the Puritan Rebellion of 1640 and the Glorious Revolution of 1688) that Parliament could execute or depose any monarch who tried to rule without its consent. In France, however, the situation was very different.

After passing through a period of disorder and civil war, the French tried to achieve order and stability by making their monarchy more absolute. The movement towards absolute monarchy in France culminated in the long reign of Louis XIV, who became king in 1643 and who ruled until he died in 1715.

The historical scene which we have just sketched was the background against which the news of Newton's scientific triumph was received. The news was received by a Europe which was tired of religious wars; and in France, it was received by a middle class which was searching for an ideology in its struggle against the *ancien régime*.

To the intellectuals of the 18th century, the orderly Newtonian cosmos, with its planets circling the sun in obedience to natural law, became an imaginative symbol representing rationality. In their search for a society more in accordance with human nature, 18th century Europeans were greatly encouraged by the triumphs of science. Reason had shown itself to be an adequate guide in natural philosophy. Could not reason and natural law also be made the basis of moral and political philosophy? In attempting to carry out this program, the philosophers of the Enlightenment laid the foundations of psychology, anthropology, social science, political science and economics.

One of the earliest and most influential of these philosophers was John Locke (1632-1705), a contemporary and friend of Newton. In his *Second Treatise on Government*, published in 1690, John Locke's aim was to refute the doctrine that kings rule by divine right, and to replace that doctrine by an alternative theory of government, derived by reason from the laws of nature. According to Locke's theory, men originally lived together without formal government:

"Men living together according to reason," he wrote, "without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature... A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same facilities, should also be equal amongst one another without subordination or subjection..."

"But though this be a state of liberty, yet it is not a state of licence... The state of nature has a law to govern it, which obliges every one; and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that being equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions."

In Locke's view, a government is set up by means of a social contract. The government is given its powers by the consent of the citizens in return for the services which it renders to them, such as the protection of their lives and property. If a government fails to render these services, or if it becomes tyrannical, then the contract has been broken, and the citizens must set up a new government.

Locke's influence on 18th century thought was very great. His influence can be seen, for example, in the wording of the American Declaration of Independence. In England,

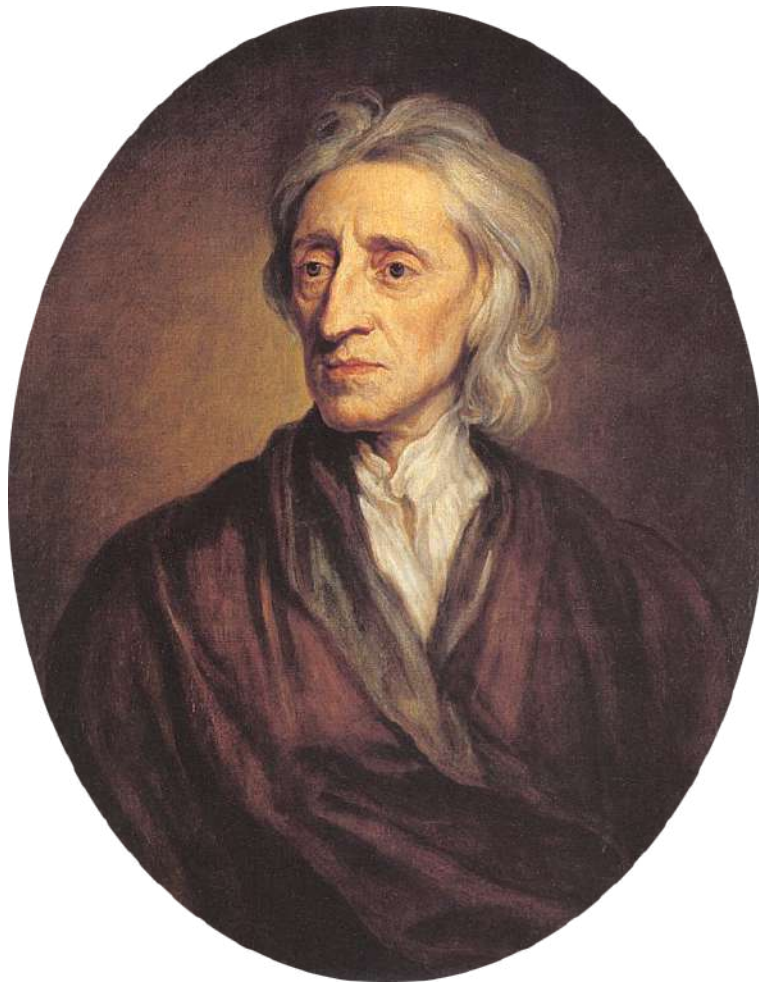


Figure 1.1: John Locke (1632-1705): “Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature... A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same facilities, should also be equal amongst one another without subordination or subjugation...”

Locke's political philosophy was accepted by almost everyone. In fact, he was only codifying ideas which were already in wide circulation and justifying a revolution which had already occurred. In France, on the other hand, Locke's writings had a revolutionary impact.

Credit for bringing the ideas of both Newton and Locke to France, and making them fashionable, belongs to Francois Marie Arouet (1694-1778), better known as "Voltaire". Besides persuading his mistress, Madame de Chatelet, to translate Newton's *Principia* into French, Voltaire wrote an extremely readable commentary on the book; and as a result, Newton's ideas became highly fashionable among French intellectuals. Voltaire lived with Madame du Chatelet until she died, producing the books which established him as the leading writer of Europe, a prophet of the Age of Reason, and an enemy of injustice, feudalism and superstition.

The Enlightenment in France is considered to have begun with Voltaire's return from England in 1729; and it reached its high point with the publication of the *Encyclopedia* between 1751 and 1780. Many authors contributed to the *Encyclopedia*, which was an enormous work, designed to sum up the state of human knowledge.

Turgot and Montesquieu wrote on politics and history; Rousseau wrote on music, and Buffon on natural history; Quesnay contributed articles on agriculture, while the Baron d'Holbach discussed chemistry. Other articles were contributed by Condorcet, Voltaire and d'Alembert. The whole enterprise was directed and inspired by the passionate faith of Denis Diderot (1713-1784). The men who took part in this movement called themselves "*philosophes*". Their creed was a faith in reason, and an optimistic belief in the perfectibility of human nature and society by means of education, political reforms, and the scientific method.

The *philosophes* of the Enlightenment visualized history as a long progression towards the discovery of the scientific method. Once discovered, this method could never be lost; and it would lead inevitably (they believed) to both the material and moral improvement of society. The *philosophes* believed that science, reason, and education, together with the principles of political liberty and equality, would inevitably lead humanity forward to a new era of happiness. These ideas were the faith of the Enlightenment; they influenced the French and American revolutions; and they are still the basis of liberal political belief.

1.2 Voltaire and Rousseau

Voltaire (1694-1778)

Francois-Marie Arouet, who later changed his name to Voltaire, was born in Paris. His father was a lawyer and a minor treasury official, while his mother's family was on the lowest rank of the French nobility. He was educated by Jesuits at Collège Louis-le-Grand, where he learned Latin theology and rhetoric. He later became fluent in Italian, Spanish and English.

Despite his father's efforts to make him study law, the young Voltaire was determined to become a writer. He eventually became the author of more than 2,000 books and pamphlets

and more than 20,000 letters. His works include many forms of writing, including plays, poems, novels, essays and historical and scientific works. His writings advocated civil liberties, and he used his satirical and witty style of writing to criticize intolerance, religious dogma and absolute monarchy. Because of the intolerance and censorship of his day, he was frequently in trouble and sometimes imprisoned. Nevertheless, his works were very popular, and he eventually became extremely rich, partly through clever investment of money gained through part ownership of a lottery.

During a period of forced exile in England, Voltaire mixed with the English aristocracy, meeting Alexander Pope, John Gay, Jonathan Swift, Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, and many other members of the nobility and royalty. He admired the English system of constitutional monarchy, which he considered to be far superior to the absolutism then prevailing in France. In 1733, he published a book entitled *Letters concerning the English Nation*, in London. When French translation was published in 1734, Voltaire was again in deep trouble. In order to avoid arrest, he stayed in the country château belonging to Émilie du Châtelet and her husband, the Marquis du Châtelet.

As a result, Madame du Châtelet became his mistress and the relationship lasted for 16 years. Her tolerant husband, the Marquis, who shared their intellectual and scientific interests, often lived together with them. Voltaire paid for improvements to the château, and together, the Marquis and Voltaire collected more than 21,000 books, and enormous number for that time. Madame du Châtelet translated Isaac Newton's great book, *Principia Mathematica*, into French, and her translation was destined to be the standard one until modern times. Meanwhile, Voltaire wrote a French explanation of the ideas of the *Principia*, which made these ideas accessible to a wide public in France. Together, the Marquis, his wife and Voltaire also performed many scientific experiments, for example experiments designed to study the nature of fire.

Voltaire's vast literary output is available today in approximately 200 volumes, published by the University of Oxford, where the Voltaire Foundation is now established as a research department.

Rousseau (1712-1778)

In 1754 Rousseau wrote: "The first man who, having fenced in a piece of land, said 'This is mine', and found people naïve enough to believe him, that man was the true founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars, and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows: Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody."

Later, he began his influential book *The Social Contract*, published in 1752, with the dramatic words: "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. Those who think themselves the masters of others are indeed greater slaves than they." Rousseau concludes Chapter 3 of this book with the words: "Let us then admit that force does not create right, and that we are obliged to obey only legitimate powers". In other words, the ability to



Figure 1.2: Voltaire used his satirical and witty style of writing to criticize intolerance, religious dogma and absolute monarchy. He wrote more than 2,000 books and pamphlets and more than 20,000 letters. His writings made a significant contribution to the Enlightenment, and paved the way for revolutions both in France and America.



Figure 1.3: The frontpiece of Voltaire's book popularizing Newton's ideas for French readers. Madame du Châtelet appears as a muse, reflecting Newton's thoughts down to Voltaire.

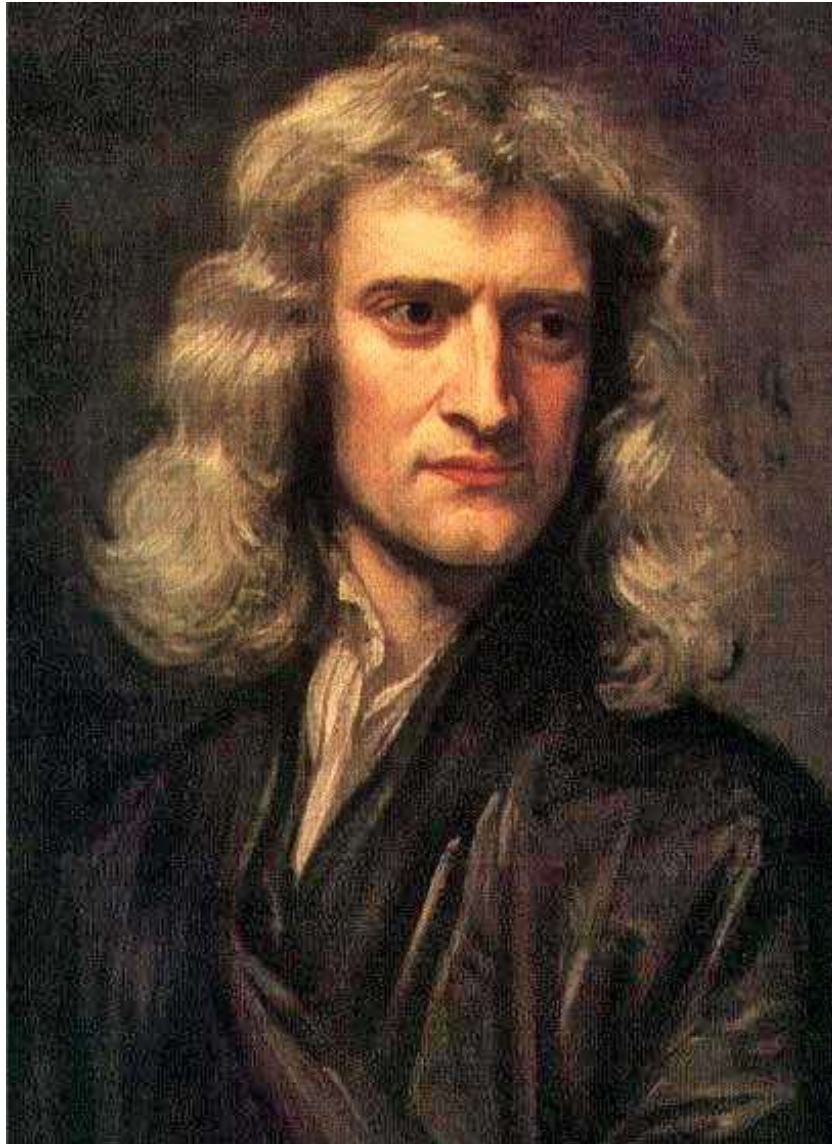


Figure 1.4: The work of Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1726) illustrates a key aspect of human cultural evolution: Because of the introduction of printing in Europe, Newton was able to build on the work of his predecessors, Copernicus, Brahe, Galileo and Kepler. He could never have achieved his great synthesis alone. During the Enlightenment, Newton became a symbol of rationality and reason. Alexander Pope wrote: “Nature, and nature’s laws, lay hid in night. God said ‘Let Newton be’, and all was light!”

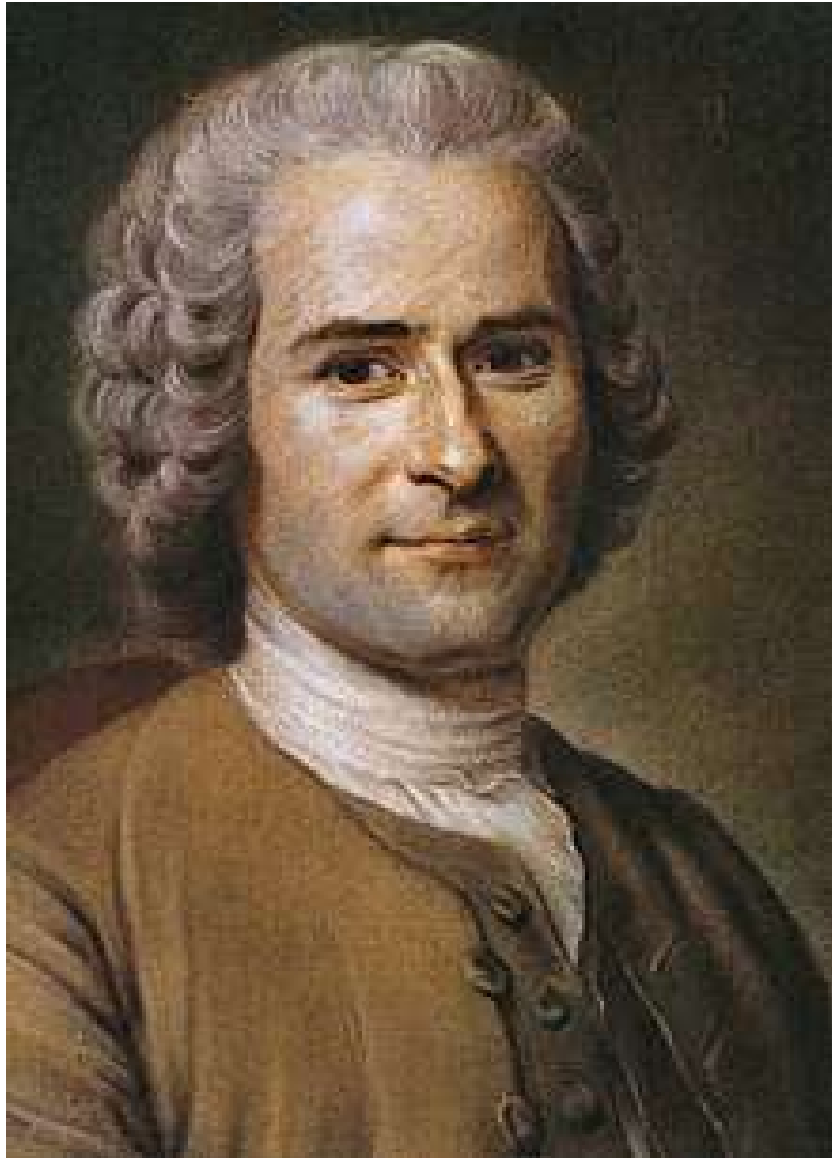


Figure 1.5: Unlike Voltaire, Rousseau was not an advocate of science, but instead believed in the importance of emotions. He believed that civilization has corrupted humans rather than making them better. Rousseau was a pioneer of the romantic movement. His book, *The Social Contract*, remains influential today.

coerce is not a legitimate power, and there is no rightful duty to submit to it. A state has no right to enslave a conquered people.

These ideas, and those of John Locke, were reaffirmed in 1776 by the American Declaration of Independence: “We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal. That they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness; and that to pursue these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

Today, in an era of government tyranny and subversion of democracy, we need to remember that the just powers of any government are not derived from the government’s ability to use of force, but exclusively from the consent of the governed.

1.3 The printer and publisher Joseph Johnson

As an example of the influence of printing on the liberation of ideas, we can consider the circle of important authors that formed around the English printer and publisher Joseph Johnson (1738-1809). His weekly dinners for authors were famous. Among the many great thinkers, artists, scientists, writers and religious dissenters who attended these dinners, or whose works he published, were William Cowper, Erasmus Darwin, William Blake, Henry Fuseli, Mary Wollstonecraft, William Godwin, Thomas Robert Malthus, Thomas Paine, Pricilla Wakefield, Gilbert Wakefield. Benjamin Franklin, Richard Price and Joseph Priestly.

Throughout her career, the pioneering feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft was aided by Johnson. As she wrote to her sister, she had decided to become the first of a new genus: a professional female writer. Having learned French and German, she translated Necker’s *Of the Importance of Religious Opinions* and Saltzman’s *Elements of Morality for the Use of Children*. Mary was helped in her new career by the liberal publisher, Joseph Johnson, who was also the publisher of Thomas Paine and William Godwin. Mary met these already famous authors at Johnson’s dinner parties, and conversations with them helped to expand her knowledge and ambitions. Joseph Johnson was a very brave man. By publishing the works of radical authors, he was risking arrest by England’s repressive government. In her letters, Mary described Johnson as “a father and brother”.

At Johnson’s parties Mary met, for the second time, the famous novelist and philosopher William Godwin. This time, they both formed a higher opinion of each other than at their first meeting. A passionate love affair developed between them, and when Mary became pregnant, they were married. Tragically, Mary Wollstonecraft died in childbirth. Her daughter Mary would later become the wife of Godwin’s admirer, the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Mary Shelly created the enduring masterpiece *Frankenstein*.



Figure 1.6: The printer and publisher Joseph Johnson (1738-1809). Johnson was the publisher of William Godwin, Mary Wollstonecraft and Thomas Paine. His dinner parties included many famous dissenting thinkers of the time.



Figure 1.7: Mary Wollstonecraft in a painting by John Opie. She called Joseph Johnson “my father and brother”.

1.4 Mary Wollstonecraft's *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*

Mary Wollstonecraft, whom we mentioned above in connection with the publisher Joseph Johnson, published a book in 1792 entitled *Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. In it she said:

"My main argument is built on this simple principle, that if [woman] be not prepared by education to become the companion of man, she will stop the progress of knowledge and virtue; for truth must be common to all".

Wollstonecraft contends that society will degenerate without educated women, particularly because mothers are the primary educators of young children. She attributes the problem of uneducated women to men and to "...a false system of education, gathered from the books written on this subject by men who [consider] females rather as women than human creatures"

"Taught from their infancy that beauty is woman's scepter, the mind shapes itself to the body, and, roaming round its gilt cage, only seeks to adorn its prison.

"I then would fain convince reasonable men of the importance of some of my remarks; and prevail on them to weigh dispassionately the whole tenor of my observations. I appeal to their understandings; and, as a fellow-creature, claim, in the name of my sex, some interest in their hearts. I entreat them to assist to emancipate their companion, to make her a help meet for them! Would men but generously snap our chains, and be content with rational fellowship instead of slavish obedience, they would find us more observant daughters, more affectionate sisters, more faithful wives, more reasonable mothers: in a word, better citizens.

1.5 William Godwin

Political Justice

In 1793 the English novelist and philosopher William Godwin published an enormously optimistic book, *Political Justice*. As the eighteenth century neared its end, this book became the focus of hopes for political reform and the center of the debate on human progress. Godwin was lifted briefly to enormous heights of fame and adulation, from which he plunged, a few years later, into relative obscurity.

In *Political Justice*, Godwin predicted a future society where scientific progress would liberate humans from material want. Godwin predicted that in the future, with the institution of war abolished, with a more equal distribution of property, and with the help of scientific improvements in agriculture and industry, much less labour would be needed to support life. Luxuries are at present used to maintain artificial distinctions between the classes of society, Godwin wrote, but in the future values will change; humans will live more simply, and their efforts will be devoted to self-fulfillment and to intellectual and moral improvement, rather than to material possessions. With the help of automated

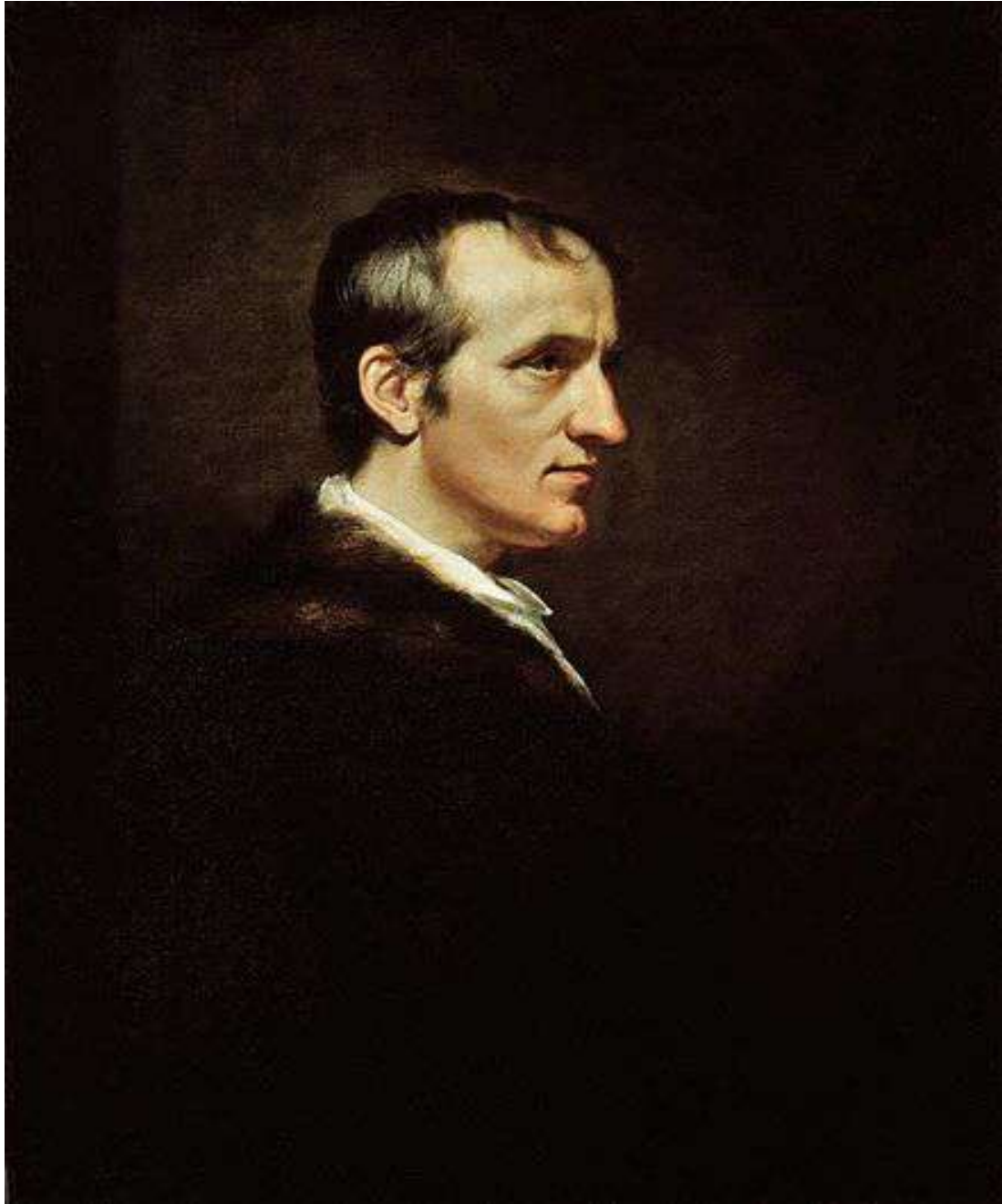


Figure 1.8: William Godwin in a painting by James Northcote.

agriculture, the citizens of a future society will need only a few hours a day to earn their bread.

Godwin went on to say, “The spirit of oppression, the spirit of servility and the spirit of fraud - these are the immediate growth of the established administration of property. They are alike hostile to intellectual improvement. The other vices of envy, malice, and revenge are their inseparable companions. In a state of society where men lived in the midst of plenty, and where all shared alike the bounties of nature, these sentiments would inevitably expire. The narrow principle of selfishness would vanish. No man being obliged to guard his little store, or provide with anxiety and pain for his restless wants, each would lose his own individual existence in the thought of the general good. No man would be the enemy of his neighbor, for they would have nothing to contend; and of consequence philanthropy would resume the empire which reason assigns her. Mind would be delivered from her perpetual anxiety about corporal support, and free to expatiate in the field of thought which is congenial to her. Each man would assist the inquiries of all.”

Godwin insisted that there is an indissoluble link between politics, ethics and knowledge. *Political Justice* is an enthusiastic vision of what humans could be like at some future period when the trend towards moral and intellectual improvement has lifted men and women above their present state of ignorance and vice. Much of the savage structure of the penal system would then be unnecessary, Godwin believed. (At the time when he was writing, there were more than a hundred capital offenses in England, and this number had soon increased to almost two hundred. The theft of any object of greater value than ten shillings was punishable by hanging.)

In its present state, Godwin wrote, society decrees that the majority of its citizens “should be kept in abject penury, rendered stupid with ignorance and disgustful with vice, perpetuated in nakedness and hunger, goaded to the commission of crimes, and made victims to the merciless laws which the rich have instituted to oppress them”. But human behavior is produced by environment and education, Godwin pointed out. If the conditions of upbringing were improved, behavior would also improve. In fact, Godwin believed that men and women are subject to natural laws no less than the planets of Newton’s solar system. “In the life of every human”, Godwin wrote, “there is a chain of causes, generated in that eternity which preceded his birth, and going on in regular procession through the whole period of his existence, in consequence of which it was impossible for him to act in any instance otherwise than he has acted.”

The chain of causality in human affairs implies that vice and crime should be regarded with the same attitude with which we regard disease. The causes of poverty, ignorance, vice and crime should be removed. Human failings should be cured rather than punished. With this in mind, Godwin wrote, “our disapprobation of vice will be of the same nature as our disapprobation of an infectious distemper.”

With improved environment and education, humans will reach a higher moral level. But what is morality? Here Godwin draws heavily on his Christian background, especially on the moral principles of the Dissenting community. The Parable of the Good Samaritan illustrates the central principle of Christian ethics: We must love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves; but our neighbor is not necessarily a member of our immediate circle.

He or she may be distant from us, in culture, in ethnic background or in geographical distance. Nevertheless, that person is still our neighbor, a member of the human family, and our duty to him or her is no less than our duty to those who are closest to us. It follows that narrow loyalties must be replaced or supplemented by loyalty to the interests of humanity as a whole.

Judging the benevolence of our actions is the responsibility of each individual conscience, Godwin says, not the responsibility of the State, and the individual must follow his or her conscience even if it conflicts with the dictates of the State. Each individual case should be judged by itself. If our institutions and laws meet the criteria of benevolence, justice and truth, we should give them our enthusiastic support; if not, we should struggle to change them. In giving personal judgement such a dominant role, Godwin anticipates the ideas of Thoreau, Tolstoy and Gandhi.

The exercise of individual judgement requires great honesty and objectivity. In order for the power of truth and reason to overcome prejudice and error, Godwin says, it is necessary for each person always to speak and act with complete sincerity. Even the degree of insincerity necessary for elegant manners is wrong in Godwin's opinion.

Starting with these ethical principles, Godwin proceeds with almost mathematical logic to deduce the consequences, intoxicated by his enthusiasm and not stopping even when the conclusions to which he is driven conflict with conventional wisdom and intuition. For example, he denies that humans have rights and maintains that they only have duties.

Regarding the right to dispose of private property as one chooses, Godwin says: "To whom does any article, suppose a loaf of bread, justly belong? I have an hundred loaves in my possession, and in the next street there is a poor man expiring with hunger, to whom one of these loaves would be a means of preserving his life. If I withhold this loaf from him, am I not unjust? If I impart it, am I not complying with what justice demands?"

In other words, according to Godwin, our duty to act for the benefit of humanity implies a sacrifice of our private rights as individuals. Private property is not really our own, to be used as we wish; it is held in trust, to be used where it will do the greatest amount of good for humanity as a whole.

Godwin also denies that several commonly admired virtues really are virtues. Keeping promises, he says, is not a virtue because at any given moment we have a duty to do the greatest possible good through our actions. If an act is good, we should do it because we believe it to be good, not because we have promised to do it; and a promise should not force us to perform an act which we believe to be bad. A virtuous person therefore does not make promises. Similarly, Godwin maintains that gratitude is a vice since it distorts our judgement of the benevolence of our actions. When he heard of Godwin's doctrine on gratitude, Edmund Burke remarked "I would save him from that vice by not doing him any service!"

Godwin saw the system of promises, loyalty, and gratitude as a means by which individual judgement can be suspended and tyranny maintained. People can be forced to act against their consciences because of promises which they have made or services which they have received. An example of this is the suspension of private ethical judgement which follows a soldier's induction into an army. We should perform an act, Godwin maintains,

not because of fear of punishment or hope of reward or in return for favors that we have received, but rather because we believe the act to be of the highest benefit to humanity as a whole.

Many of our political institutions may be needed now, Godwin said, because of mankind's present faults; but in the future, when humanity has reached a higher level of perfection, they will be needed less and less. The system of nation states might then be replaced by a loose federation of small communities, within each of which problems could be resolved by face-to-face discussion. Regarding this future ideal system, Godwin writes: "It is earnestly to be desired that each man was wise enough to govern himself without the interference of any compulsory restraint; and since government in its best state is an evil, the object principally to be aimed at is, that we should have as little of it as the general peace of human society will permit."

Political Justice is a vision or prophesy of what human life might be like, not in the world as it is but in an ideal world of the future. As Godwin's disciple, Percy Bysshe Shelley, later expressed it in his verse-drama *Prometheus Unbound*,

*The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise...*

Enormous instant fame; The New Philosophy

The quarto edition of *Political Justice* was a best seller and the book was soon republished in a less expensive octavo edition which sold equally well. It was pirated in Ireland, Scotland, and America and hundreds of groups of workers who could not afford to buy the book individually bought joint copies, which then circulated among the subscribers or were read aloud to groups. The doctrines advocated in *Political Justice* were soon being called the "New Philosophy".

Godwin became famous overnight: "I was nowhere a stranger", he wrote later, "...I was everywhere received with curiosity and kindness. If temporary fame ever was an object worthy to be coveted by the human mind, I certainly obtained it in a degree that has seldom been exceeded."

Godwin's friend, the essayist William Hazlitt, described this sudden burst of fame in the following words: "... he blazed as a sun in the firmament of reputation; no-one was more talked of, more looked up to, more sought after, and wherever liberty, truth, justice was the theme, his name was not far off".

William Wordsworth read *Political Justice* in 1794 and was greatly influenced by it. Between February and August 1795, Wordsworth met Godwin seven times for long private discussions. Much of Wordsworth's writing from the Great Decade shows the mark of

Godwin's ideas, as can be seen, for example in the following lines from *The Prelude*:

*How glorious! in self-knowledge and self-rule,
To look through all the frailties of the world,
And, with a resolute mastery shaking off
Infirmities of nature, time and place,
Build social upon personal Liberty,
Which, to the blind restraints of general laws
Superior, magisterially adopts
One guide, the light of circumstances, flashed
Upon an independent intellect*

Things as they are

On 26 May 1794, Godwin added to his already great reputation by publishing a powerful and original psychological novel, *Things as They Are*, later renamed *Caleb Williams*. Godwin's purpose in writing this novel was to illustrate some of the themes of *Political Justice* and to bring his ideas to readers who might not be directly interested in philosophy.

In *Caleb Williams*, Godwin makes several literary innovations which were to influence such writers as Edgar Allan Poe, Charles Dickens, Balzac, and Victor Hugo. *Caleb Williams* is, in fact, the ancestor of the modern thriller and detective story.

A few hangings needed to cast a chill over discussion

Godwin had written a Preface to *Caleb Williams* in which he said: "The question now afloat in the world respecting THINGS AS THEY ARE, is the most interesting which can be presented to the human mind. While one party pleads for reformation and change, the other extols in the warmest terms the existing constitution of society... It is now known to philosophers that the spirit and character of a government intrudes itself into every rank of society. But this is a truth highly worthy to be communicated to persons whom books of philosophy and science are never likely to reach. Accordingly it was proposed in the invention of the following work, to comprehend, as far as the progressive nature of a single story would allow, a general review of the modes of domestic and unrecorded tyranny." .

This Preface was never printed, because Godwin's publisher, Crosby, was afraid of prosecution. In fact, the publication of *Caleb Williams* coincided with a decision by Pitt's government that a few hangings were needed in order to cast a chill on public discussion of political reform. On the day of publication, orders went out for the arrest of Godwin's friends in the reform movement, Hardy, Thelwall, and Horne Tooke. Although the radical leaders were arrested in May, *habeas corpus* was suspended, and it was not until 2 October 1794 that a charge was brought against them. A few days later, on a trip to Warwickshire, Godwin heard that his closest friend, Thomas Holcroft, also had been arrested.

Godwin hurried back to London and locked himself in his home, studying the charges that had been brought by Lord Chief Justice Eyre against Holcroft and the others. The charge was high treason and the law under which Eyre brought this charge had been passed in the fourteenth century, during the reign of Edward III. It defined high treason as any act which could “compass or imagine the Death of a King”. The penalty for this offense was to be hanged by the neck, to be cut down while still living, to be disembowelled, to have one’s bowels burnt before one’s eyes, and then to be beheaded and quartered. It was rumored that as soon as the 12 prisoners were convicted, 800 further arrest warrants were ready to go out and Godwin’s own name might well have been among them.

Godwin soon saw that Eyre’s argument involved an unprecedented broadening of the definition of high treason. Essentially Eyre was arguing that the actions of the accused might cause events in England to follow the same course as in France, where Louis XVI had recently been executed. On 21 October Godwin published an anonymous article in the Morning Chronicle entitled *Cursory Strictures on the Charge Delivered by Lord Chief Justice Eyre*. It was a carefully written legal argument, completely different in style from anything that Godwin had written previously. In this article, he argued that in broadening the interpretation of high treason without precedent, Eyre was in effect creating a new law and judging the prisoners *ex post facto*. It was especially necessary for high treason to have a narrow definition, Godwin pointed out, since a broad definition could lead to the abridgement of all English civil liberties.

After the publication of *Cursory Strictures* it became clear to everyone that Eyre’s charge lay outside the boundary of the law and that it would probably not be upheld. Nevertheless, the atmosphere in the courtroom was tense as the jury returned its verdicts. As soon as Holcroft was acquitted, he left the dock and went to sit beside Godwin. The artist, Sir Thomas Lawrence, made a sketch of the two friends sitting side-by-side and waiting for the verdict on the other prisoners, Godwin’s bending and contemplative figure contrasting with Holcroft’s upright and defiant stance. In the end, all charges were dropped.

William and Mary

Soon after these dramatic events, William Godwin met Mary Wollstonecraft for a second time. On 8 January 1796, Mary Hayes, a friend and admirer of Mary Wollstonecraft, invited her to tea together with William Godwin and Thomas Holcroft. The tea was a success, and Godwin found Mary Wollstonecraft very much changed from the carelessly dressed and irritating woman who had dominated the conversation at Johnson’s dinner when he had wanted to hear Thomas Paine. Now, several years later, she had become much more attractive. Mary’s beauty and her charming, intelligent conversation won Godwin’s heart. He also greatly admired her recently published book, *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*.

On 13 February, Godwin called on Mary Wollstonecraft, but she was not at home. On 14 April, she broke the social rules of the time and returned his call. During the next few months they often appeared together at literary and artistic dinners in London. They had many friends in common and both of them had many admirers of the opposite sex.

Godwin was not a tall man and his nose was rather large. On the other hand, he had fine eyes and a high, impressive brow; his manners had become more gallant and fame is a powerful aphrodisiac. A number of attractive intellectual women fluttered around him. Mary's admirers included the poet Robert Southey, the distinguished artist John Opie, and Godwin's closest friend, Thomas Holcroft.

Gradually, during the spring and summer of 1796, the friendship between Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin deepened into love. Outwardly, nothing was changed. Both partners were hard at work, Godwin preparing a new edition of *Political Justice* and Mary writing a novel, *The Wrongs of Woman*. Like *Caleb Williams*, Mary's novel was designed to illustrate the themes of the New Philosophy. They kept their relationship a secret, continued to live separately, and continued to meet their friends as before, but they had become lovers. For Godwin, this was the first real love affair of his life and he was at first very awkward, afraid of the strong emotions he was experiencing. Mary tenderly and good-humouredly guided him through his difficulties.

As winter approached, a crisis occurred: Johnson, Mary's publisher insisted that she should settle her debts and refused to give her more credit. At the same time, Mary realized that she was pregnant. She had experienced some of the harsh penalties with which English society of that time punished unwed mothers. Many of her former friends had dropped away. Her remaining friends called her Mrs Imlay, maintaining the fiction that she had been legally married; but with the new baby no such cover would be possible. Johnson offered a solution: He knew of a rich but somewhat elderly admirer who was willing to solve all of Mary's problems, both financial and social, by marrying her. Mary felt insulted and would not hear of this solution. In her books she had often denounced marriage for the sake of property as "legalized prostitution". Instead, she asked Godwin to marry her. He did this in spite of his own disapproval of the institution of marriage as practised at that time in Europe, an institution which he had called "the most odious of all monopolies".

Godwin and Mary were in fact extremely happy together. They were not at all alike: He relied on reason, while she placed more trust in her emotions. These differences meant that each revealed a new world for the other. For Godwin, Mary opened a world of strong feelings; and he acquired from her a taste for the writings of Rousseau, whom she called "the Prometheus of Sentiment". Godwin was never the same again. All his later novels and books of philosophy were to stress the importance of domestic affections and sensitivity to the force of emotion.

Mary's tragic death in childbirth

Mary's baby was due at the end of August 1797. She insisted that no doctor was needed, only a midwife. After a long labour, she gave birth to a baby girl at 11 p.m. and Godwin was overjoyed that all had gone well. However, at 2 a.m. the midwife warned Godwin that his wife was still in danger, since the afterbirth had not yet appeared. A doctor was sent for; and following the accepted medical practice of the time, he removed the afterbirth surgically. Mary at first seemed to be recovering well; but in a few days it became clear

that she was fatally ill with an infection, very likely the result of the operation to remove the afterbirth. On 10 September she died, brave and affectionate to the end. In her last words, she spoke of Godwin as “the kindest, best man in the world”.

Godwin was left heartbroken by Mary’s death. In a letter to Holcroft he wrote: “My wife is now dead. I firmly believe that there does not exist her equal in the world. I know from experience that we were formed to make each other happy. I have not the least expectation that I can now ever know happiness again”. In his sorrow, he sat rereading Mary’s books and letters, seeming to hear her voice again through the words that she had written.

Soon Godwin found consolation for his grief by editing the unpublished works of his dead wife and by writing her biography. Believing strongly in the principle of absolute honesty, he tried to describe her life and work as simply and as accurately as he could, not hiding her human weaknesses, but at the same time doing full justice to her stature as a great pioneer of woman’s rights. He included her letters to Imlay, and a description of an affair between Mary and the Swiss artist Fuseli, which had taken place before her departure for France.

On 29 January 1798, Johnson published Godwin’s *Memoirs of the Author of the Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, together with four small volumes of Mary’s posthumous works, including her unfinished novel, *The Wrongs of Woman*.

The wave of hope crashes down

Godwin’s moving and honest portrait of his wife is one of his most enduring and readable books but its honesty shocked his contemporaries more than anything else that he had written. The European Magazine, for example, said that it would be read “with disgust by every female who has any pretensions to delicacy; with detestation by everyone attached to the interests of religion and morality; and with indignation by any one who might feel any regard for the unhappy woman, whose frailties should have been buried in oblivion”.

This reaction against the *Memoirs* was part of a much more general reaction against all liberal ideas. In 1798, Napoleon’s armies were victorious on the continent, and the French were massing their forces for an invasion of England. Napoleon believed that the ordinary people of England would welcome him as a liberator and, in fact, the English government was facing a mutiny in its own navy, massive riots, and rebellion in Ireland. The Establishment was fighting for its life and was not in the mood to make fine distinctions about whether the blows that it struck were above or below the belt. Pitt and Grenville had already introduced the “Gagging Acts”, which effectively put an end to freedom of speech and assembly. The government now sponsored, by means of a secret subsidy, the *Anti-Jacobin Review*, a periodical which savagely attacked all of the leading liberals in turn, including both William and Mary.

Godwin had been carried to great heights by the wave of hope which accompanied the French Revolution; and as the wave crashed he was carried down with it. Despite the abuse and ridicule which were increasingly heaped upon him, he maintained a philosophical attitude, confident that he had already made a permanent contribution to the idea

of human progress. His ideas, and those of his pioneering wife Mary Wollstonecraft, can speak to our present dangerous situation.

1.6 The Marquis de Condorcet

A vision of human progress

In France the Marquis de Condorcet had written an equally optimistic book, *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain*. Condorcet's optimism was unaffected even by the fact that at the time when he was writing he was in hiding, under sentence of death by Robespierre's government. Like Godwin's *Political Justice*, this book offers an optimistic vision of how human society can be improved. Together, the two books provoked Malthus to write his book on population.

Condorcet becomes a mathematician

Marie-Jean-Antoine-Nicolas Caritat, Marquis de Condorcet, was born in 1743 in the town of Ribemont in southern France. He was born into an ancient and noble family of the principality of Orange but there was nothing in his background to suggest that he might one day become a famous scientist and social philosopher. In fact, for several generations before, most of the men in the family had followed military or ecclesiastical careers and none were scholars.

After an initial education received at home from his mother, Condorcet was sent to his uncle, the Bishop of Lisieux, who provided a Jesuit tutor for the boy. In 1758 Condorcet continued his studies with the Jesuits at the College of Navarre. After he graduated from the College, Condorcet's powerful and independent intelligence suddenly asserted itself. He announced that he intended to study mathematics. His family was unanimously and violently opposed to this idea. The privileges of the nobility were based on hereditary power and on a static society. Science, with its emphasis on individual talent and on progress, undermined both these principles. The opposition of Condorcet's family is therefore understandable but he persisted until they gave in.

From 1765 to 1774, Condorcet focused on science. In 1765, he published his first work on mathematics entitled *Essai sur le calcul intégral*, which was well received, launching his career as a mathematician. He would go on to publish many more papers, and in 1769, at the age of 26, he was elected to the Academie royale des Sciences (French Royal Academy of Sciences)

Condorcet worked with Leonhard Euler and Benjamin Franklin. He soon became an honorary member of many foreign academies and philosophic societies including the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences (1785), Foreign Honorary Member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1792), and also in Prussia and Russia.

Human rights and scientific sociology

In 1774, at the age of 31, Condorcet was appointed Inspector-General of the Paris Mint by his friend, the economist Turgot. From this point on, Condorcet shifted his focus from the purely mathematical to philosophy and political matters. In the following years, he took up the defense of human rights in general, and of women's and blacks' rights in particular (an abolitionist, he became active in the Society of the Friends of the Blacks in the 1780s). He supported the ideals embodied by the newly formed United States, and proposed projects of political, administrative and economic reforms intended to transform France.

The year 1785 saw the publication of Condorcet's highly original mathematical work, *Essai sur l'application de l'analyse à la probabilité des décisions rendues à la pluralité des voix*, in which he pioneered the application of the theory of probability in the social sciences. A later, much enlarged, edition of this book extended the applications to games of chance. Through these highly original works, Condorcet became a pioneer of scientific sociology.

In 1786, Condorcet married one of the most beautiful women of the time, Sophie de Grouchy (1764-1822). Condorcet's position as Inspector-General of the Mint meant that they lived at the Hotel des Monnaies. Mme Condorcet's salon there was famous.

The French Revolution

Ever since the age of 17, Condorcet had thought about questions of justice and virtue and especially about how it is in our own interest to be both just and virtuous. Very early in his life he had been occupied with the idea of human perfectibility. He was convinced that the primary duty of every person is to contribute as much as possible to the development of mankind, and that by making such a contribution, one can also achieve the greatest possible personal happiness. When the French Revolution broke out in 1789 he saw it as an unprecedented opportunity to do his part in the cause of progress and he entered the arena wholeheartedly.

Condorcet was first elected as a member of the Municipality of Paris; and then, in 1791, he became one of the six Commissioners of the Treasury. Soon afterwards he was elected to the Legislative Assembly, of which he became first the Secretary and finally the President. In 1792, Condorcet proposed to the Assembly that all patents of nobility should be burned. The motion was carried unanimously; and on 19 June his own documents were thrown on a fire with the others at the foot of a statue of Louis XIV.

Condorcet was one of the chief authors of the proclamation which declared France to be a republic and which summoned a National Convention. As he remained above the personal political quarrels that were raging at the time, Condorcet was elected to the National Convention by five different constituencies. When the Convention brought Louis XVI to trial, Condorcet maintained that, according to the constitution, the monarch was inviolable and that the Convention therefore had no legal right to try the King. When the King was tried despite these protests, Condorcet voted in favor of an appeal to the people.



Figure 1.9: **The Marquis de Condorcet.**

Drafting a new constitution for France

In October 1792, when the Convention set up a Committee of Nine to draft a new constitution for France, Condorcet sat on this committee as did the Englishman, Thomas Paine. Under sentence of death in England for publishing his pamphlet *The Rights of Man*, Paine had fled to France and had become a French citizen. He and Condorcet were the chief authors of a moderate (Gerondist) draft of the constitution. However, the Jacobin leader, Robespierre, bitterly resented being excluded from the Committee of Nine and, when the Convention then gave the responsibility for drafting the new constitution to the Committee for Public Safety, which was enlarged for this purpose by five additional members. The result was a hastily produced document with many glaring defects. When it was presented to the Convention, however, it was accepted almost without discussion. This was too much for Condorcet to stomach and he published anonymously a letter entitled *Advice to the French on the New Constitution*, in which he exposed the defects of the Jacobin constitution and urged all Frenchmen to reject it.

Hiding from Robespierre's Terror

Condorcet's authorship of this letter was discovered and treated as an act of treason. On 8 July 1793, Condorcet was denounced in the Convention; and an order was sent out for his arrest. The officers tried to find him, first at his town house and then at his house in the country but, warned by a friend, Condorcet had gone into hiding.

The house where Condorcet took refuge was at Rue Servandoni, a small street in Paris leading down to the Luxembourg Gardens, and it was owned by Madame Vernet, the widow of a sculptor. Madame Vernet, who sometimes kept lodgings for students, had been asked by Condorcet's friends whether she would be willing to shelter a proscribed man. 'Is he a good man?', she had asked; and when assured that this was the case, she had said, 'Then let him come at once. You can tell me his name later. Don't waste even a moment. While we are speaking, he may be arrested.' She did not hesitate, although she knew that she risked death, the penalty imposed by the Convention for sheltering a proscribed man.

Condorcet writes the *Esquisse*

Although Robespierre's agents had been unable to arrest him, Condorcet was sentenced to the guillotine *in absentia*. He knew that in all probability he had only a few weeks or months to live and he began to write his last thoughts, racing against time. Hidden in the house at Rue Servandoni, and cared for by Madame Vernet, Condorcet returned to a project which he had begun in 1772, a history of the progress of human thought, stretching from the remote past to the distant future. Guessing that he would not have time to complete the full-scale work he had once planned, he began a sketch or outline: *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des progrès de l'Esprit Humain*.

Condorcet's *Esquisse*, is an enthusiastic endorsement of the idea of infinite human perfectibility which was current among the philosophers of the 18th century, and in this book,

Condorcet anticipated many of the evolutionary ideas of Charles Darwin. He compared humans with animals, and found many common traits. Condorcet believed that animals are able to think, and even to think rationally, although their thoughts are extremely simple compared with those of humans. He also asserted that humans historically began their existence on the same level as animals and gradually developed to their present state.

Since this evolution took place historically, he reasoned, it is probable, or even inevitable, that a similar evolution in the future will bring mankind to a level of physical, mental and moral development which will be as superior to our own present state as we are now superior to animals.

In his *Esquisse*, Condorcet called attention to the unusually long period of dependency which characterize the growth and education of human offspring. This prolonged childhood is unique among living beings. It is needed for the high level of mental development of the human species; but it requires a stable family structure to protect the young during their long upbringing. Thus, according to Condorcet, biological evolution brought into existence a moral precept, the sanctity of the family.

Similarly, Condorcet maintained, larger associations of humans would have been impossible without some degree of altruism and sensitivity to the suffering of others incorporated into human behavior, either as instincts or as moral precepts or both; and thus the evolution of organized society entailed the development of sensibility and morality.

Condorcet believed that ignorance and error are responsible for vice; and he listed what he regarded as the main mistakes of civilization: hereditary transmission of power, inequality between men and women, religious bigotry, disease, war, slavery, economic inequality, and the division of humanity into mutually exclusive linguistic groups.

Condorcet believed the hereditary transmission of power to be the source of much of the tyranny under which humans suffer; and he looked forward to an era when republican governments would be established throughout the world. Turning to the inequality between men and women, Condorcet wrote that he could see no moral, physical or intellectual basis for it. He called for complete social, legal, and educational equality between the sexes.

Condorcet predicted that the progress of medical science would free humans from the worst ravages of disease. Furthermore, he maintained that since perfectibility (i.e. evolution) operates throughout the biological world, there is no reason why mankind's physical structure might not gradually improve, with the result that human life in the remote future could be greatly prolonged. Condorcet believed that the intellectual and moral facilities of man are capable of continuous and steady improvement; and he thought that one of the most important results of this improvement will be the abolition of war.

At the end of his *Esquisse*, Condorcet said that any person who has contributed to the progress of mankind to the best of his ability becomes immune to personal disaster and suffering. He knows that human progress is inevitable and can take comfort and courage from his inner picture of the epic march of mankind, through history, towards a better future.

Shortly after Condorcet completed the *Esquisse*, he received a mysterious warning that soldiers of the Convention were on their way to inspect Madame Vernet's house. Wishing to spare his generous hostess from danger, he disguised himself as well as he could and

slipped past the portress. However, Condorcet had only gone a few steps outside the house when he was recognized by Madame Verdet's cousin, who risked his life to guide Condorcet past the sentinels at the gates of Paris, and into the open country beyond.

Condorcet wandered for several days without food or shelter, hiding himself in quarries and thickets. Finally, on 27 March 1794, hunger forced him to enter a tavern at the village of Clamart, where he ordered an omelette. When asked how many eggs it should contain, the exhausted and starving philosopher replied without thinking, 'twelve'. This reply, together with his appearance, excited suspicion. He was asked for his papers and, when it was found that he had none, soldiers were sent for and he was arrested. He was taken to a prison at Bourg-la-Reine, but he was so weak that he was unable to walk there, and had to be carried in a cart. The next morning, Condorcet was found dead on the floor of his cell. The cause of his death is not known with certainty. It was listed in official documents as congestion sanguine, congestion of the blood but the real cause may have been cold, hunger, exhaustion or poison. Many historians believe that Condorcet was murdered by Robespierre's agents, since he was so popular that a public execution would have been impossible.

After Condorcet's death the currents of revolutionary politics shifted direction. Robespierre, the leader of the Terror, was himself soon arrested. The execution of Robespierre took place on 25 July 1794, only a few months after the death of Condorcet.

Condorcet's *Esquisse d'un Tableau Historique des Progrès de l'Esprit Humain* was published posthumously in 1795. In the post-Thermidor reconstruction, the Convention voted funds to have it printed in a large edition and distributed throughout France, thus adopting the *Esquisse* as its official manifesto. Condorcet's name will always be linked with this small prophetic book. It was destined to establish the form in which the eighteenth-century idea of progress was incorporated into Western thought, and (as we shall see) it provoked Robert Malthus to write *An Essay on the Principle of Population*.

1.7 The abolition of serfdom and slavery

The ideals of the Enlightenment led to movements for the abolition of both serfdom and slavery. John Locke had expressed these ideals in the famous words: "Men living together according to reason, without a common superior on earth with authority to judge between them, is properly the state of nature... A state also of equality, wherein all the power and jurisdiction is reciprocal, no one having more than another; there being nothing more evident than that creatures of the same species, promiscuously born to all the same advantages of nature and the use of the same facilities, should also be equal amongst one another without subordination or subjection..."

The same ideals are echoed in the American Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, and that among these are the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights Governments are instituted



Figure 1.10: **Reeve and serfs in feudal England, c. 1310.**

among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

The political philosophers of the Enlightenment could see no rational argument for “the divine right of kings”, nor for serfdom, nor for slavery. The ideal of human equality, liberty and brotherhood led to revolutions in America, France and Russia, and to movements in many countries for the abolition of serfdom and slavery. Despite the successes of these revolutions and movements, both slavery and extreme inequality still exists. Today, child labor accounts for 22% of the workforce in Asia, 32% in Africa, and 17% in Latin America. Large-scale slavery also exists today, although there are formal laws against it in every country. There are more slaves now than ever before - their number is estimated to be between 12 million and 27 million. Besides outright slaves, who are bought and sold for as little as 100 dollars, there many millions of workers whose lack of options and dreadful working conditions must be described as slavlike.

Extreme financial inequality also exists today, both between countries and within countries; and as the result of the control of wealth over politics, many nations that claim to be democracies, are in fact oligarchies.



Figure 1.11: Punishment with a knout. Whipping was a common punishment for Russian serfs.

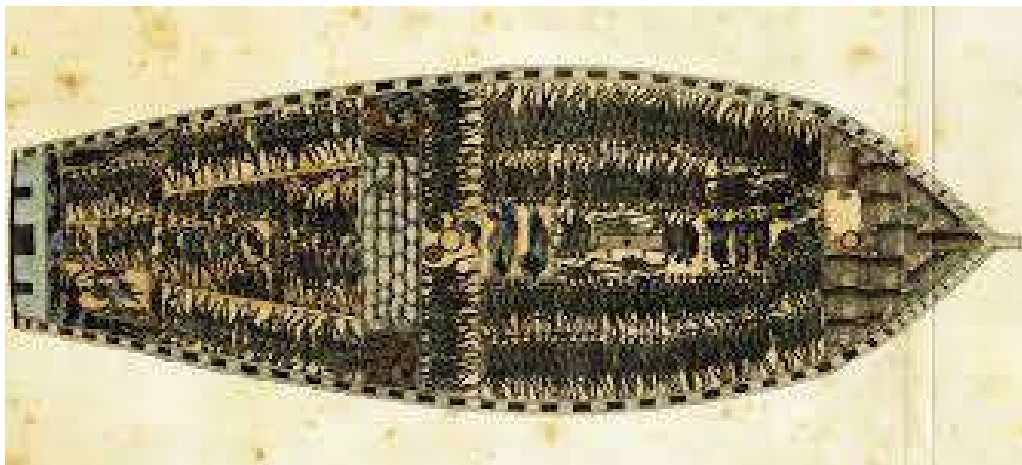


Figure 1.12: Diagram of a slave ship.



Figure 1.13: “Am I not a man and a brother?”, a medallion designed by Charles Darwin’s uncle, Josiah Wedgwood, for the British anti-slavery campaign.



Figure 1.14: The Chevalier de Saint-Georges. sometimes called the “Black Mozart”.



Figure 1.15: “Abolition of slavery in the French colonies, 1848”. a painting by Auguste Biard



Figure 1.16: William Wilberforce (1759-1833), a leader of the British movement to abolish the slave trade.

Suggestions for further reading

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Chapter 2

WILLIAM BLAKE

2.1 Education as an engraver and printmaker

William Blake was born in 1757 in the Soho district of London. He was the third of seven children, two of whom died in infancy. His parents, who were English Dissenters, seem to have been reasonable wealthy during his childhood, since his father was able to purchase many books for him. Among these were books of engravings and drawings through which Blake became familiar with the works of Michelangelo, Raphael and Albrecht Dürer.

Recognizing their son's extremely independent temperament and his gifts as an artist, his parents sent him to an ordinary school only long enough to learn reading and writing, after which he was tutored at home by his mother, and later apprenticed to an engraver and printmaker. After he had finished his apprenticeship, the young Blake became a student at the Royal Academy. Finally, he opened his own engraving and printmaking shop.

Blake continued to read avidly on topics of all kinds, but was most influenced by his studies of the Bible.

2.2 Marriage

In 1782, while recovering from the pain of a rejected marriage proposal, Blake met Catherine Boucher, who was five years his junior. He told Catherine about the pain he had experienced and asked "Do you pity me?" When she answered that she did, Blake replied "Then I love you".

Blake's marriage to Catherine was an extremely happy one. She was illiterate, but he taught her to read and write. Later he also trained her as an engraver. She was an invaluable help to him, and she lifted his spirits whenever he was burdened by misfortunes. She said of her husband, "He is always in Heaven".



Figure 2.1: Newton depicted in a print by William Blake.

2.3 Political activity

William Blake's first collection of poems, *Poetical Sketches*, was printed around 1783. After his father's death, Blake and former fellow apprentice James Parker opened a print shop in 1784, and began working with radical publisher Joseph Johnson. Johnson's house was a meeting-place for some leading English intellectual dissidents of the time: theologian and scientist Joseph Priestley, philosopher Richard Price, artist John Henry Fuseli, early feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and English-American revolutionary Thomas Paine. Along with William Wordsworth and William Godwin, Blake had great hopes for the French and American revolutions, but despaired with the rise of Robespierre and the Reign of Terror in France.

Blake illustrated *Original Stories from Real Life* (2nd edition, 1791) by Mary Wollstonecraft. They seem to have shared some views on sexual equality and the institution of marriage. In 1793 Blake published *Visions of the Daughters of Albion*, in which he condemned the cruel absurdity of enforced marriage without love and defended the right of women to complete self-fulfilment.

2.4 Some verses from Blake's *Auguries of Innocence*

*To see a World in a Grain of Sand
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower
Hold Infinity in the palm of your hand
And Eternity in an hour*

*A Robin Red breast in a Cage
Puts all Heaven in a Rage*

*A Dove house filled with Doves & Pigeons
Shudders Hell thr' all its regions*

*A dog starvd at his Masters Gate
Predicts the ruin of the State*

*A Horse misusd upon the Road
Calls to Heaven for Human blood*

*Each outcry of the hunted Hare
A fibre from the Brain does tear*

*A Skylark wounded in the wing
A Cherubim does cease to sing*

*The Game Cock clipd & armd for fight
Does the Rising Sun affright*

*Every Wolfs & Lions howl
Raises from Hell a Human Soul*

*The wild deer, wandring here & there
Keeps the Human Soul from Care*

*The Lamb misusd breeds Public Strife
And yet forgives the Butchers knife*

*The Bat that flits at close of Eve
Has left the Brain that wont Believe*

*The Owl that calls upon the Night
Speaks the Unbelievers fright*

*He who shall hurt the little Wren
Shall never be belovd by Men*

*He who the Ox to wrath has moved
Shall never be by Woman loved*

*The wanton Boy that kills the Fly
Shall feel the Spiders enmity*

*He who torments the Chafers Sprite
Weaves a Bower in endless Night*

*The Catterpillar on the Leaf
Repeats to thee thy Mothers grief*

*Kill not the Moth nor Butterfly
For the Last Judgment draweth nigh*

*He who shall train the Horse to War
Shall never pass the Polar Bar*

*The Beggars Dog & Widows Cat
Feed them & thou wilt grow fat*

*The Gnat that sings his Summers Song
Poison gets from Slanders tongue*

*The poison of the Snake & Newt
Is the sweat of Envys Foot*

*The poison of the Honey Bee
Is the Artists Jealousy*

*The Princes Robes & Beggars Rags
Are Toadstools on the Misers Bags*

*A Truth thats told with bad intent
Beats all the Lies you can invent*

*The Whore & Gambler by the State
Licenced build that Nations Fate*

*The Harlots cry from Street to Street
Shall weave Old Englands winding Sheet*

*The Winners Shout the Losers Curse
Dance before dead Englands Hearse*

*Every Night & every Morn
Some to Misery are Born
Every Morn and every Night
Some are Born to sweet delight
Some are Born to sweet delight
Some are Born to Endless Night.*

2.5 *Jerusalem*

*And did those feet in ancient time
Walk upon England's mountains green?
And was the holy Lamb of God
On England's pleasant pastures seen?*

*And did the Countenance Divine
Shine forth upon our clouded hills?
And was Jerusalem builded here*

Among these dark Satanic Mills?

*Bring me my bow of burning gold!
Bring me my arrows of desire!
Bring me my spear! O clouds, unfold!
Bring me my chariot of fire!*

*I will not cease from mental fight,
Nor shall my sword sleep in my hand,
Till we have built Jerusalem
In England's green and pleasant land.*

2.6 *London*

*I wandered through each chartered street
Near which the chartered Thames doth flow.
A mark in every face I meet,
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.*

*In every cry of every man,
In every infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forged manacles I hear.*

*How the chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackening church appalls,
And how the hapless soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down palace-walls.*

*But most, through midnight streets I hear
How the youthful harlot's curse
Blasts the new-born infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the marriage-hearse.*



Figure 2.2: William Blake in a portrait by Thomas Phillips.



Figure 2.3: Blake's *Ancient of Days*, 1794.

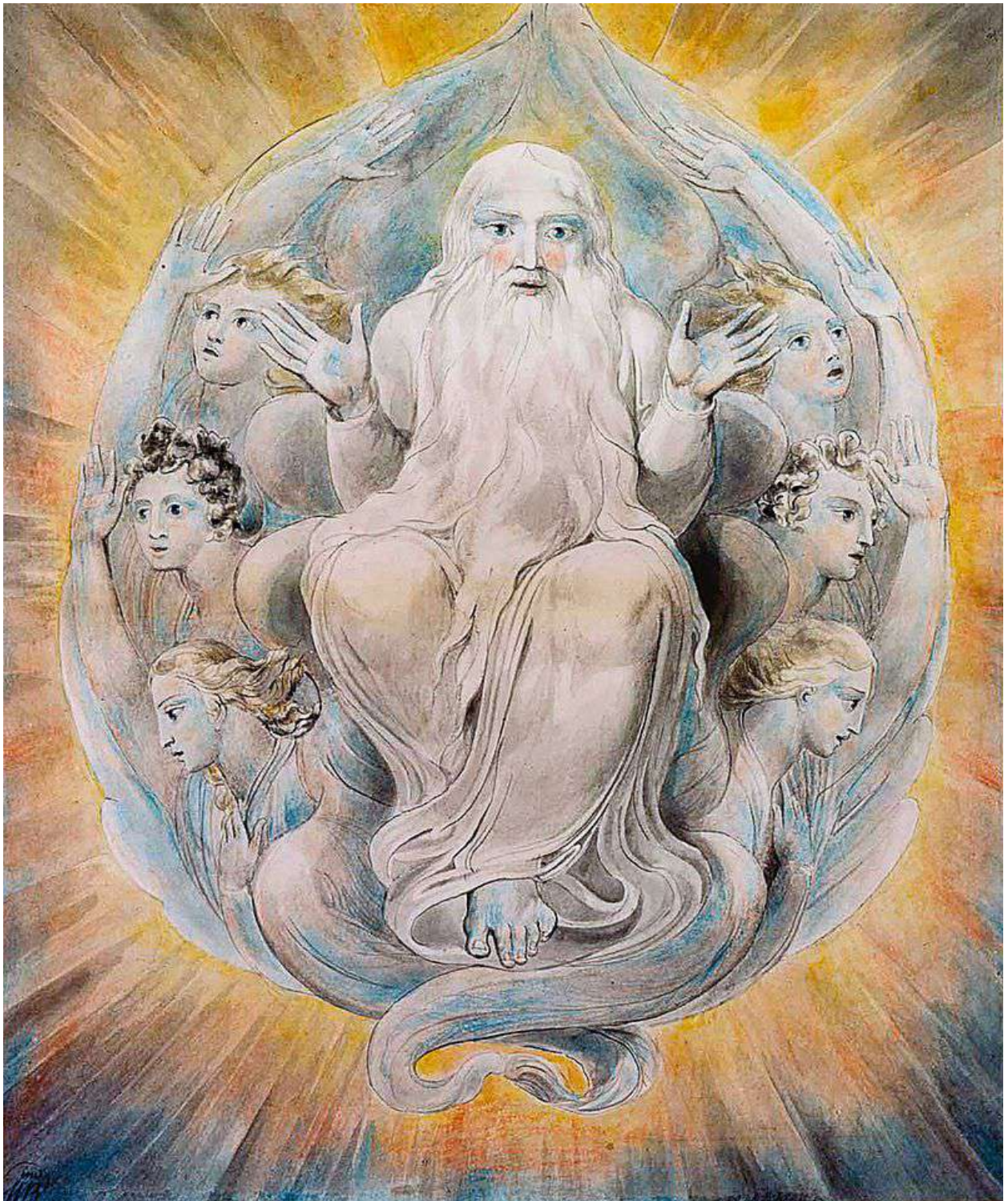


Figure 2.4: Blake's *God blessing the seventh day*, 1805 watercolour.



Figure 2.5: Blake's *The Lovers' Whirlwind*, illustrates Hell in Canto V of Dante's *Inferno*.



Figure 2.6: *The Night of Enitharmon's Joy*, 1795; Blake's vision of Hecate, Greek goddess of black magic and the underworld.



Figure 2.7: *The Body of Abel Found by Adam and Eve*, c. 1825, Watercolour on wood.



Figure 2.8: Blake's *Lot and His Daughters*, Huntington Library, c. 1800.

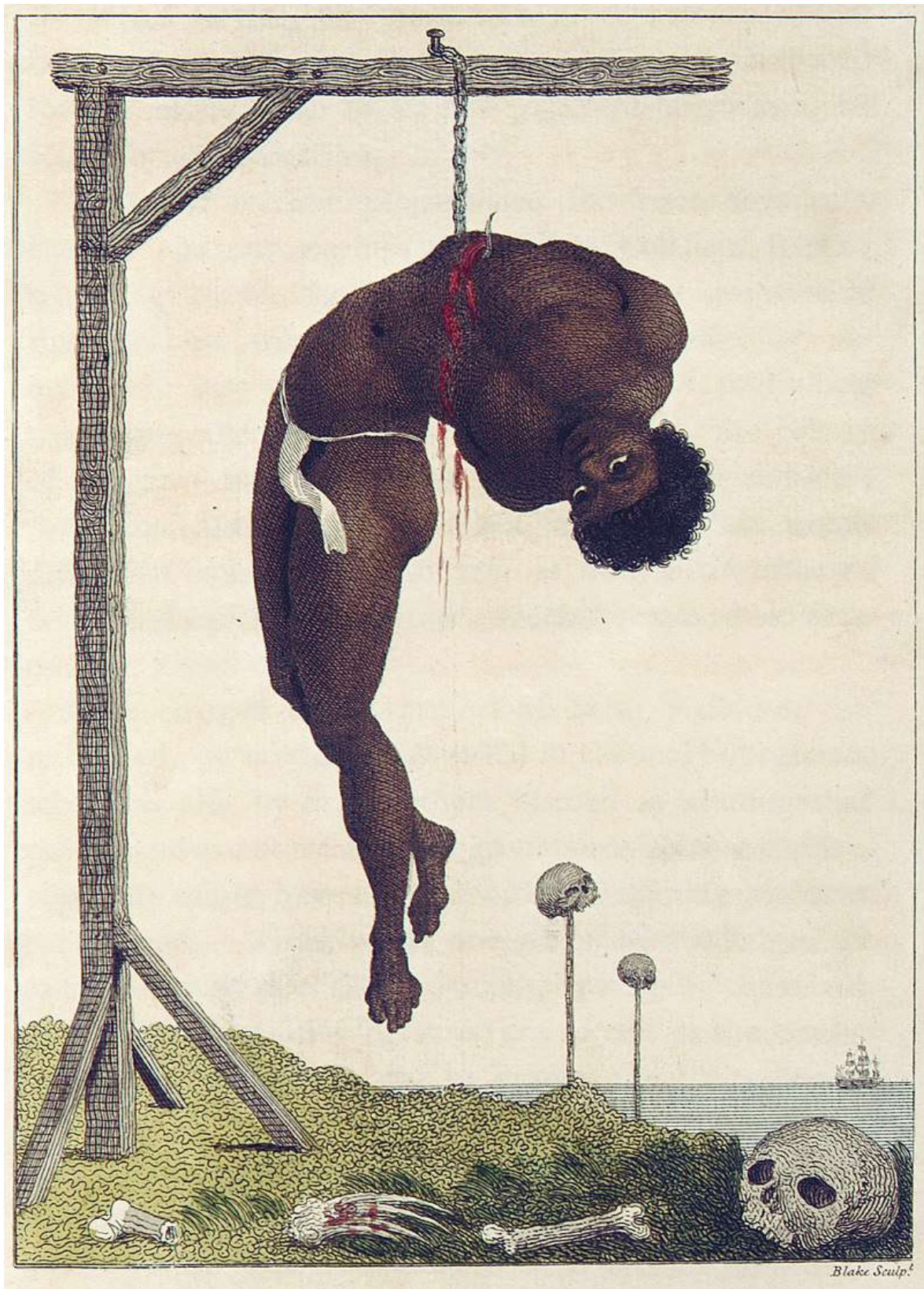


Figure 2.9: Blake's *A Negro Hung Alive by the Ribs to a Gallows*, an illustration to J. G. Stedman's *Narrative, of a Five Years' Expedition, against the Revolted Negroes of Surinam* (1796).

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Chapter 3

THOMAS PAINE

3.1 Early life

Thomas Paine was born in 1737 in Thetford, Norfolk, England. His father was a manufacturer of rope stays used on ships, and after attending grammar school, Paine was apprenticed to his father. Later, he held a variety of positions in England, including excise officer and school-teacher.

Paine also opened a tobacco shop, but it failed, and the resulting financial difficulties put Paine in danger of debtor's prison. He was saved from this fate by Benjamin Franklin, to whom he had been introduced by a fellow excise officer. Franklin suggested to Paine that he should emigrate to America, and he set sail in 1774.

Thomas Paine barely survived the voyage to America. The water on board had been polluted with typhoid fever, and when the ship arrived in Pennsylvania, Paine was so ill that he had to be carried ashore. Franklin's physician nursed the sick man back to health. Paine then became a citizen of Pennsylvania, and in 1775 he found work as editor of the *Pennsylvania Magazine*, a post which he filled with distinction.

3.2 Common sense, 1776

In Pennsylvania, Thomas Paine became an enthusiastic supporter American independence movement, and in 1776 he published an immensely successful pamphlet entitled *Common Sense*. Ultimately half a million copies of this pamphlet were sold in the American colonies, whose population at that time was only 2.5 million. In proportion to the total population, Paine's pamphlet sold more copies than any printed work ever published in America, before or since.

Besides readers who owned copies of *Common Sense*, many others heard it read aloud in homes or taverns. The revolution against the English monarchy had already started, but Paine's pamphlet encouraged enlistment in George Washington's Continental Army and it supplied the the colonists with strong arguments for independence. Because of this, Paine is often called "the father of the American Revolution".

In his introduction to *Common Sense*, Paine wrote: “The cause of America is, to a great extent, the cause of all mankind. Many circumstances have, and will, arise, which are not local but universal, and through which principles all lovers of mankind are affected, and in the event of which their affections are interested. The laying of a country desolate with fire and sword, declaring war against the natural rights of all mankind, and extirpating the defenders thereof from the face of the earth, is the concern of every man to whom nature hath given the power of feeling; of which class, regardless of party censure, is the author.”

In the main body of the pamphlet he opposed the idea that the English constitution is a good for America: “I know that it is difficult to get over long standing prejudices, yet if we suffer ourselves to examine the component parts of the English constitution, we shall find them to be the base remains of two ancient tyrannies, compounded with some new republican materials.

First: The remains of the monarchical tyranny in the person of the king.

Secondly: The remains of the aristocratical tyranny in the persons of the peers.

Thirdly: The new republican materials in the persons of the commons, on whose virtue depends the freedom of England.”

“There is something exceedingly ridiculous in the composition of monarchy; it first excludes a man from the means of information, yet empowers him to act in cases where the highest judgement is required. The state of a king shuts him off from the world; yet the business of a king requires him to know it thoroughly; whereof the different parts, by opposing and destroying each other, prove the whole character to be absurd and useless.”

“That the crown is the overbearing part of the English constitution, needs not be mentioned, and that it derives its whole consequence merely from being the giver of places and pensions is self-evident, whereof, although we have been wise enough to shut an lock a door against absolute monarchy, we at the same time have been foolish enough to put the crown in possession of the key.”

3.3 The Rights of Man, (1791)

The Continental Congress sought financial help from France to support the revolutionary war against England. Thomas Paine was sent to France as one of two negotiators. He landed there in March 1781 and returned to America in August with 2.5 million livres in silver, as part of a “present” of 6 million and a loan of 10 million.

Paine returned to England in 1787 and he soon became involved a debate concerning the French Revolution. In 1790, the conservative writer Edmond Burke issued a pamphlet entitled *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Burke’s pamphlet was an argument for retaining traditional methods of government. Since they had evolved slowly and had been tested over long periods of time, Burke argued, traditional forms of government were more trustworthy than institutions that was newly invented.

Burke’s pamphlet provoked a storm of refutations, and Thomas Paine joined the chorus with a pamphlet entitled *The Rights of Man*. He first offered this pamphlet to the liberal publisher Joseph Johnson. However, Johnson had been especially warned by government

agents that if he printed anything by Paine, he would be speedily imprisoned. Paine himself was warned by William Blake that if he returned to his lodgings, he too would be imprisoned. Blake advised him to flee to France.

Before leaving for France, Paine entrusted *The Rights of Man* to another printer, J.S. Jordan, who risked arrest by publishing it. Nearly a million copies were sold! Details of the publication were handled by William Godwin, Thomas Brand Hollis and Thomas Holcroft, all of whom were close friends of Paine.

In England, Thomas Paine was tried *in absentia* for writing *The Rights of Man*, and he was convicted of seditious libel against the King. Of course he could not be arrested and hanged by the English government, because he was in France.

Despite not being able to speak French, Paine was elected to the French National Convention. However, France at that time was not a safe place, since rival revolutionary factions were fighting for control of the country. Paine was arrested in 1793 by Robespierre's party because he supported the rival Girondists. After narrowly escaping execution, Paine was finally released from prison through the diplomatic efforts of the future American President, James Monroe. Thus Paine survived the critical days until the fall of Robespierre, after which he lived safely in France for a number of years.

In his 90,000-word book, *The Rights of Man*, Paine argued that human rights originate in Nature, thus, rights cannot be granted via political charter, because that implies that rights are legally revocable, hence, would be privileges:

"It is a perversion of terms", Paine wrote, "to say that a charter gives rights. It operates by a contrary effect - that of taking rights away. Rights are inherently in all the inhabitants; but charters, by annulling those rights, in the majority, leave the right, by exclusion, in the hands of a few... They... consequently are instruments of injustice ... The fact, therefore, must be that the individuals, themselves, each, in his own personal and sovereign right, entered into a contract with each other to produce a government: and this is the only mode in which governments have a right to arise, and the only principle on which they have a right to exist."

Thomas Paine argued that government's only purpose is safeguarding the individual's safety and inherent, inalienable rights; each societal institution that does not benefit the nation is illegitimate - especially monarchy and aristocracy.

Many of these ideas were already circulating during the Enlightenment period, for example in John Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*. Paine developed these ideas further, helped by conversations with Thomas Jefferson, who was also in Paris at that time.

In the final part of *The Rights of Man*, Paine proposes that a reformed English Constitution should be drafted, along the lines of the American Constitution. He advocated the elimination of aristocratic titles, a budget without military allocations, lower taxes and subsidized education for the poor, and a progressively weighted and increased income tax for the wealthy.



Figure 3.1: Thomas Paine in a portrait by Mathew Pratt.



Figure 3.2: Oil painting by Laurent Dabos, circa 1791.

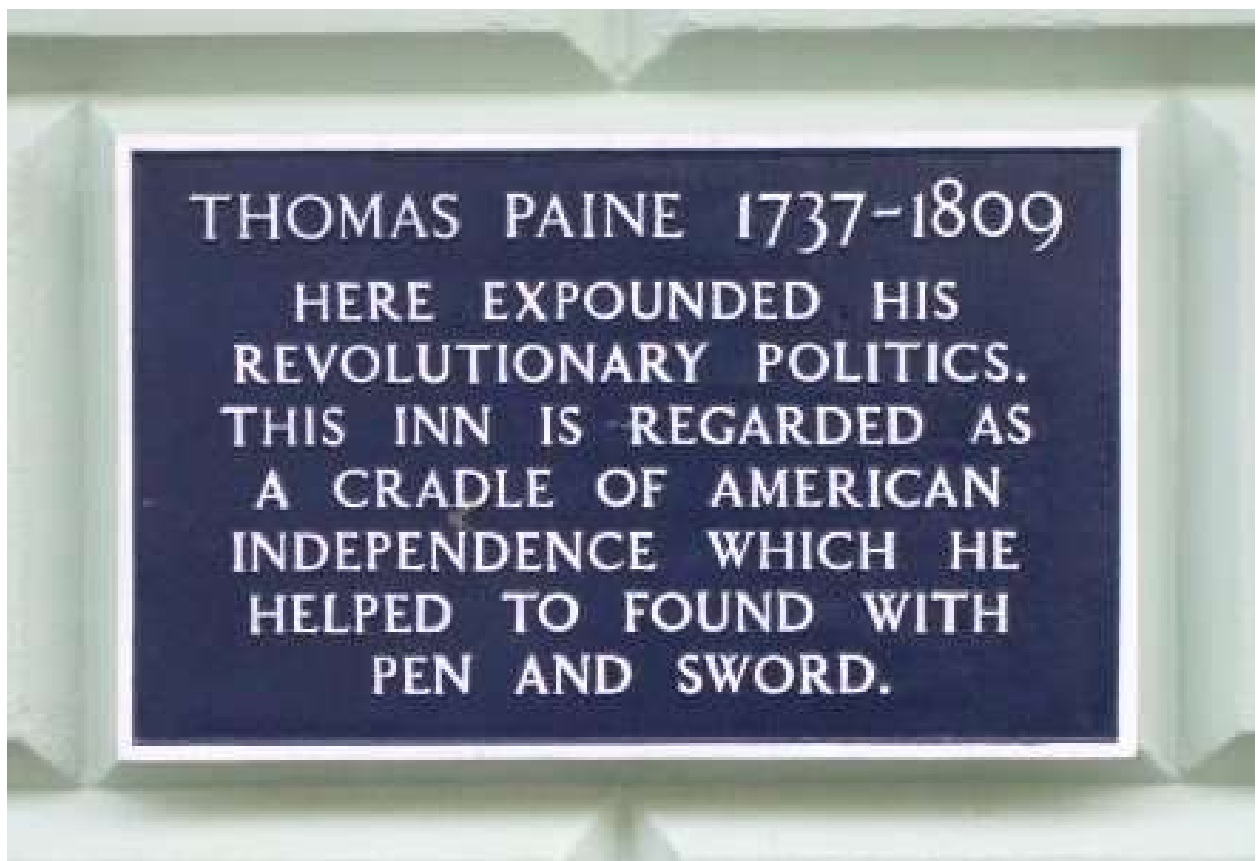


Figure 3.3: Plaque at the White Hart Hotel, Lewes, East Sussex, south east England.

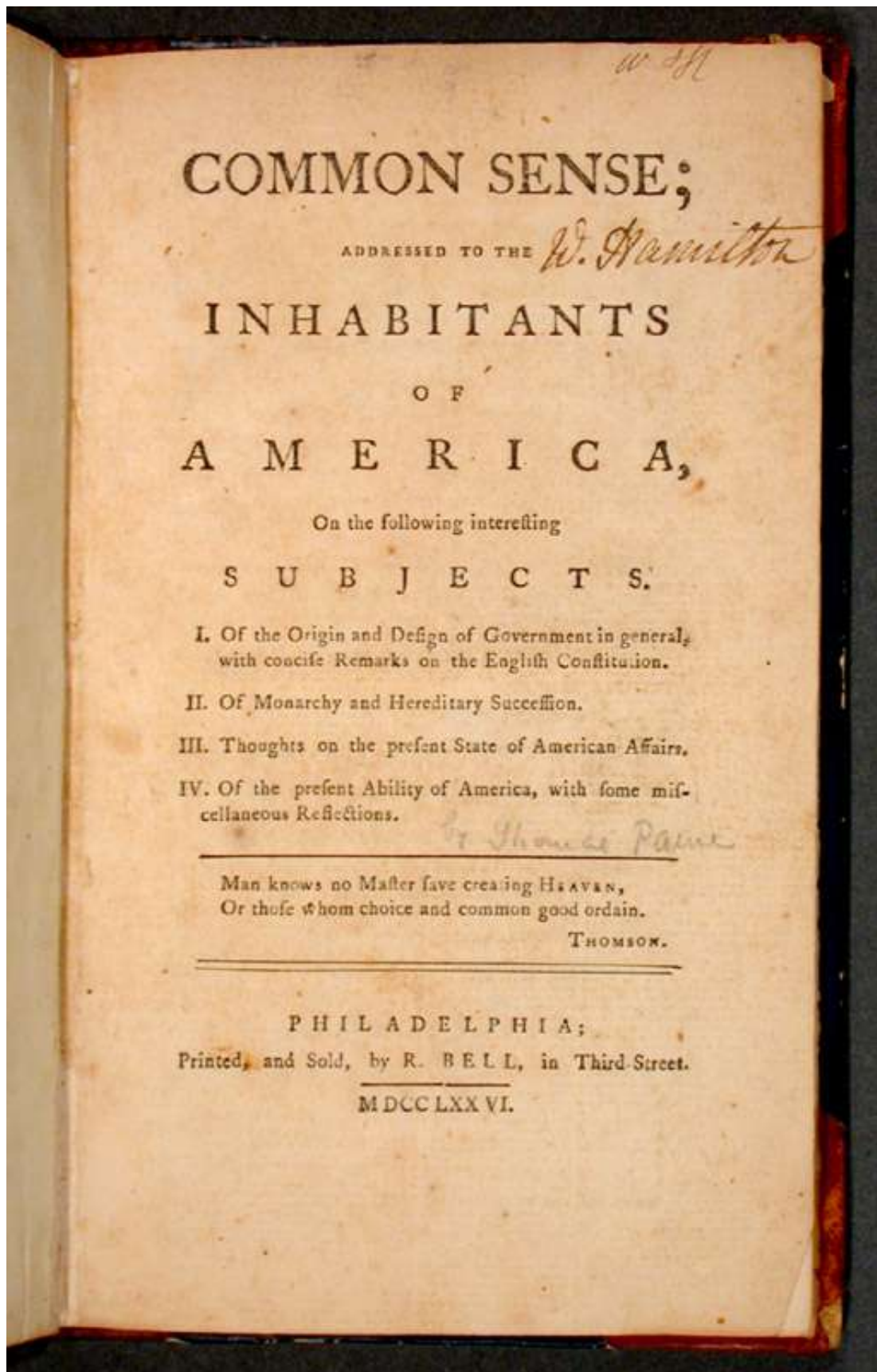


Figure 3.4: Common Sense, published in 1776.

THE
A G E
O F
R E A S O N;
B E I N G
AN INVESTIGATION
O F
TRUE AND FABULOUS THEOLOGY.

BY THOMAS PAINE,
SECRETARY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS TO CONGRESS
IN THE AMERICAN WAR,
AND AUTHOR OF THE WORKS ENTITLED,
COMMON SENSE, AND RIGHTS OF MAN, &c.

PARIS:
PRINTED BY BARROIS.
LONDON: Sold by D. I. EATON, at the COCK AND SWINE,
No. 74, Newgate-Street.
1794.
PRICE TWO SHILLINGS.

Figure 3.5: Title page from the first English edition of Part I.

3.4 The Impact of Thomas Paine's Ideas

Napoleon claimed that he slept with a copy of Paine's *The Rights of Man* under his pillow. Napoleon was once friendly with Paine, but when he assumed the title of Emperor, Paine denounced him as a charlatan.

Abraham Lincoln's writing style was very much influenced by Paine's. Roy Basler, the editor of Lincoln's papers, said: "Paine had a strong influence on Lincoln's style: No other writer of the eighteenth century, with the exception of Jefferson, parallels more closely the temper or gist of Lincoln's later thought. In style, Paine above all others affords the variety of eloquence which, chastened and adapted to Lincoln's own mood, is revealed in Lincoln's formal writings."

Thomas Edison wrote: "I have always regarded Paine as one of the greatest of all Americans. Never have we had a sounder intelligence in this republic ... It was my good fortune to encounter Thomas Paine's works in my boyhood ... it was, indeed, a revelation to me to read that great thinker's views on political and theological subjects. Paine educated me, then, about many matters of which I had never before thought. I remember, very vividly, the flash of enlightenment that shone from Paine's writings, and I recall thinking, at that time, 'What a pity these works are not today the schoolbooks for all children!' My interest in Paine was not satisfied by my first reading of his works. I went back to them time and again, just as I have done since my boyhood days."

The Uruguayan national hero Jose Gervasio Artigas became familiar with and embraced Paine's ideas. In turn, many of Artigas's writings drew directly from Paine's, including the Instructions of 1813, which Uruguayans consider to be one of their country's most important constitutional documents; it was one of the earliest writings to articulate a principled basis for an identity independent of Buenos Aires.

Interestingly, like his lifelong friend and mentor Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Paine was also an inventor. Single-span iron bridges designed by him have been constructed in many parts of the world, and he contributed to the improvement of the steam engine.

In 2002, Paine was voted number 34 of "100 Greatest Britons" in a public poll conducted by the BBC.

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Chapter 4

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

4.1 A pioneer of nonviolent resistance to tyranny

Largely unrecognized during his lifetime because his radical views prevented his poems from being published, Shelley is today considered to be one of the major English-language poets. Less well known is the fact that he was a pioneer of non-violent resistance to tyranny, whose ideas influenced Henry David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoy and Mahatma Gandhi.

Percy Bysshe Shelley was the eldest legitimate son of Sir Timothy Shelley, Baronet and Whig Member of Parliament. His mother was a wealthy Sussex landowner. Shelley was thus the heir to a baronetcy and a large estate. He had a happy childhood, but was unhappy at Eton College, where he was regularly mobbed because of his strong principles and his refusal to take part in sports.

In 1810, after graduating from Eton, Shelley became a student at Oxford University. Legend has it that he attended only one lecture. However, while at Oxford, he was extremely active as a writer, publishing a series of books: the Gothic novel, *Zastrozzi* (1810), *St. Irvyne; or, The Rosicrucian: A Romance* (dated 1811), *Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire* (written together with his sister Elizabeth) and a collection of poetry entitled *Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson* (written in collaboration with Thomas Jefferson Hogg).



Figure 4.1: Percy Bysshe Shelley in a portrait by Alfred Clint.



Figure 4.2: Posthumous Portrait of Shelley Writing *Prometheus Unbound* in Italy - painting by Joseph Severn, 1845.



Figure 4.3: Reni or Sirani's portrait of Beatrice Cenci, which captivated Shelley and inspired his verse play on her parricide.



Figure 4.4: *The Funeral of Shelley* by Louis Édouard Fournier (1889). Pictured in the centre are, from left, Trelawny, Hunt, and Byron. In fact, Hunt did not observe the cremation, and Byron left early. Mary Shelley, who is pictured kneeling at left, did not attend the funeral according to customs at the time.



Figure 4.5: Keats-Shelley Memorial House, at right with a red sign by the Spanish Steps, Rome

4.2 Expelled from Oxford

All these books could have been considered subversive by the Oxford authorities, but no action was taken. However, when Shelley anonymously published *The Necessity of Atheism* in 1811, the University authorities threatened to expel him if he did not renounce his authorship. Shelley refused and was expelled. His influential father then intervened, and persuaded the authorities to reinstate his son if he would renounce his authorship as well as the principles expressed in the pamphlet. However, Shelley once again refused. This led to an estrangement between father and son.

Sir Thomas cut off his son's allowance, and from then on, Shelley's financial circumstances became precarious. He was still the heir to an estate with an income of 6,000 pounds per year, in those days an enormous sum, and he could (and did) borrow money against his future inheritance, but the amount that he could raise in that way was limited.

4.3 Godwin's disciple

After reading William Godwin's *Political Justice*, Shelly wrote in his verse-drama *Prometheus Unbound*:

*The loathsome mask has fallen, the man remains
Sceptreless, free, uncircumscribed, but man
Equal, unclassed, tribeless, and nationless,
Exempt from awe, worship, degree, the king
Over himself; just, gentle, wise...*

After being expelled from Oxford, Shelley visited the poet Robert Southey, who informed him that the once universally popular revolutionary author William Godwin was still alive. Shelley who had always been an ardent admirer of Godwin's writing, was greatly excited by the news, and he immediately contacted Godwin, offering himself as a disciple.

At that time, England was going through a period of reaction against the excesses of the French Revolution, and Godwin's books and articles were no longer popular. Left with two infant daughters to care for after the death of his wife, Godwin had been driven to marry his neighbor, Mary Jane Claremont, a widow who herself had a young daughter. Thus, when Shelley arrived at Godwin's household he met three attractive young girls, Fanny Imlay, Jane Claremont and Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin. All three had been educated by Godwin.

Here is Jane Claremont's description of the household: "All the family worked hard, learning and studying: We all took the liveliest interest in the great questions of the day. Common topics, gossiping, scandal, found no entrance in our circle for we had been taught by Mr. Godwin to think it the greatest misfortune to be fond of the world, or worldly pleasures or of luxury or money; and that there was no greater happiness than to think

well of those around us, to love them, and to delight in being useful or pleasing to them”.

“The name of Godwin has been used to excite in me feelings of reverence and admiration”, the 20-year-old Shelley had written in his letter to Godwin. “...I had enrolled your name on the list of the honourable dead. I had felt regret that the glory of your being had passed from this earth of ours. It is not so. You still live, and I firmly believe are still planning the welfare of human kind.

“I am young’, Shelley wrote, ‘You have gone before me, I doubt not a veteran to me in the years of persecution. Is it strange that, defying persecution as I have done, I should outstep the limits of custom’s prescription, and endeavour to make my desire useful by friendship with William Godwin?’”

Godwin answered immediately, and in the voluminous correspondence which followed he soon recognized Shelley’s genius.

Inspired by Godwin’s *Political Justice*, Shelley had decided to devote both his life and his fortune to political reform. (The fortune, however, was only a distant future prospect.) In his letters, Godwin advised slow changes through education as the best means of reform but Shelley’s whole temperament rebelled against caution and gradualism.

During the spring of 1812 Shelley wrote *An Address to the Irish People* and travelled to Ireland to work for the cause of Catholic emancipation. He assured the worried Godwin that the pamphlet contained ‘no religion but benevolence, no cause but virtue, no party but the world’. Shelley soon found himself so surrounded by beggars and government spies that he was forced to leave Ireland.

Shelley’s letters had by this time captured the imagination of the entire Godwin household, and whenever a new one arrived with its familiar handwriting, all three daughters and Mary Jane waited excitedly “on tiptoe” to know the news. Shelley, who dreamed of establishing a utopian community of free and enlightened friends, invited Godwin to come to Devon for a visit and Godwin (who was in the habit of making a small excursion during his summer vacation) did so; but after a terrible journey by boat in stormy weather he arrived at Lynemouth only to find Shelley gone. Alarmed by the arrest of his servant Dan (who had been posting Shelley’s *Declaration of Rights* and his ballad *The Devil’s Walk*), the young poet had left quietly with his entourage before he himself was arrested.

4.4 A wild romance

In 1814, Shelley had lodgings in Fleet Street but, between May and July, he lived mainly with the Godwin family. Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin was at that time sixteen and a half years old and extremely pretty, with long blond hair and her father’s expressive eyes. She had just returned from Scotland, where she had lived for two years with family friends, ostensibly for the sake of her health. Probably the real reason for Mary’s stay in Scotland was friction with her step-mother: Mary’s affection for her father had been enough to excite the jealousy of the new Mrs Godwin.

Shelley was immediately electrified by meeting Mary. As she told him of her daydreams, of her writing, and of the wild Scottish landscapes which she had just experienced, Mary

seemed to him to combine the emotional sensitivity of Mary Wollstonecraft with the imagination and mental power of William Godwin. In an ode to Mary, Shelley wrote:

*They say that thou wert lovely from thy birth,
Of glorious parents, thou aspiring Child.
I wonder not, for One then left this earth
Whose life was like a setting planet mild,
Which clothed thee in a radiance undefiled
Of its departing glory, still her fame
Shines on thee through the tempests dark and wild
Which shake these latter days; and thou canst claim
The shelter from thy Sire of an immortal name.*

For her part, Mary was fascinated by the openness, generosity and warmth of the brilliant young writer who was her father's best-loved disciple. In her copy of Shelley's revolutionary poem *Queen Mab*, she wrote: 'This book is sacred to me... I love the author beyond all power of expression...'

Because of her step-mother's jealousy, it was uncomfortable for Mary to be at home; and she was in the habit of taking a book to the old St Pancreas churchyard where her mother was buried. Shelley followed her there and under the willow tree beside Mary Wollstonecraft's grave they declared their love for each other. Meanwhile, Mary's step-sister Jane, who had stage-managed the meeting, watched from a distant tombstone. Jane was (of course) also in love with Shelley and Fanny, the third sister, was in love with him too.

On 28 July 1814, Godwin awoke to find a note on his dressing table: Shelley had eloped with Mary and, amazingly, he and Mary had taken Jane with them. Mary was 16 years old, Jane 15, and Shelley 21.

The fugitives had left at five in the morning and hurried to Dover where they embarked for France in a small boat. After a stormy and dangerous night on the Channel, they arrived at Calais. Meanwhile, Mrs Godwin set off in pursuit, hoping to rescue Jane and with the help of information from the London stables, she traced the runaways to their lodgings in Calais. Jane spent the next night with her mother, but in the morning she decided firmly to continue with Mary and Shelley.

Why had Shelley and Mary taken Jane? For one thing, Jane was the only one of the three who spoke fluent French and she was good at making practical arrangements. Shelley also thought that Jane needed to be rescued from the influence of the new Mrs Godwin. "I am not in the least in love with her", Shelley is said to have explained, "but she is a nice little girl, and her mother is such a vulgar, commonplace woman, without an idea of philosophy. I do not think she is a proper person to form the mind of a young girl."

After arriving in Paris, Shelley, Mary and Jane bought a mule and they set out for Switzerland, sometimes riding the mule but for the most part walking. Switzerland was the country of Rousseau and the setting of Godwin's novel, *Fleetwood*. They hoped that it would prove to be a land of enlightenment and freedom. After a few weeks in Switzer-

land, however, Shelley's financial problems forced them to return to England. Mary later described the journey in her *History of a Six Week's Tour*.

4.5 Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*

Jane now changed her name to one which she considered to be more romantic: Claire. Since she was no longer permitted a share of Shelley, Claire decided to capture a poet of her own and with remarkable resourcefulness and determination she managed to seduce Lord Byron, then at the height of his fame. This was an extraordinary accomplishment since Byron was being pursued by hordes of fashionable and beautiful women, including the famous Lady Caroline Lamb. However, Byron was soon forced to leave England because of scandals resulting from his affairs, especially his relationship with his half-sister Augusta.

On 2 May 1816, Shelley and Mary left England too, planning never to return. Shelley's financial position had improved following the death of his grandfather in 1815. Shelley and Mary took Claire Clairmont with them. She was already pregnant with Lord Byron's child, although probably none of them knew it. They headed for Geneva, hoping to meet Lord Byron there. Claire was anxious to show off her catch to Shelley and the two poets were looking forward to meeting each other. Although Shelley was not yet famous as a writer, Byron had read and admired his work.

Byron had rented a large house called Villa Diadoti, near Lake Geneva, and he was staying there with his personal physician, Dr Polidori. Shelley, Mary and Claire found quarters at the nearby Maison Chapuis, and before long the whole Villa Diadoti group had settled into a routine of excursions on the lake or walks along the shore, followed by long evenings of conversation at Villa Diadoti. Whenever the weather was bad, as it frequently was that summer, Shelley, Mary and Claire spent the night at Diadoti instead of returning to Maison Chapuis.

Because of Byron's fame, their movements were followed avidly by scandalized English tourists, who spent hours looking at the party through field-glasses and telescopes. Stories of immorality filtered back to England; and the rumors had some foundation, since Byron had resumed his affair with Claire. He looked down on her, but Claire was very pretty, and, as Byron explained, "I could not exactly play the stoic with a woman who has scrambled eight hundred miles to unphilosophize me".

Byron was writing the third canto of *Childe Harold*, and in the evenings he often read new sections of it to the others. The romantic mood of the poem and the splendor of the distant Alps contributed to the atmosphere of the summer evenings at Diadoti.

Byron also retold for his friends the myth of Prometheus Porphyros, which he had translated from Aeschylus at Harrow. In this myth, Prometheus steals the sacred fire of the gods and gives it to mankind. Punished by Zeus, Prometheus is chained forever to a rock in the Caucasus, while an eagle tears out his vitals. A later version of the myth, Prometheus Plasticator, was popular among the Romans, and in this later version, Prometheus creates or recreates mankind by giving life to a figure of clay.

Both Byron and Shelley recognized the symbolic possibilities of the myth. Prometheus

had already been used as a symbol of the creative artist but Shelley, with his interest in science, saw that Prometheus could also stand as a symbol for scientific creativity. Benjamin Franklin had recently performed the famous experiment in which he flew a kite during a thunderstorm, thus drawing down lightning and showing it to be identical with electricity. Franklin, Shelley realized, could be thought of as a modern Prometheus, who defied the thunderbolts of Zeus and brought the sacred fire of the gods down from heaven for the use of mankind.

The weather worsened at Diadoti, and for many days, heavy rain and lightning confined the party to the villa. To pass the time, they read aloud to each other from a book of German ghost stories. The storm outside and the strange Gothic stories had a strong effect on Shelley's imagination, and one night he rushed out of the room with a cry of terror, explaining later that he had seen a vision of a woman with eyes instead of breasts.

"We will each write a ghost story", Byron said, and his idea was adopted with enthusiasm. Dr Polidori began a tale of a skull-headed woman; and both Byron and Shelley began stories too but, being poets, they soon tired of writing prose. Mary was unable to think of an idea sufficiently horrible to produce terror in a reader. Every morning she was asked whether she had found a theme and she was forced to answer sadly that she had not.

Meanwhile, Byron and Shelley continued to talk of the possibilities of the myth of Prometheus, especially as a symbol for scientific creativity. Perhaps, one day, science might achieve the Promethean feat of creating life. Shelley was especially interested in experiments with electricity, such as the discovery by Galvani that an electrical current could cause the legs of a dismembered frog to move.

"Many and long were the conversations between Lord Byron and Shelley", Mary wrote later. Finally, well past midnight, Mary went to bed; but she was unable to sleep. Images from the conversation, to which she had been an attentive but almost silent listener, passed uncontrollably through her mind. Later, remembering this half-waking dream, she wrote:

"I saw, with shut eyes, but acute mental vision, I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together. I saw the hideous phantasm of a man stretched out, and then, on the working of some powerful engine, show signs of life, and stir with an uneasy, half vital motion. Frightful must it be; for supremely frightful would be the effect of any human endeavour to mock the stupendous mechanism of the Creator of the world."

Mary realized that she had found her theme. In fact, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, not yet 19 years old, had discovered an enduring symbol for science out of control, science pursued without regard for its social consequences. The next day, encouraged by Shelley, she began to write *Frankenstein, or The Modern Prometheus*,



Figure 4.6: Richard Rothwell's portrait of Mary Shelley was shown at the Royal Academy in 1840, accompanied by lines from Percy Shelley's poem "The Revolt of Islam" calling her a "child of love and light" Mary's father was the famous reformist author and philosopher, William Godwin, and her mother, Mary Wollstonecraft, was also a famous author; but today, Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*, conceived in a half-waking dream by herself, and written in collaboration with her husband, is perhaps known more widely than the books of her famous parents.

4.6 A few poems by Shelley

Ozymandias

*I met a traveller from an antique land,
 Who said: "Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
 Stand in the desert. . . . Near them, on the sand,
 Half sunk a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
 And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
 Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
 Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
 The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed;
 And on the pedestal, these words appear:
 My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings;
 Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!
 Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
 Of that colossal Wreck, boundless and bare
 The lone and level sands stretch far away.*

A few verses from *Prometheus Unbound*

*This is the day, which down the void abyss
 At the Earth-born's spell yawns for Heaven's despotism,
 And Conquest is dragged captive through the deep:
 Love, from its awful throne of patient power
 In the wise heart, from the last giddy hour
 Of dead endurance, from the slippery, steep,
 And narrow verge of crag-like agony, springs
 And folds over the world its healing wings.*

*Gentleness, Virtue, Wisdom, and Endurance,
 These are the seals of that most firm assurance
 Which bars the pit over Destruction's strength;
 And if, with infirm hand, Eternity,
 Mother of many acts and hours, should free
 The serpent that would clasp her with his length;
 These are the spells by which to re-assume
 An empire o'er the disentangled doom.*

*To suffer woes which Hope thinks infinite;
 To forgive wrongs darker than death or night;
 To defy Power, which seems omnipotent;
 To love, and bear; to hope till Hope creates*

*From its own wreck the thing it contemplates;
 Neither to change, nor falter, nor repent;
 This, like thy glory, Titan, is to be
 Good, great and joyous, beautiful and free;
 This is alone Life, Joy, Empire, and Victory.*

Ode to the West Wind

*O Wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being-
 Thou from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
 Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,
 Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
 Pestilence-stricken multitudes! - O thou
 Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed
 The wing'd seeds, where they lie cold and low,
 Each like a corpse within its grave, until
 Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow
 Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
 (Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)
 With living hues and odours plain and hill-
 Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere-
 Destroyer and Preserver - hear, O hear!*

*Thou on whose stream, 'mid the steep sky's commotion,
 Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
 Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,
 Angels of rain and lightning! they are spread
 On the blue surface of thine airy surge,
 Like the bright hair uplifted from the head
 Of some fierce Maenad, ev'n from the dim verge
 Of the horizon to the zenith's height-
 The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge
 Of the dying year, to which this closing night
 Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
 Vaulted with all thy congregated might
 Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
 Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: - O hear!*

*Thou who didst waken from his summer-dreams
 The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
 Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,
 Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,*

*And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,
All overgrown with azure moss, and flowers
So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers
Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know
Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear
And tremble and despoil themselves: - O hear!*

*If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share
The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! - if even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be
The comrade of thy wanderings over heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision,- I would ne'er have striven
As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
O lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!
A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee - tameless, and swift, and proud*

*Make me thy lyre, ev'n as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies
Will take from both a deep autumnal tone,
Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! be thou me, impetuous one!
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like wither'd leaves, to quicken a new birth;
And, by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth
The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?*

To a Skylark

*Hail to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from Heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.*

*Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.*

*In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are bright'ning,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an unbodied joy whose race is just begun.*

*The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of Heaven,
In the broad day-light
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,*

*Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.*

*All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and Heaven is overflow'd.*

*What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.*

*Like a Poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:*

*Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:*

*Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its a:ereal hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:*

*Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet those heavy-winged thieves:*

*Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awaken'd flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass.*

*Teach us, Sprite or Bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine:
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.*

*Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Match'd with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.*

*What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?*

*With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest: but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.*

*Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?*

*We look before and after,
And pine for what is not:
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.*

*Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.*

*Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!*

*Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.*



Figure 4.7: Caricature by George Cruikshank depicting the charge upon the rally. The mounted cavalry soldiers used their sabers against unarmed protesters, including women and children, killing many and wounding a much larger number. The massacre was called “Peterloo”, an ironic comparison to the battle of Waterloo. The result of the massacre was not reform. Instead the British Parliament passed a number of acts aimed at suppressing protests.

4.7 The Peterloo Massacre and *The Masque of Anarchy*

Shelley wrote his poem *The Masque of Anarchy* in response to the Peterloo Massacre, which took place at St. Peter's field, Manchester on the 16th of August 1819. Cavalry soldiers of the government charged a crowd of 60,000 citizens who were peacefully assembled to ask for better representation in Parliament. They were suffering from unemployment and from famine produced by the Corn Laws. The cavalry slashed down hundreds of the protesters with their sabres, including women and children. Shelley's poem advocating non-violent resistance to tyranny was an inspiration to Thoreau, Tolstoy and Gandhi. Here is the poem:



Figure 4.8: Another depiction of the Peterloo Massacre. The massacre had at least one positive result: It led to the foundation of the important progressive newspaper, *The Manchester Guardian*. It also inspired Shelley to write *The Masque of Anarchy*, from which the title of this book is taken,

The Masque of Anarchy

*Stand ye calm and resolute,
Like a forest close and mute,
With folded arms and looks which are
Weapons of unvanquished war.*

*And if then the tyrants dare,
Let them ride among you there;
Slash, and stab, and maim and hew;
What they like, that let them do.*

*With folded arms and steady eyes,
And little fear, and less surprise,
Look upon them as they slay,
Till their rage has died away:*

*Then they will return with shame,
To the place from which they came,
And the blood thus shed will speak
In hot blushes on their cheek:*

*Rise, like lions after slumber
In unvanquishable number!
Shake your chains to earth like dew
Which in sleep had fallen on you:
Ye are many, they are few!*

4.8 Shelley's major works

- (1810) Zastrozzi
- (1810) Original Poetry by Victor and Cazire
- (1810) Posthumous Fragments of Margaret Nicholson: Being Poems Found Amongst the Papers of That Noted Female Who Attempted the Life of the King in 1786
- (1810 dated 1811) St. Irvyne; or, The Rosicrucian
- (1812) The Devil's Walk: A Ballad
- (1813) Queen Mab: A Philosophical Poem
- (1814) A Refutation of Deism: In a Dialogue
- (1815) Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude
- (1816) The Daemon of the World
- (1816) Mont Blanc
- (1816) On Death

- (1817) Hymn to Intellectual Beauty (text)
- (1817) Laon and Cythna; or, The Revolution of the Golden City: A Vision of the Nineteenth Century
- (1817) The Revolt of Islam, A Poem, in Twelve Cantos
- (1817) History of a Six Weeks' Tour through a part of France, Switzerland, Germany, and Holland (with Mary Shelley)
- (1818) Ozymandias (text)
- (1818) The Banquet (or The Symposium) by Plato, translation from Greek into English[93]
- (1818) Rosalind and Helen: A Modern Eclogue (published in 1819)
- (1818) Lines Written Among the Euganean Hills, October 1818
- (1819) The Cenci, A Tragedy, in Five Acts
- (1819) Ode to the West Wind (text)
- (1819) The Masque of Anarchy
- (1819) England in 1819
- (1819) A Philosophical View of Reform (published in 1920)
- (1819) Julian and Maddalo: A Conversation
- (1820) Peter Bell the Third (published in 1839)
- (1820) Prometheus Unbound, A Lyrical Drama, in Four Acts
- (1820) To a Skylark
- (1820) The Cloud
- (1820) The Sensitive Plant[94]
- (1820) Oedipus Tyrannus; Or, Swellfoot The Tyrant: A Tragedy in Two Acts
- (1820) The Witch of Atlas (published in 1824)
- (1821) Adonais
- (1821) Ion by Plato, translation from Greek into English
- (1821) A Defence of Poetry (first published in 1840)
- (1821) Epipsychidion
- (1822) Hellas, A Lyrical Drama
- (1822) Wolfstein; or, The Mysterious Bandit (chapbook)
- (1822) The Triumph of Life (unfinished, published in 1824)

Short prose works

- "The Assassins, A Fragment of a Romance" (1814)
- "The Coliseum, A Fragment" (1817)
- "The Elysian Fields: A Lucianic Fragment" (1818)
- "Una Favola (A Fable)" (1819, originally in Italian)

Essays

- The Necessity of Atheism (1811)
- Poetical Essay on the Existing State of Things (1811)
- Declaration of Rights (1812)
- A Letter to Lord Ellenborough (1812)
- A Defence of Poetry
- A Vindication of Natural Diet (1813)
- A Refutation of Deism (1814)
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Chapter 5

ROBERT OWEN

5.1 Robert Owen and social reform

During the early phases of the Industrial Revolution in England, the workers suffered greatly. Enormous fortunes were made by mill and mine owners, while workers, including young children, were paid starvation wages for cruelly long working days. However, trade unions, child labor laws, and the gradual acceptance of birth control finally produced a more even distribution of the benefits of industrialization.

One of the most interesting pioneers of these social reforms was Robert Owen (1771-1858), who is generally considered to have been the father of the Cooperative Movement. Although in his later years not all of his projects developed as he wished, his life started as an amazing success story. Owen's life is not only fascinating in itself; it also illustrates some of the reforms that occurred between 1815 and 1850.

Robert Owen was born in Wales, the youngest son of a family of iron-mongers and saddle-makers. He was a very intelligent boy, and did well at school, but at the age of 9, he was apprenticed to a draper, at first in Wales. Later, at the age of 11, he was moved



Figure 5.1: **Twin Pines, the international symbol for cooperatives.**

to London, where he was obliged to work eighteen hours a day, six days a week, with only short pauses for meals. Understandably, Robert Owen found this intolerable, and he moved again, this time to Manchester, where he again worked for a draper.

5.2 A remarkable career

While in Manchester, Robert Owen became interested in the machines that were beginning to be used for spinning and weaving. He borrowed a hundred pounds from his brother, and entered (as a partner) a small business that made these machines.

After two years of moderate success as a small-scale industrialist, Owen saw the newspaper advertisement of a position for manager of a large spinning mill, owned by a Mr. Drinkwater. "I put on my hat" Owen wrote later, "and proceeded straight to Mr. Drinkwater's counting house." "How old are you?", he asked. "Twenty this May", was my reply. "How often do you get drunk in the week?"... "I was never", I said, "drunk in my life", blushing scarlet at this unexpected question. "What salary do you ask?" "Three hundred a year", was my reply. "What?", Mr. Drinkwater said with some surprise, repeating the words, "Three hundred pounds! I have had this morning I know not how many seeking the situation and I do not think that all of their askings would amount to what you require." "I cannot be governed by what others seek", said I, "and I cannot take less."

Apparently impressed by Robert Owen's success as a small-scale industrialist, and perhaps also impressed by his courage, Mr. Drinkwater hired him. Thus, at the age of 19, Owen became the manager of a large factory. Mr. Drinkwater had no cause to regret his decision, since his new manager quickly became the boy wonder of Manchester's textile community. Within six months, Drinkwater offered Owen a quarter interest in his business.

After several highly successful years in his new job, Robert Owen heard of several mills that were for sale in the village of New Lanark, near to Glasgow. The owner, Mr. Dale, happened to be the father of the girl with whom Robert Owen had fallen in love. Instead of directly asking Dale for permission to marry his daughter, Owen (together with some business partners) first purchased the mills, after which he won the hand of the daughter.



Figure 5.2: Robert Owen (1771-1858) was a social reformer and a pioneer of the cooperative movement. Painting by William Henry Brooke.

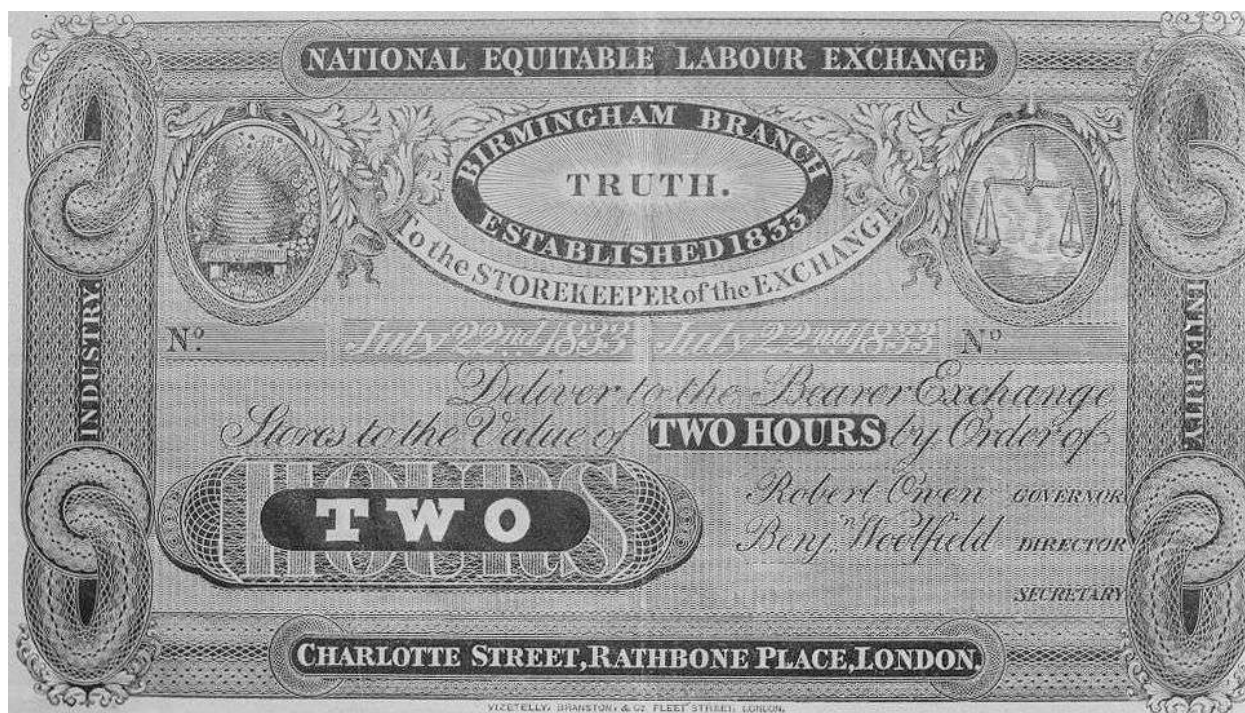


Figure 5.3: Truck system of payment by order of Robert Owen and Benj Woolfield, National Equitable Labour Exchange, 22 July 1833.

5.3 A utopian community at New Lanark

Ownership of the New Lanark mills gave Robert Owen the chance to put into practice the ideas of social reform that he had been developing throughout his life. Instead of driving his workers by threats of punishment, and instead of subjecting them to cruelly long working hours (such as he himself had experienced as a draper's apprentice in London), Owen made the life of his workers at New Lanark as pleasant as he possibly could. He established a crèche for the infants of working mothers, free medical care, concerts, dancing, music-making, and comprehensive education, including evening classes.

Rather than the usual squalid one-room houses for workers, neat two-room houses were built. Garbage was collected regularly instead of being thrown into the street. New Lanark also featured pleasant landscaped areas.

Instead of leading to bankruptcy, as many of his friends predicted, Robert Owen's reforms led to economic success. Owen's belief that a better environment would lead to better work was vindicated. The village, with its model houses, schools and mills, became internationally famous as a demonstration that industrialism need not involve oppression.

Crowds of visitors made the journey over narrow roads from Glasgow to learn from New Lanark and its visionary proprietor. Among the twenty thousand visitors who signed the guest-book between 1815 and 1825 were the Grand Duke Nicholas of Russia (who later became Czar Nicholas I), and Princes John and Maximilian of Austria.



Figure 5.4: The Co-operative Bank's head office in Manchester. The statue in front is of Robert Owen, a pioneer in the cooperative movement.

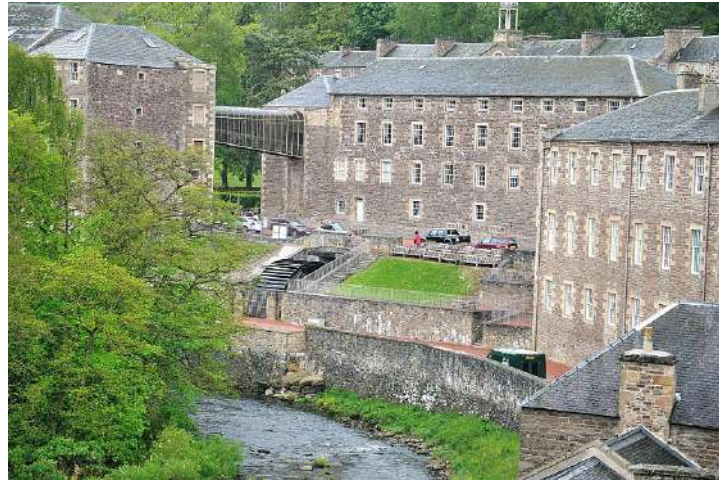


Figure 5.5: New Lanark village in Scotland. A social utopia created in 1786, it is now a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



Figure 5.6: The village of New Lanark with its associated mill buildings and the river in the foreground.

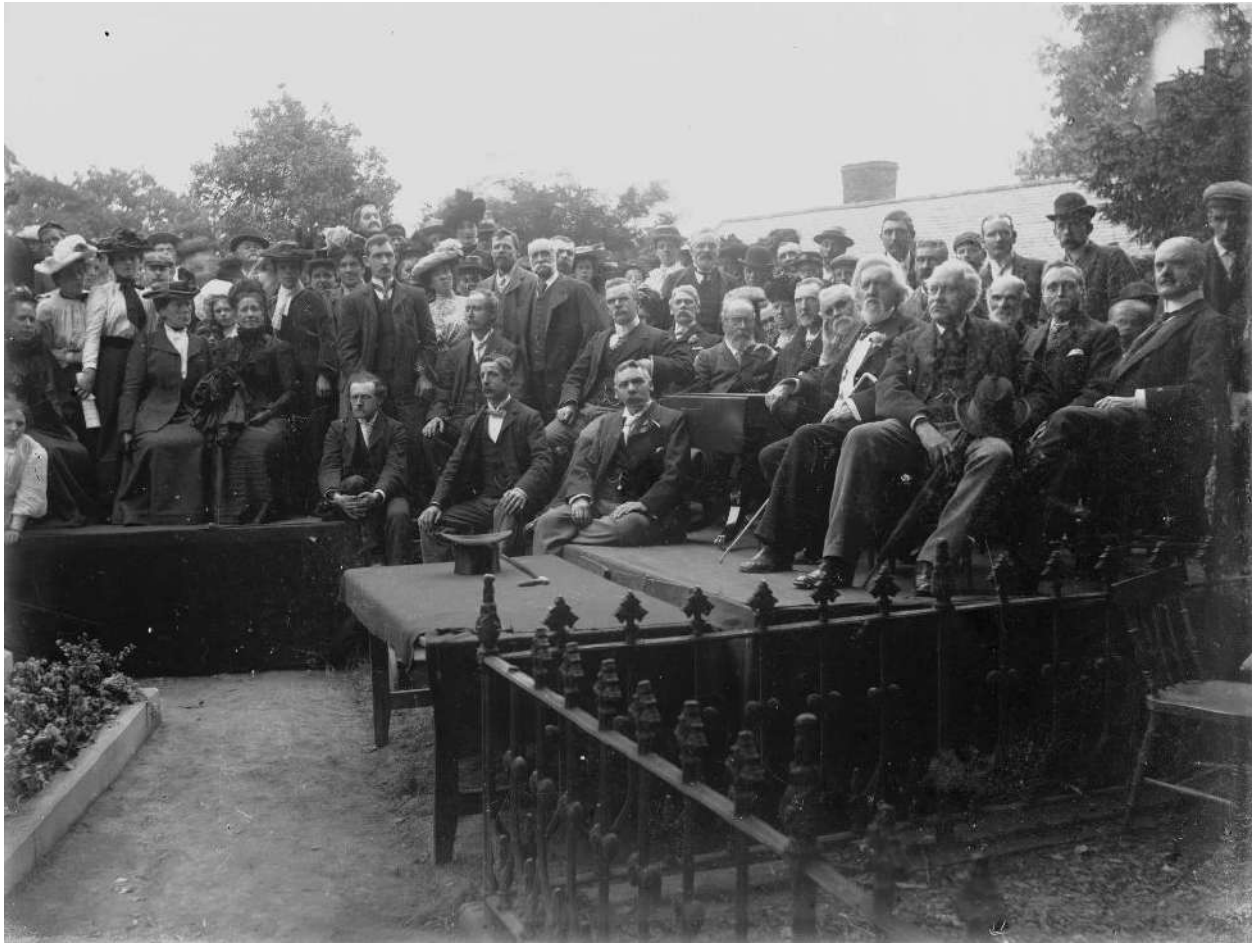


Figure 5.7: Crowds of locals gather to commemorate Robert Owen at his grave in Newtown, Montgomeryshire, in the 1890s

Robert Owen's ideas of social reform can be seen in the following extract from an "Address to the Inhabitants of New Lanark", which he presented on New Year's Day, 1816: "What ideas individuals may attach to the term 'Millennium' I know not; but I know that society may be formed so as to exist without crime, without poverty, with health greatly improved, with little, if any, misery. and with intelligence and happiness increased a hundredfold; and no obstacle whatsoever intervenes at this moment except ignorance to prevent such a state of society from becoming universal."

5.4 Villages of cooperation

Robert Owen believed that these principles could be applied not only in New Lanark but also in the wider world. He was soon given a chance to express this belief. During the years from 1816 to 1820, apart from a single year, business conditions in England were very bad, perhaps as a result of the Napoleonic Wars, which had just ended. Pauperism and social unrest were widespread, and threatened to erupt into violence. A committee to deal with the crisis was formed under the leadership of the Dukes of Kent and York.

Because of Owen's reputation, he was asked for his opinion, but the committee was hardly expecting the answer that they received from him. Robert Owen handed the two Dukes and the other committee members a detailed plan for getting rid of pauperism by making paupers productive. They were to be settled in self-governing Villages of Cooperation, each with between 800 and 1,200 inhabitants. Each family was to have a private apartment, but there were to be common sitting rooms, reading rooms and kitchens. Near to the houses, there were to be gardens tended by the children, and farther out, fields to be cultivated by the adults. Still farther from the houses, there was to be a small factory.

Owen's idea for governmentally-planned paupers' collectives was at first rejected out of hand. The early 19th century was, after all, a period of unbridled laissez-faire economics. Owen then bombarded the Parliament with pamphlets advocating his scheme. Finally a committee was formed to try to raise the money to establish one Village of Cooperation as an experiment; but the money was never raised.

Unwilling to accept defeat, Robert Owen sold his interest in New Lanark and sailed for America, where he believed that his social experiment would have a better chance of success. He bought the town of Harmonie and 30,000 acres of land on the banks of the Wabash River in Indiana. There he established a Village of Cooperation which he named "New Harmony" He dedicated it on the 4th of July, 1826. It remained a collective for only two years, after which individualism reasserted itself. Owen's four sons and one of his daughters made their homes in New Harmony, and it also became the home of numerous scientists, writers and artists.

Owen's son, Robert Dale Owen, became a member of the U.S. House of Representatives, where he introduced the bill establishing the Smithsonian Institution. In 1862 he wrote an eloquent letter to Abraham Lincoln urging emancipation of the slaves. Three days later, probably influenced by Owen's letter, Lincoln read the Emancipation Proclamation to his cabinet. Another son, Richard Owen, served as President of the University of Indiana, and

was later elected as the first President of Purdue University.

5.5 The cooperative movement

When Robert Owen returned to England shortly after dedicating New Harmony, he found that he had become a hero of the working classes. They had read his writings avidly, and had begun to establish cooperatives, following his principles. There were both producer's cooperatives and consumer's cooperatives. In England, the producer's cooperatives failed, but in Denmark they succeeded, as we will discuss below.

One of the early consumer's cooperatives in England was called the Rochdale Society of Equitable Pioneers. It was founded by 28 weavers and other artisans, who were being forced into poverty by mechanization. They opened a small cooperative store selling butter, sugar, flour, oatmeal and candles. After a few months, they also included tobacco and tea. From this small beginning, the Cooperative Movement grew, finally becoming one of the main pillars of the British Labour Party.



Figure 5.8: **Co-op City in The Bronx, New York City is the largest cooperative housing development in the world, with 55,000 people.**

5.6 Trade unions

Robert Owen's attention now turned from cooperatives to the embryonic trade union movement, which was struggling to establish itself in the face of fierce governmental opposition. He assembled the leaders of the working class movement and proposed the formation of the "Grand National Moral Union of Productive and Useful Classes". The name was soon shortened to "The Grand National Consolidated Trades Union" or simply the "Grand National".

Owen's Grand National was launched in 1833, and its membership quickly grew to half a million. It was the forerunner of modern nationwide trade unions, but it lasted only two years. Factory-owners saw the Grand National as a threat, and they persuaded the government to prosecute it under anti-union laws. Meanwhile, internal conflicts helped to destroy the Grand National. Owen was accused of atheism by the working class leaders, and he accused them of fermenting class hatred.

Robert Owen's influence helped to give raw laissez faire capitalism a more human face, and helped to spread the benefits of industrialization more widely. Through the work of other reformers like Owen, local trade unions succeeded, both in England and elsewhere; and in the end, successful national unions were finally established. The worst features of the early Industrial Revolution were moderated by the growth of the trade union movement, by child labor laws, by birth control and by a minimum wage law.¹

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Chapter 6

HENRY DAVID THOREAU

In the distant future (and perhaps even in the not-so-distant future) industrial civilization will need to abandon its relentless pursuit of unnecessary material goods and economic growth. Modern society will need to re-establish a balanced and harmonious relationship with nature. In preindustrial societies harmony with nature is usually a part of the cultural tradition. In our own time, the same principle has become central to the ecological counter-culture while the main-stream culture thunders blindly ahead, addicted to wealth, power and growth.

In the 19th century the American writer, Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862), pioneered the concept of a simple life, in harmony with nature. Today, his classic book, *Walden*, has become a symbol for the principles of ecology, simplicity, and respect for nature.

Thoreau was born in Concord Massachusetts, and he attended Harvard from 1833 to 1837. After graduation, he returned home, worked in his family's pencil factory, did odd jobs, and for three years taught in a progressive school founded by himself and his older brother, John. When John died of lockjaw in 1842, Henry David was so saddened that he felt unable to continue the school alone.

6.1 Nonviolent civil disobedience

Thoreau refused to pay his poll tax because of his opposition to the Mexican War and to the institution of slavery. Because of his refusal to pay the tax (which was in fact a very small amount) he spent a night in prison. To Thoreau's irritation, his family paid the poll tax for him and he was released. He then wrote down his ideas on the subject in an essay entitled *The Duty of Civil Disobedience*, where he maintains that each person has a duty to follow his own individual conscience even when it conflicts with the orders of his government.

In his essay, Thoreau said: "A common and natural result of an undue respect for law is that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys, and all marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, ay, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed,

and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power?"

"Under a government that which imprisons any unjustly", Thoreau wrote, "the true place for a just man is in prison." Civil Disobedience influenced Tolstoy, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, and it anticipated the Nuremberg Principles.

6.2 Harmony with nature

Thoreau became the friend and companion of the transcendentalist writer Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 1882), who introduced him to a circle of New England writers and thinkers that included Ellery Channing, Margaret Fuller and Nathaniel Hawthorne.

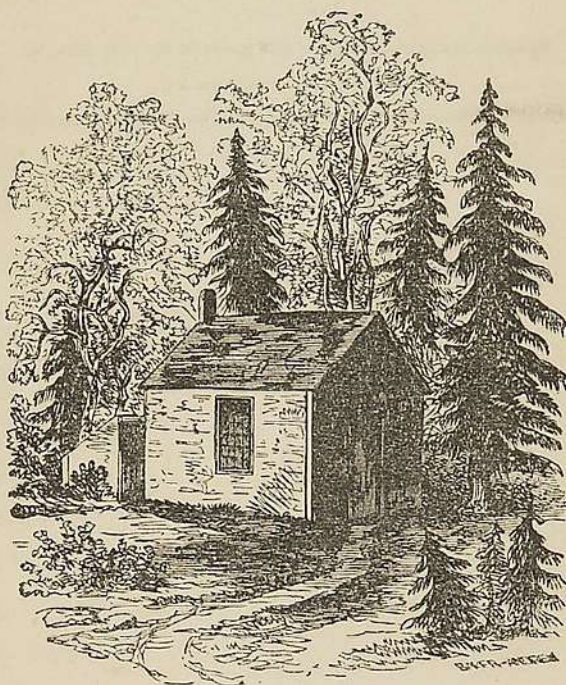
Nathaniel Hawthorne described Thoreau in the following words: "Mr. Thorow [sic] is a keen and delicate observer of nature, a genuine observer, which, I suspect, is almost as rare a character as even an original poet; and Nature, in return for his love, seems to adopt him as her especial child, and shows him secrets which few others are allowed to witness. He is familiar with beast, fish, fowl, and reptile, and has strange stories to tell of adventures, and friendly passages with these lower brethren of mortality. Herb and flower, likewise, wherever they grow, whether in garden, or wild wood, are his familiar friends. He is also on intimate terms with the clouds and can tell the portents of storms. It is a characteristic trait, that he has a great regard for the memory of the Indian tribes, whose wild life would have suited him so well; and strange to say, he seldom walks over a plowed field without picking up an arrow-point, a spear-head, or other relic of the red men, as if their spirits willed him to be the inheritor of their simple wealth."



Figure 6.1: **Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862).**

WALDEN;
OR,
LIFE IN THE WOODS.

By HENRY D. THOREAU,
AUTHOR OF "A WEEK ON THE CONCORD AND MERRIMACK RIVERS."



I do not propose to write an ode to dejection, but to brag as lustily as chanticleer in the morning, standing on his roost, if only to wake my neighbors up. — Page 92.

BOSTON:
TICKNOR AND FIELDS.
M DCCC LIV.

Figure 6.2: Original title page of *Walden*, with an illustration from a drawing by Thoreau's sister Sophia.



Figure 6.3: **Replica of Thoreau's cabin and a statue of him near Walden Pond.**



Figure 6.4: **Walden Pond.**

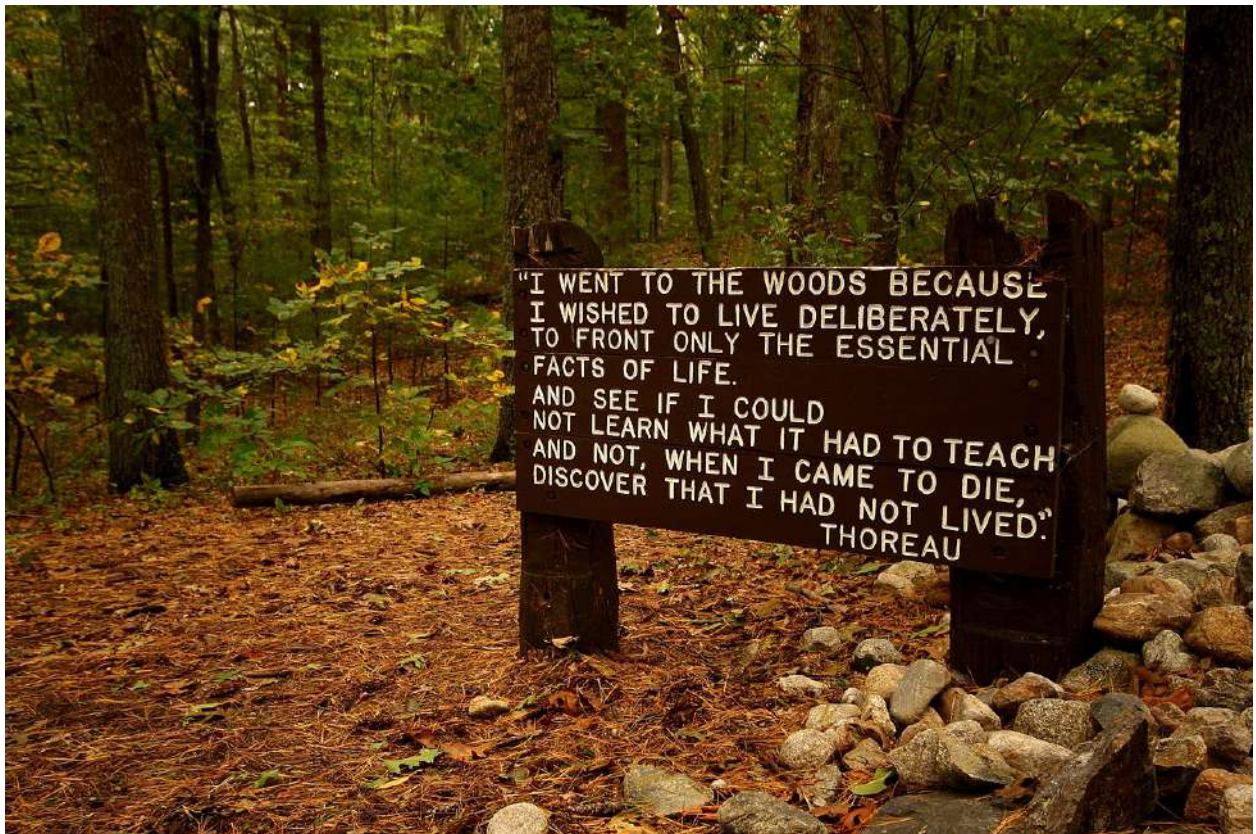


Figure 6.5: Thoreau's famous quotation, near his cabin site at Walden Pond.

6.3 Walden, an experiment in simple living

At Emerson's suggestion, Thoreau opened a journal, in which he recorded his observations concerning nature and his other thoughts. Ultimately the journal contained more than 2 million words. Thoreau drew on his journal when writing his books and essays, and in recent years, many previously unpublished parts of his journal have been printed.

From 1845 until 1847, Thoreau lived in a tiny cabin that he built with his own hands. The cabin was in a second-growth forest beside Walden Pond in Concord, on land that belonged to Emerson. Thoreau regarded his life there as an experiment in simple living. He described his life in the forest and his reasons for being there in his book *Walden*,

"Most of the luxuries", Thoreau wrote, "and many of the so-called comforts of life, are not only not indispensable, but positive hindrances to the elevation of mankind. With respect to luxuries, the wisest have ever lived a more simple and meager life than the poor. The ancient philosophers, Chinese, Hindoo, Persian, and Greek, were a class than which none has been poorer in outward riches, none so rich in inward."

Elsewhere in "Walden", Thoreau remarks, "It is never too late to give up your prejudices", and he also says, "Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprises? If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer." Other favorite quotations from Thoreau include "Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth", "Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes", "Most men lead lives of quiet desperation" and "Men have become tools of their tools."

Thoreau's closeness to nature can be seen from the following passage, written by his friend Frederick Willis, who visited him at Walden Pond in 1847, together with the Alcott family: "He was talking to Mr. Alcott of the wild flowers in Walden woods when, suddenly stopping, he said: 'Keep very still and I will show you my family.' Stepping quickly outside the cabin door, he gave a low and curious whistle; immediately a woodchuck came running towards him from a nearby burrow. With varying note, yet still low and strange, a pair of gray squirrels were summoned and approached him fearlessly. With still another note several birds, including two crows flew towards him, one of the crows nestling upon his shoulder. I remember that it was the crow resting close to his head that made the most vivid impression on me, knowing how fearful of man this bird is. He fed them all from his hand, taking food from his pocket, and petted them gently before our delighted gaze; and then dismissed them by different whistling, always strange and low and short, each wild thing departing instantly at hearing his special signal."

6.4 Thoreau's views on religion

Towards the end of his life, when he was very ill, someone asked Thoreau whether he had made his peace with God. "We never quarreled", he answered.

In an essay published by the Atlantic Monthly in 1853, Thoreau described a pine tree in Maine with the words: "It is as immortal as I am, and perchance will go to as high a heaven,

there to tower above me still.” However, the editor (James Russell Lowell) considered the sentence to be blasphemous, and removed it from Thoreau’s essay.

In one of his essays, Thoreau wrote: “If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making the earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen.”

6.5 A few more things that Thoreau said

It is the beauty within us that makes it possible for us to recognize the beauty around us. The question is not what you look at, but what you see.

Simplify your life. Don’t waste the years struggling for things that are unimportant. Don’t burden yourself with possessions. Keep your needs and wants simple and enjoy what you have. Don’t destroy your peace of mind by looking back, worrying about the past. Live in the present. Simplify!

Go confidently in the direction of your dreams. Live the life you’ve imagined.

Happiness is like a butterfly; the more you chase it, the more it will elude you, but if you turn your attention to other things, it will come and sit softly on your shoulder.

Rather than love, than money, than fame, give me truth.

The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation.

You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment. Fools stand on their island of opportunities and look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other life but this

Be not simply good, be good for something,

Books are the treasured wealth of the world and the fit inheritance of generations and nations.

If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

If a man does not keep pace with his companions, perhaps it is because he hears a different drummer. Let him step to the music he hears, however measured or far away.

The greatest compliment that was ever paid me was when one asked me what I thought, and attended to my answer.

We need the tonic of wildness...At the same time that we are earnest to explore and learn all things, we require that all things be mysterious and unexplorable, that land and sea be indefinitely wild, unsurveyed and unfathomed by us because unfathomable. We can never have enough of nature.

6.6 Thoreau's *Civil Disobedience*

Here are some quotations:

I heartily accept the motto, - "That government is best which governs least;" and I should like to see it acted up to more rapidly and systematically. Carried out, it finally amounts to this, which also I believe - "That government is best which governs not at all;" and when men are prepared for it, that will be the kind of government which they will have. Government is at best but an expedient; but most governments are usually, and all governments are sometimes, inexpedient. The objections which have been brought against a standing army, and they are many and weighty, and deserve to prevail, may also at last be brought against a standing government. The standing army is only an arm of the standing government. The government itself, which is only the mode which the people have chosen to execute their will, is equally liable to be abused and perverted before the people can act through it. Witness the present Mexican war, the work of comparatively a few individuals using the standing government as their tool; for, in the outset, the people would not have consented to this measure.

This American government, - what is it but a tradition, though a recent one, endeavoring to transmit itself unimpaired to posterity, but each instant losing some of its integrity? It has not the vitality and force of a single living man; for a single man can bend it to his will. It is a sort of wooden gun to the people themselves; and, if ever they should use it in earnest as a real one against each other, it will surely split. But it is not the less necessary for this; for the people must have some complicated machinery or other, and hear its din, to satisfy that idea of government which they have. Governments show thus how successfully men can be imposed on, even impose on themselves, for their own advantage. It is excellent, we must all allow; yet this government never of itself furthered any enterprise, but by the alacrity with which it got out of its way. It does not keep the country free. It does not settle the West. It does not educate. The character inherent in the American people has done all that has been accomplished; and it would have done somewhat more, if the

government had not sometimes got in its way. For government is an expedient, by which men would fain succeed in letting one another alone; and, as has been said, when it is most expedient, the governed are most let alone by it. Trade and commerce, if they were not made of India rubber, would never manage to bounce over obstacles which legislators are continually putting in their way; and, if one were to judge these men wholly by the effects of their actions, and not partly by their intentions, they would deserve to be classed and punished with those mischievous persons who put obstructions on the railroads.

But, to speak practically and as a citizen, unlike those who call themselves no-government men, I ask for, not at once no government, but *at once* a better government. Let every man make known what kind of government would command his respect, and that will be one step toward obtaining it.

After all, the practical reason why, when the power is once in the hands of the people, a majority are permitted, and for a long period continue, to rule, is not because they are most likely to be in the right, nor because this seems fairest to the minority, but because they are physically the strongest. But a government in which the majority rule in all cases can not be based on justice, even as far as men understand it. Can there not be a government in which the majorities do not virtually decide right and wrong, but conscience? - in which majorities decide only those questions to which the rule of expediency is applicable? Must the citizen ever for a moment, or in the least degree, resign his conscience to the legislator? Why has every man a conscience, then? I think that we should be men first, and subjects afterward. It is not desirable to cultivate a respect for the law, so much as for the right. The only obligation which I have a right to assume, is to do at any time what I think right. It is truly enough said that a corporation has no conscience; but a corporation of conscientious men is a corporation with a conscience. Law never made men a whit more just; and, by means of their respect for it, even the well-disposed are daily made the agents of injustice. A common and natural result of an undue respect for the law is, that you may see a file of soldiers, colonel, captain, corporal, privates, powder-monkeys and all, marching in admirable order over hill and dale to the wars, against their wills, aye, against their common sense and consciences, which makes it very steep marching indeed, and produces a palpitation of the heart. They have no doubt that it is a damnable business in which they are concerned; they are all peaceably inclined. Now, what are they? Men at all? or small movable forts and magazines, at the service of some unscrupulous man in power? Visit the Navy Yard, and behold a marine, such a man as an American government can make, or such as it can make a man with its black arts, a mere shadow and reminiscence of humanity, a man laid out alive and standing, and already, as one may say, buried under arms with funeral accompaniment...

Unjust laws exist: shall we be content to obey them, or shall we endeavor to amend them, and obey them until we have succeeded, or shall we transgress

them at once? Men generally, under such a government as this, think that they ought to wait until they have persuaded the majority to alter them. They think that, if they should resist, the remedy would be worse than the evil. But it is the fault of the government itself that the remedy is worse than the evil. *It* makes it worse. Why is it not more apt to anticipate and provide for reform? Why does it not cherish its wise minority? Why does it cry and resist before it is hurt? Why does it not encourage its citizens to be on the alert to point out its faults, and *do* better than it would have them? Why does it always crucify Christ, and excommunicate Copernicus and Luther, and pronounce Washington and Franklin rebels?...

I do not hesitate to say, that those who call themselves abolitionists should at once effectually withdraw their support, both in person and property, from the government of Massachusetts, and not wait till they constitute a majority of one, before they suffer the right to prevail through them. I think that it is enough if they have God on their side, without waiting for that other one. Moreover, any man more right than his neighbors constitutes a majority of one already...

There will never be a really free and enlightened State, until the State comes to recognize the individual as a higher and independent power, from which all its own power and authority are derived, and treats him accordingly. I please myself with imagining a State at last which can afford to be just to all men, and to treat the individual with respect as a neighbor; which even would not think it inconsistent with its own repose, if a few were to live aloof from it, not meddling with it, nor embraced by it, who fulfilled all the duties of neighbors and fellow-men. A State which bore this kind of fruit, and suffered it to drop off as fast as it ripened, would prepare the way for a still more perfect and glorious State, which also I have imagined, but not yet anywhere seen.

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Chapter 7

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY

Leo Tolstoy was born in 1828. While he was still a child, his parents died, and he became Count Tolstoy, with responsibility for the family estate at Yasnaya Polyana. As a young man, he was attracted to the gay and worldly social life of Moscow, but his diary during this period shows remorse over his pursuit of sensual pleasures. Disgusted with himself, he entered the army, and during idle periods he began his career as a writer. While still a soldier, he published a beautiful nostalgic work entitled “Childhood” as well as a number of skillful stories describing army life.

7.1 Schools and textbooks for peasants

At the age of 28, Tolstoy left the army and spent a brief period as a literary idol in St. Petersburg. He then became concerned about lack of education among Russian peasants, and he traveled widely in Europe, studying educational theory and methods. Returning to Yasnaya Polyana, he established schools for the peasants, published an educational magazine and compiled a number of textbooks whose simplicity and attractiveness anticipated modern teaching methods.

7.2 Tolstoy’s great novels

Tolstoy married in 1862 at the age of 34. His wife, Sonya Bers, shared his wide intellectual interests, and they had a happy family life with thirteen children¹. During this period, Tolstoy managed his estate with much success, and he produced his great literary masterpieces “War and Peace” and “Anna Karenina”. He modeled the characters in “War and Peace” after members of his own family. For example, Tolstoy’s famous heroine, Natasha, is modeled after his sister-in-law, Tanya Bers. Pierre in “War and Peace” and Levin in “Anna Karenina” reflect Tolstoy’s own efforts to understand the meaning of life, his concern with the misery of the Russian peasants, and his ultimate conclusion that true happiness and peace of mind can only be found in a simple life devoted to the service of others.

7.3 Search for life's meaning

By the time Tolstoy had finished “Anna Karenina”, he had become very dissatisfied with the life that he was leading. Despite having achieved in great measure all of the goals for which humans usually strive, he felt that his existence lacked meaning; and in 1879 he even contemplated suicide. He looked for life's purpose by systematically studying the writings of scientists and philosophers, but he could not find an answer there that satisfied him.

Finally Tolstoy found inspiration in the humble and devout lives of the peasants. He decided that the teachings of Jesus, as recorded in the New Testament, could provide the answer for which he was searching. Tolstoy published an account of his spiritual crisis in a book entitled “A Confession”, in which he says:

“I searched for enlightenment everywhere in the hard-won accumulated knowledge of mankind. I searched passionately and long, not in a lazy way, but with my whole soul, day and night. I searched like a drowning man looking for safety - and found nothing. I searched all the sciences, and not only did I find nothing, but I also came to the conclusion that everyone who, like myself, had searched in the sciences for life's meaning had also found nothing.”

“I then diligently studied the teachings of Buddhism and Islam in the holy books of those religions; but most of all I studied Christianity as I met it in the holy Scriptures and in the living Christians around me...”

7.4 Love for the poor

“I began to approach the believers among the poor, simple ignorant people: pilgrims, monks and peasants... The whole life of Christians of our own circle seemed to be a contradiction of their faith. By contrast, the whole life of Christians of the peasant class was an affirmation of the view of life which their religious faith gave to them. I looked more and more deeply into the faith of these people, and the more deep my insight became, the more I became convinced that they had a genuine belief, that their faith was essential to them, and that it was their faith alone which gave their life a meaning and made it possible for them to live... I developed a love for these simple people.”

Moved by the misery of the urban poor whom he encountered in the slums of Moscow, Tolstoy wrote: “Between us, the rich and the poor, there is a wall of false education, and before we can help the poor, we must first tear down that wall. I was forced to the conclusion that our own wealth is the true cause of the misery of the poor.”

7.5 What Then Must We Do?

Tolstoy's book, “What Then Must We Do?”, tells of his experiences in the slums and analyses the causes of poverty. Tolstoy felt that the professed Christian belief of the Czarist state was a thin cosmetic layer covering a structure that was fundamentally built on violence. Violence was used to maintain a huge gap between the rich and the poor, and

violence was used in international relations. Tolstoy felt especially keenly the contradiction between Christianity and war. In a small book entitled "The Kingdom of God is Within You" he wrote:

The contradiction between Christianity and war

"All other contradictions are insignificant compared with the contradiction which now faces humankind in international relations. and which cries out for a solution, since it brings the very existence of civilization into danger. This is the contradiction between the Christian conscience and war."

"All of the Christian peoples of the world, who all follow one and the same spiritual life, so that any good and fruitful thought which is put forward in any corner of the world is immediately communicated to all of Christendom, where it arouses feelings of pride and happiness in us regardless of our nationality; we who simply love the thinkers, humanitarians, and poets of other countries; we who not only admire their achievements, but also feel delight in meeting them and greet them with friendly smiles; we will all be forced by the state to participate in a murderous war against these same people, a war which if it does not break out today will do so tomorrow."

"...The sharpest of all contradictions can be seen between the government's professed faith in the Christian law of the brotherhood of all humankind, and the military laws of the state, which force each young man to prepare himself for enmity and murder, so that each must be simultaneously a Christian and a gladiator."

Banned and excommunicated

Tolstoy's writings on Christianity and on social questions were banned by the public censor, and he was excommunicated from the Russian Orthodox Church. However, his universally recognized stature as one of the world's greatest writers was undiminished, and his beliefs attracted many followers, both inside and outside of Russia.

Tolstoy and Gandhi

In 1894, the young Indian lawyer, Mohandas K. Gandhi, (who was then working for the civil rights of Indians in South Africa), read Tolstoy's books on Christianity and was greatly influenced by them. Gandhi wrote a review of "The Kingdom of God is Within You", and in 1909 he sent Tolstoy an account of the activities of the civil rights movement in South Africa. He received a reply in which Tolstoy said:

"...The longer I live, and especially now, when I vividly feel the nearness of death, the more I want to tell others what I feel so particularly clearly and what to my mind is of great importance, namely that which is called passive resistance, but which is in reality nothing else but the teaching of love, uncorrupted by false interpretations. That love, i.e. the striving for the union of human souls and the activity derived from that striving, is the highest and only law of human life, and in the depth of his soul every human being knows

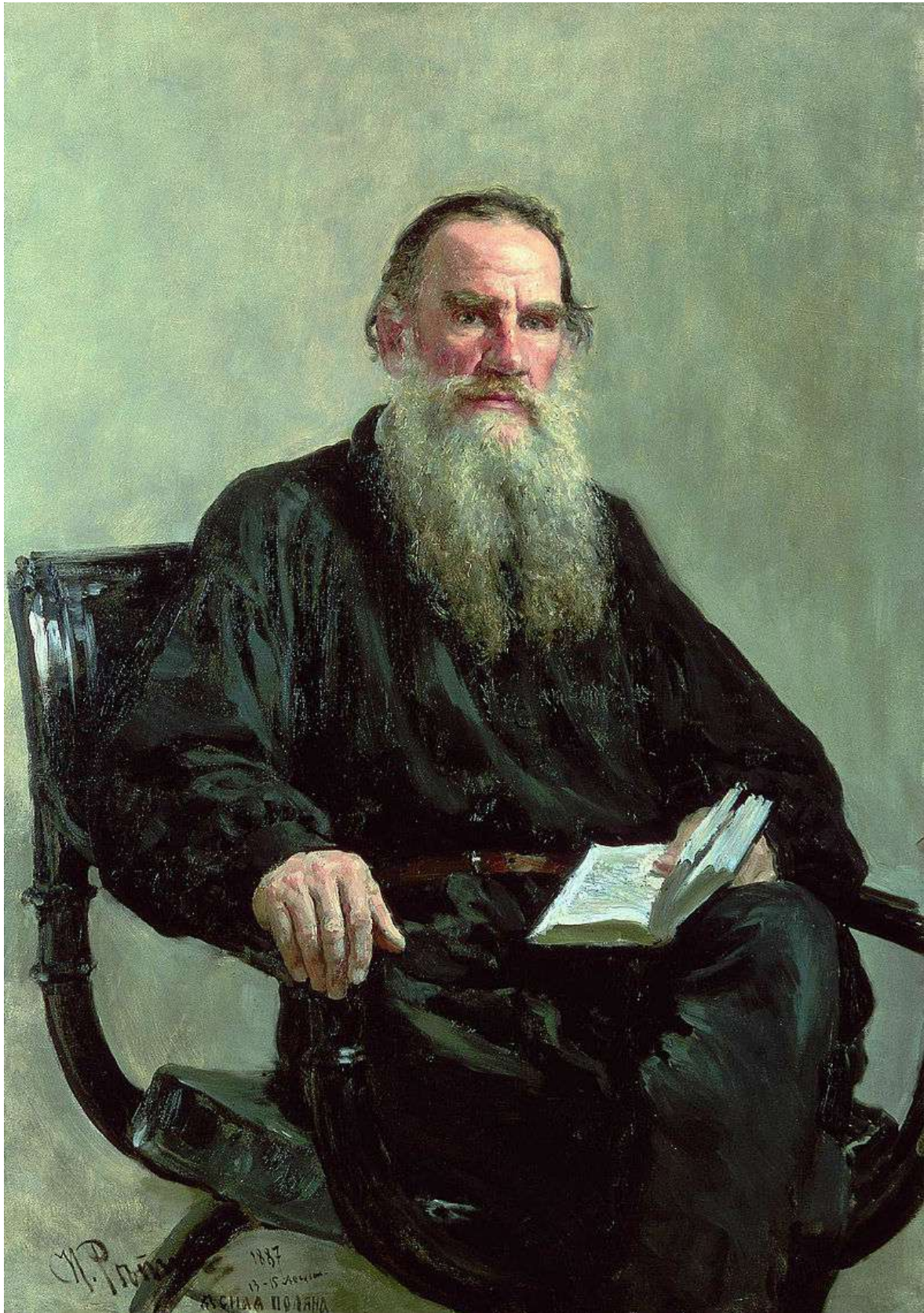


Figure 7.1: Portrait of Count Leo Tolstoy made in 1887 by Ilia Repin.

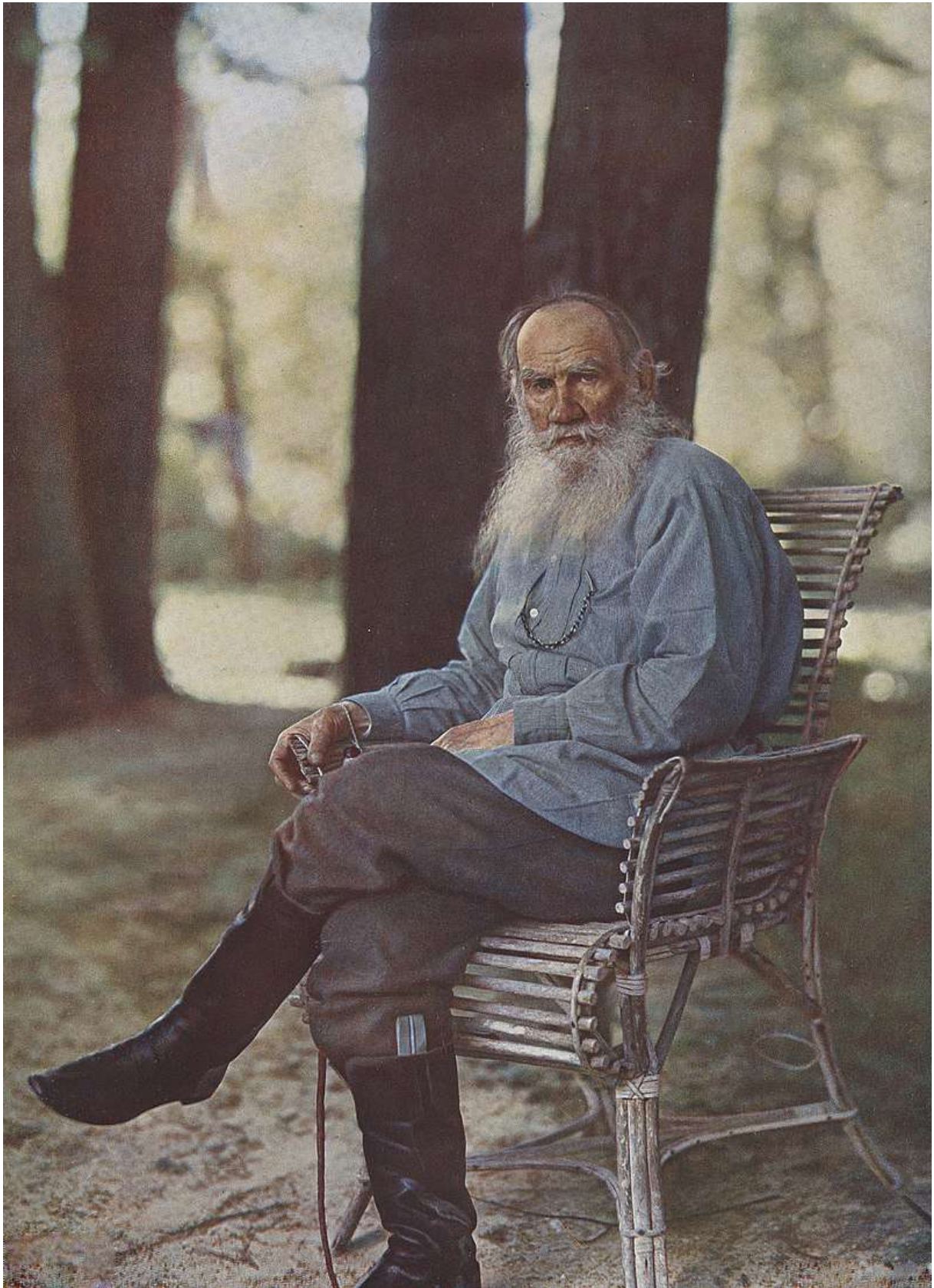


Figure 7.2: Tolstoy on 23 May 1908 at Yasnaya Polyana, photo by Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky.



Figure 7.3: Tolstoy's wife Sophia and their daughter Alexandra.



Figure 7.4: Tolstoy dressed in peasant clothing, by Ilya Repin (1901).



Figure 7.5: Mohandas K. Gandhi and other residents of Tolstoy Farm, South Africa, 1910.



Figure 7.6: Tolstoy organizing famine relief in Samara, 1891.

this (as we most clearly see in children); he knows this until he is entangled in the false teachings of the world. This law was proclaimed by all, by the Indian as by the Chinese, Hebrew, Greek and Roman sages of the world. I think that this law was most clearly expressed by Christ, who plainly said that ‘in this alone is all the law and the prophets’...” “...The peoples of the Christian world have solemnly accepted this law, while at the same time they have permitted violence and built their lives on violence; and that is why the whole life of the Christian peoples is a continuous contradiction between what they profess, and the principles on which they order their lives - a contradiction between love accepted as the law of life, and violence which is recognized and praised, acknowledged even as a necessity in different phases of life, such as the power of rulers, courts, and armies...”

7.6 Nonviolent resistance to governmental violence

Tolstoy believed that violence can never under any circumstances be justified, and that therefore an individual’s resistance to governmental violence must be passive and non-violent. He also believed that each individual ought to reduce his needs to a minimum in order to avoid exploiting the labor of others.

Tolstoy gave up meat, alcohol, tobacco, and hunting. He began to clean his own room, wore simple peasant clothes, worked in the fields, and made his own boots. He participated in famine relief, and he would have liked to give away all of his great wealth to feed the poor, but bowing to the protests of his family, he gave his wealth to them instead. Because he had been unable to convert his family to his beliefs, Tolstoy left home secretly on a November night in 1910, accompanied, like King Lear, by his youngest daughter. He died of pneumonia a few days later at a remote railway junction.

7.7 What would Tolstoy say today?

What would Tolstoy say about the 1,700,000,000,000.00 dollars which the world spends each year on armaments while 11 million children die each year from poverty and starvation?

What would Tolstoy say about the illegal war that ruined Iraq, smashing its infrastructure, killing a million innocent people and forcing two million to flee as refugees?

What would Tolstoy say about oil and petrodollars as motives for war?

What would Tolstoy say about the militarization of outer space?

What would Tolstoy say about the craven failure of the mass media to educate us and to mobilize the public to the action needed to solve the multiple threats to our beautiful world?

What would Tolstoy say about a fossil fuel industry that pays advertisers to deny climate change?

What would Tolstoy say about nations which quarrel about who is to blame for climate change while each of them pours megatons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere?

What would Tolstoy say about advertisers who convince us that we cannot be happy without more and more material goods?

What would Tolstoy say about the illegal long-distance killing of men, women and children by means of drones?

What would Tolstoy say about the threat of an omnicidal nuclear war, a threat that hangs like a dark cloud over the future of life on earth?

What would Tolstoy say about wars of aggression aimed at gaining control over oil and other resources?

What would Tolstoy say about the rape of Africa for the sake of its agricultural land and mineral resources?

What would Tolstoy say about the illegal activities and greed of banks which are “too big to prosecute”?

What would Tolstoy say about the destruction of the earth’s environment for the sake of profit?

What would Tolstoy say about the threat of an all-destroying Third World War, initiated by a military attack on Iran?

Suggestions for further reading

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Chapter 8

MAHATMA GANDHI

If humans are ever to achieve a stable global society in the future, they will have to become much more modest in their economic behavior and much more peaceful in their politics. For both modesty and peace, Gandhi is a useful source of ideas. The problems with which he struggled during his lifetime are extremely relevant to us in the 21st Century, when both nuclear and ecological catastrophes threaten the world.

8.1 Avoiding escalation of conflicts

Today we read almost every day of killings that are part of escalating cycles of revenge and counter-revenge, for example in the Middle East. Gandhi's experiences both in South Africa and in India convinced him that such cycles could only be ended by unilateral acts of kindness and understanding from one of the parties in a conflict. He said, "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind".

To the insidious argument that "the end justifies the means", Gandhi answered firmly: "They say that 'means are after all means'. I would say that 'means are after all everything'. As the means, so the end. Indeed, the Creator has given us limited power over means, none over end... The means may be likened to a seed, and the end to a tree; and there is the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life."

Gandhi's advocacy of non-violence is closely connected to his attitude towards ends and means. He believed that violent methods for achieving a desired social result would inevitably result in an escalation of violence. The end achieved would always be contaminated by the methods used. He was influenced by Leo Tolstoy with whom he exchanged many letters, and he in turn influenced Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

8.2 The power of truth

Gandhi was trained as a lawyer, and when he began to practice in South Africa, in his first case, he was able to solve a conflict by proposing a compromise that satisfied both

parties. Of this result he said, “My joy was boundless. I had learnt the true practice of law. I had learnt to find out the better side of human nature and to enter men’s hearts. I realized that the true function of a lawyer was to unite parties riven asunder.” When Gandhi became involved with the struggle for civil rights of the Indian minority in South Africa, his background as a lawyer once more helped him. This time his jury was public opinion in England. When Gandhi lead the struggle for reform, he insisted that the means of protest used by his followers should be non-violent, even though violence was frequently used against them. In this way they won their case in the court of public opinion. Gandhi called this method of protest “satyagraha”, a Sanskrit word meaning “the power of truth”. In today’s struggles for justice and peace, the moral force of truth and nonviolence can win victories in the court of world public opinion.

8.3 Harmony between religious groups

Gandhi believed that at their core, all religions are based on the concepts of truth, love, compassion, nonviolence and the Golden Rule. When asked whether he was a Hindu, Gandhi answered, “Yes I am. I am also a Christian, a Muslim, a Buddhist and a Jew.” When praying at his ashram, Gandhi made a point of including prayers from many religions. One of the most serious problems that he had to face in his efforts to free India from British rule was disunity and distrust, even hate, between the Hindu and Muslim communities. Each community felt that with the British gone, they might face violence and repression from the other. Gandhi made every effort to bridge the differences and to create unity and harmony. His struggles with this problem are highly relevant to us today, when the world is split by religious and ethnic differences.

8.4 Solidarity with the poor

Today’s world is characterized by intolerable economic inequalities, both between nations and within nations. 8 million children die each year from poverty-related causes. 1.3 billion people live on less than 1.25 dollars a day. Gandhi’s concern for the poor can serve as an example to us today, as we work to achieve a more equal world. He said, “There is enough for every man’s need, but not for every man’s greed.”

8.5 Voluntary reduction of consumption

After Gandhi’s death, someone took a photograph of all his worldly possessions. It was a tiny heap, consisting of his glasses, a pair of sandals, a homespun cloth (his only garment) and a watch. That was all. By reducing his own needs and possessions to an absolute minimum, Gandhi had tried to demonstrate that the commonly assumed connection between wealth and merit is false. This is relevant today, in a world where we face a crisis

of diminishing resources. Not only fossil fuels, but also metals and arable land per capita will become scarce in the future. This will force a change in lifestyle, particularly in the industrialized countries, away from consumerism and towards simplicity. Gandhi's example can teach us that we must cease to use wealth and "conspicuous consumption" as a measure of merit.

8.6 Gandhian economics

In his autobiography, Mahatma Gandhi says: "Three moderns have left a deep impression on my life and captivated me: Raychandbhai (the Indian philosopher and poet) by his living contact; Tolstoy by his book 'The Kingdom of God is Within You'; and Ruskin by his book 'Unto This Last'." Ruskin's book, "Unto This Last", which Gandhi read in 1904, is a criticism of modern industrial society. Ruskin believed that friendships and warm interpersonal relationships are a form of wealth that economists have failed to consider. He felt that warm human contacts are most easily achieved in small agricultural communities, and that therefore the modern tendency towards centralization and industrialization may be a step backward in terms of human happiness. While still in South Africa, Gandhi founded two religious Utopian communities based on the ideas of Tolstoy and Ruskin, Phoenix Farm (1904) and Tolstoy Farm (1910).

Because of his growing fame as the leader of the Indian civil rights movement in South Africa, Gandhi was persuaded to return to India in 1914 and to take up the cause of Indian home rule. In order to re-acquaint himself with conditions in India, he travelled tirelessly, now always going third class as a matter of principle.

During the next few years, Gandhi worked to reshape the Congress Party into an organization which represented not only India's Anglicized upper middle class but also the millions of uneducated villagers who were suffering under an almost intolerable burden of poverty and disease. In order to identify himself with the poorest of India's people, Gandhi began to wear only a white loincloth made of rough homespun cotton. He traveled to the remotest villages, recruiting new members for the Congress Party, preaching non-violence and "firmness in the truth", and becoming known for his voluntary poverty and humility. The villagers who flocked to see him began to call him "Mahatma" (Great Soul).

Disturbed by the spectacle of unemployment and poverty in the villages, Gandhi urged the people of India to stop buying imported goods, especially cloth, and to make their own. He advocated the re-introduction of the spinning wheel into village life, and he often spent some hours spinning himself. The spinning wheel became a symbol of the Indian independence movement, and was later incorporated into the Indian flag.

The movement for boycotting British goods was called the "Swadeshi movement". The word Swadeshi derives from two Sanskrit roots: Swa, meaning self, and Desh, meaning country. Gandhi described Swadeshi as "a call to the consumer to be aware of the violence he is causing by supporting those industries that result in poverty, harm to the workers and to humans or other creatures."

Gandhi tried to reconstruct the crafts and self-reliance of village life that he felt had been destroyed by the colonial system. "I would say that if the village perishes, India will perish too", he wrote, "India will be no more India. Her own mission in the world will get lost. The revival of the village is only possible when it is no more exploited. Industrialization on a mass scale will necessarily lead to passive or active exploitation of the villagers as problems of competition and marketing come in. Therefore we have to concentrate on the village being self-contained, manufacturing mainly for use. Provided this character of the village industry is maintained, there would be no objection to villagers using even the modern machines that they can make and can afford to use. Only they should not be used as a means of exploitation by others."

"You cannot build nonviolence on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages... Rural economy as I have conceived it, eschews exploitation altogether, and exploitation is the essence of violence... We have to make a choice between India of the villages that are as ancient as herself and India of the cities which are a creation of foreign domination..."

"Machinery has its place; it has come to stay. But it must not be allowed to displace necessary human labour. An improved plow is a good thing. But if by some chances, one man could plow up, by some mechanical invention of his, the whole of the land of India, and control all the agricultural produce, and if the millions had no other occupation, they would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become. There is hourly danger of many being reduced to that unenviable state."

In these passages we see Gandhi not merely as a pioneer of nonviolence; we see him also as an economist. Faced with misery and unemployment produced by machines, Gandhi tells us that social goals must take precedence over blind market mechanisms. If machines are causing unemployment, we can, if we wish, and use labor-intensive methods instead. With Gandhi, the free market is not sacred; we can do as we wish, and maximize human happiness, rather than maximizing production and profits.

Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist on January 30, 1948. After his death, someone collected and photographed all his worldly goods. These consisted of a pair of glasses, a pair of sandals, a pocket watch and a white homespun loincloth. Here, as in the Swadeshi movement, we see Gandhi as a pioneer of economics. He deliberately reduced his possessions to an absolute minimum in order to demonstrate that there is no connection between personal merit and material goods. Like Veblen, Mahatma Gandhi told us that we must stop using material goods as a means of social competition. We must start to judge people not by what they have, but by what they are.



Figure 8.1: Gandhi (right) with his eldest brother Laxmidas in 1886.



Figure 8.2: Gandhi (left) and his wife Kasturba (right) (1902).

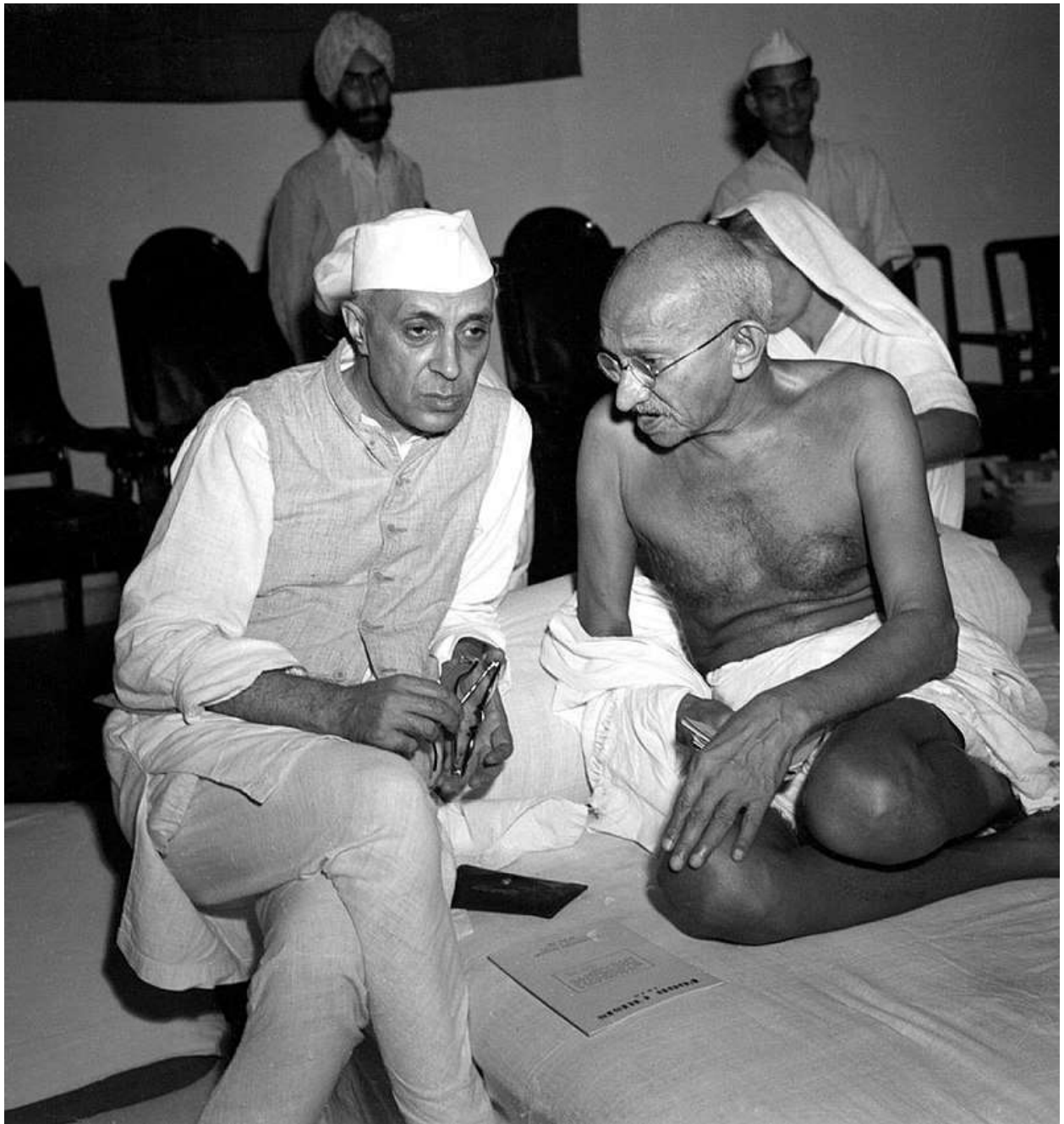


Figure 8.3: Gandhi and Nehru at a meeting of the Congress Party. After India gained its independence, it was Nehru's vision of an urbanized and industrialized India that prevailed. Gandhi's much more sustainable vision of "India of villages" was lost.



Figure 8.4: Gandhi spinning yarn, in the late 1920s.

8.7 Gandhi as an economist

Mahatma Gandhi is most famous as the father of his nation's independence, and as an ethical philosopher, but it is also worthwhile to remember his contributions to economics. This is especially important today, as it becomes more and more clear that our present economic system is completely unsustainable. Today it is obvious that "shopping as a way of life" and "grow or die" economics are destroying our planet.

In a recent interview, Naomi Klein said "The economic system that we have created has also created global warming. I didn't make this up. The system is broken, economic inequality is too great and lack of restraint on the part of energy companies is disastrous."¹

In his autobiography, Gandhi says: "Three moderns have left a deep impression on my life and captivated me: Raychandbhai (the Indian philosopher and poet) by his living contact; Tolstoy by his book 'The Kingdom of God is Within You'; and Ruskin by his book 'Unto This Last'."

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Because of his growing fame as the leader of the Indian civil rights movement in South Africa, Gandhi was persuaded to return to India in 1914 and to take up the cause of Indian home rule. In order to re-acquaint himself with conditions in India, he traveled tirelessly, now always going third class as a matter of principle.

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¹<https://www.transcend.org/tms/2015/03/naomi-klein-the-economic-system-we-have-created-global-warming/>

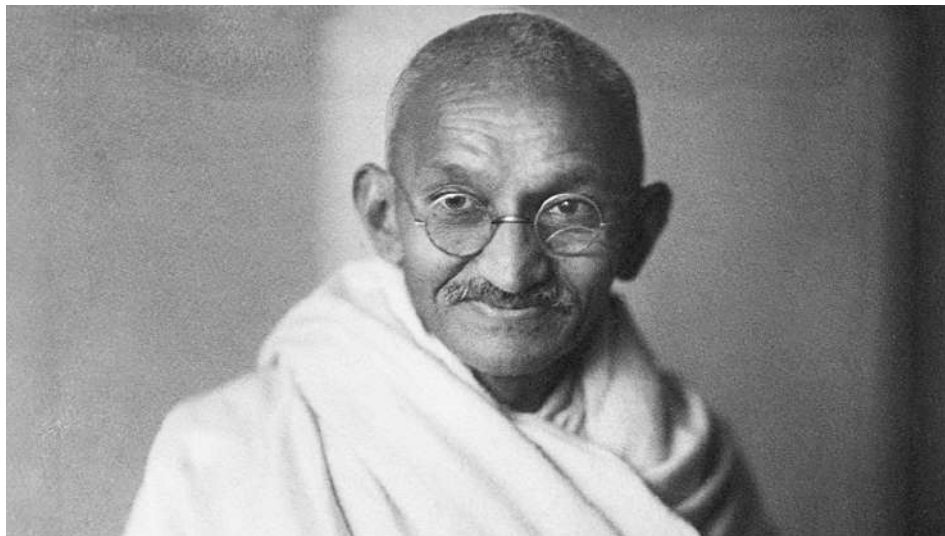


Figure 8.5: **Gandhi contributed importantly to economic ideas.**

independence movement, and was later incorporated into the Indian flag.

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would starve, and being idle, they would become dunces, as many have already become. There is hourly danger of many being reduced to that unenviable state.”

In these passages we see Gandhi not merely as a pioneer of nonviolence; we see him also as an economist. Faced with misery and unemployment produced by machines, Gandhi tells us that social goals must take precedence over blind market mechanisms. If machines are causing unemployment, we can, if we wish, and use labor-intensive methods instead. With Gandhi, the free market is not sacred; we can do as we wish, and maximize human happiness, rather than maximizing production and profits. Today, we urgently need an economic system with both a social conscience and an ecological conscience. Gandhi showed us that we can build such an economic system if we wish, rather than being slaves to the maximization of production and profits. It is our choice.

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Chapter 9

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

9.1 Slavery in the United States

The authors of the Declaration of Independence wrote “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Did they really mean **all** men? What about slaves? Many of the Founding Fathers possessed them.

The American Civil War was fought over the question of whether slavery should be extended to the western territories and whether states’ rights could overrule federal authority. Lincoln’s chief aim was to save the union. He said “If I could save the union without freeing any slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing all the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that.” Later, however, Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all of the slaves.

In his Gettysburg Address, Abraham Lincoln refers to the words of the Declaration of Independence, by saying “Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.”

Although freed by the Emancipation Proclamation and by the victory of the North in the Civil War, African Americans did not have equal rights. In the South, the Klu Klux Klan was organized to terrorize and suppress them. It was not until the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960’s that some degree of equality was established; but even today there is much discrimination, for example in police treatment of suspects.

Progressives today would like to eliminate all forms of discrimination, whether based on race, religion, ethnicity, or gender. They feel that they are fighting for the basic values on which America was built, fighting for America’s soul.

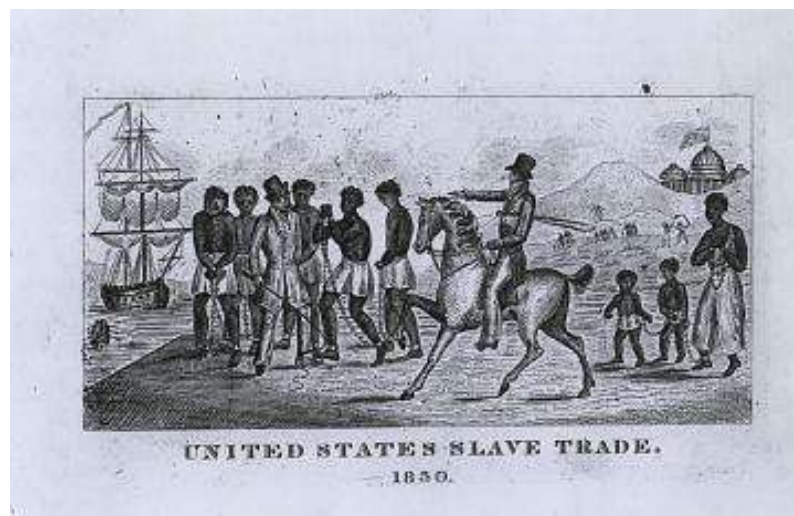


Figure 9.1: An estimated 600,000 enslaved African Americans were bought and sold in the United States in the decades before the Civil War. More than half of those sales separated parents and children.

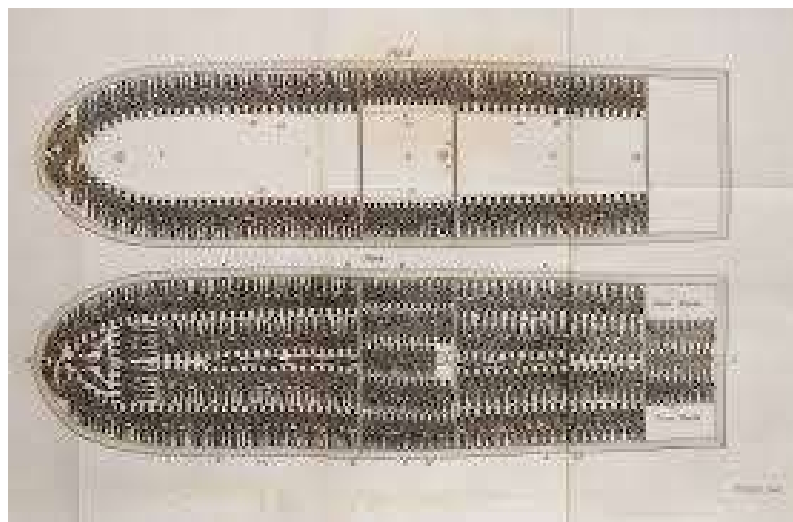


Figure 9.2: Diagram of a slave ship. A considerable proportion of the slaves being transported in this way, died during the voyage, and their bodies were thrown overboard.

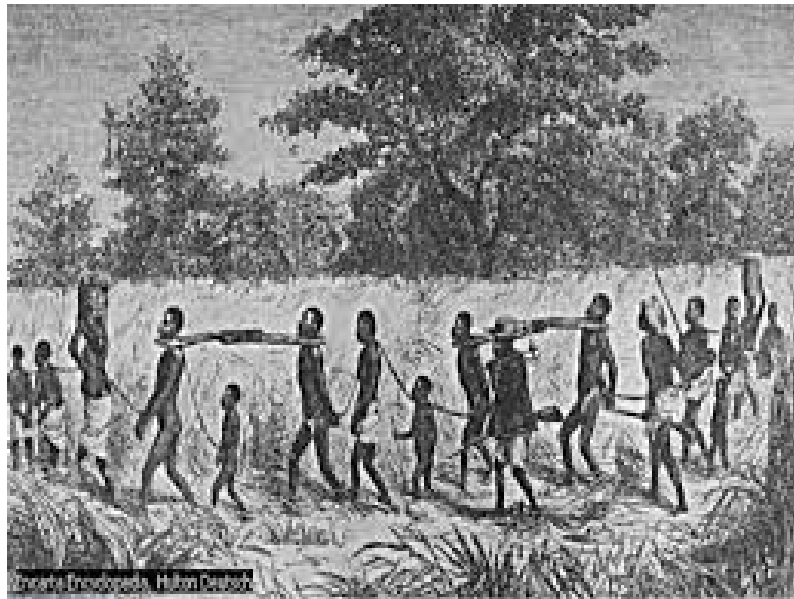


Figure 9.3: Captured Africans being marched towards slave ships.



Figure 9.4: A slave auction.

9.2 The Klu Klux Klan

Following the defeat of the Confederate states in the US Civil War, the original Klu Klux Klan was established in the south to overthrow northern rule, and to terrorize freed slaves who were thought to be a threat to white womanhood. Large numbers of black people and their sympathizers were lynched and murdered by the original KKK. The organization was outlawed in 1871.

The Klu Klux Klan was revived in 1915, inspired by D.W. Griffith's influential but controversial film *The Birth of a Nation*, which depicted the original Klan in a positive light. In this second incarnation which lasted until the mid-1920's, the KKK sought to maintain Protestant white supremacy, and opposed both Roman Catholicism and the influence of Jews.

The third incarnation of the Klu Klux Klan came in the 1950's. Local groups have opposed civil rights activists, and murdered many of them. The KKK is classified as a hate group by the Anti-Defamation League.

Wikipedia states that "The second and third incarnations of the Ku Klux Klan made frequent references to America's 'Anglo-Saxon' blood, hearkening back to 19th-century nativism. Although members of the KKK swear to uphold Christian morality, virtually every Christian denomination has officially denounced the KKK".



Figure 9.5: KKK rally in Chicago, c. 1920.



Figure 9.6: Three Ku Klux Klan members at a 1922 parade. Trump's father was a well-known Klansman in New York and New Jersey in his hey days.



Figure 9.7: Cross burning was introduced by William J. Simmons, the founder of the second Klan in 1915.



Figure 9.8: Klu Klux Klan members at a cross burning in 2005.



Figure 9.9: Klu Klux Klan members march down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. in 1928.



Figure 9.10: Historically, the Klu Klux Klan has been responsible for innumerable lynchings.

9.3 Rosa Parks

Rosa Louise McCauley Parks (1913-2005) is remembered as the person who started the Montgomery Alabama bus boycott in 1955, the first major battle of the Civil Rights Movement. On December 1, 1955, Mrs. Parks was asked by a bus driver in Montgomery to give up her seat in the black section of the bus to a white passenger. When she refused, she was arrested. The result was a strike in which members of the city's black community refused to ride on busses.

Martin Luther King Jr. had been pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery Alabama for only a year when he was chosen to lead a boycott protesting segregation in the Montgomery buses. Suddenly thrust into this situation of intense conflict, he remembered both the Christian principle of loving one's enemies and Gandhi's methods of non-violent protest. In his first speech as President of the Montgomery Improvement Association (a speech which the rapid pace of events had forced him to prepare in only twenty minutes, five of which he spent in prayer), he said:

"Our method will be that of persuasion, not coercion. We will only say to people, 'Let your conscience be your guide'. Our actions must be guided by the deepest principles of our Christian faith. Love must be our regulating ideal. Once again we must hear the words of Jesus echoing across the centuries: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' If we fail to do this, our protest will end up as a meaningless drama on the stage of history, and its memory will be shrouded by the ugly garments of shame. In spite of the mistreatment that we have confronted, we must not become bitter and end up by hating our white brothers. As Booker T. Washington said, 'Let no man pull you down so low as to make you hate him.'"

"If you will protest courageously, and yet with dignity and Christian love, when the history books are written in future generations, the historians will have to pause and say, 'There lived a great people, a black people, who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization.' This is our challenge and our overwhelming responsibility."

Victory in the court of public opinion

This speech, which Dr. King made in December 1955, set the tone of the black civil rights movement. Although the protesters against racism were often faced with brutality and violence; although many of them, including Dr. King were unjustly jailed; although the homes of the leaders were bombed; although they constantly received telephone calls threatening their lives; although many civil rights workers were severely beaten, and several of them killed, they never resorted to violence in their protests against racial discrimination. Because of this adherence to Christian ethics, public opinion shifted to the side of the civil rights movement, and the United States Supreme Court ruled bus segregation to be unconstitutional.



Figure 9.11: Rosa Parks with 26-year-old Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in the background..

9.4 The March on Washington

According to Wikipedia,

“The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, also known as the March on Washington or The Great March on Washington, was held in Washington, D.C. on Wednesday, August 28, 1963. The purpose of the march was to advocate for the civil and economic rights of African Americans. At the march, Martin Luther King Jr., standing in front of the Lincoln Memorial, delivered his historic ‘I Have a Dream’ speech in which he called for an end to racism.

“The march was organized by A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, who built an alliance of civil rights, labor, and religious organizations that came together under the banner of ‘jobs and freedom.’ Estimates of the number of participants varied from 200,000 to 300,000, but the most widely cited estimate is 250,000 people. Observers estimated that 75-80% of the marchers were black. The march was one of the largest political rallies for human rights in United States history. Walter Reuther, president of the United Auto Workers, was the most integral and significant white organizer of the march.

“The march is credited with helping to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and preceded the Selma Voting Rights Movement which led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965...

“On June 22, the organizers met with President Kennedy, who warned against creating ‘an atmosphere of intimidation’ by bringing a large crowd to Washington. The civil rights activists insisted on holding the march. Wilkins pushed for the organizers to rule out civil disobedience and described this proposal as the ‘perfect compromise’. King and Young agreed. Leaders from the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and Congress of Racial Equality (CORE), who wanted to conduct direct actions against the Department of Justice, endorsed the protest before they were informed that civil disobedience would not be allowed. Finalized plans for the March were announced in a press conference on July 2. President Kennedy spoke favorably of the March on July 17, saying that organizers planned a peaceful assembly and had cooperated with the Washington, D.C., police.”



Figure 9.12: The March on Washington.



Figure 9.13: The March on Washington, where Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his famous “I have a dream” speech, August 28, 1963.

9.5 King applies nonviolent principles to the Civil Rights movement

The son of a southern Baptist minister, Martin Luther King, Jr received his Ph.D. in theology from Boston University in 1955. During his studies, he had admired Thoreau's essay "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience," and he had also been greatly moved by the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.

Martin Luther King Jr. had been pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery Alabama for only a year when he was chosen to lead a boycott protesting segregation in the Montgomery buses. Suddenly thrust into this situation of intense conflict, he remembered both the Christian principle of loving one's enemies and Gandhi's methods of non-violent protest. In his first speech as President of the Montgomery Improvement Association (a speech which the rapid pace of events had forced him to prepare in only twenty minutes, five of which he spent in prayer), he said:

"Our method will be that of persuasion, not coercion. We will only say to people, 'Let your conscience be your guide'. Our actions must be guided by the deepest principles of our Christian faith. Love must be our regulating ideal. Once again we must hear the words of Jesus echoing across the centuries: 'Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, and pray for them that despitefully use you.' If we fail to do this, our protest will end up as a meaningless drama on the stage of history, and its memory will be shrouded by the ugly garments of shame. In spite of the mistreatment that we have confronted, we must not become bitter and end up by hating our white brothers. As Booker T. Washington said, 'Let no man pull you down so low as to make you hate him.'"

"If you will protest courageously, and yet with dignity and Christian love, when the history books are written in future generations, the historians will have to pause and say, 'There lived a great people, a black people, who injected new meaning and dignity into the veins of civilization.' This is our challenge and our overwhelming responsibility."

9.6 Victory in the court of public opinion

This speech, which Dr. King made in December 1955, set the tone of the black civil rights movement. Although the protesters against racism were often faced with brutality and violence; although many of them, including Dr. King were unjustly jailed; although the homes of the leaders were bombed; although they constantly received telephone calls threatening their lives; although many civil rights workers were severely beaten, and several of them killed, they never resorted to violence in their protests against racial discrimination. Because of this adherence to Christian ethics, public opinion shifted to the side of the civil rights movement, and the United States Supreme Court ruled bus segregation to be unconstitutional.

9.7 Welcomed to India by Nehru

In 1959, while recovering from an almost-fatal stabbing, Martin Luther King Jr. visited India at the invitation of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr. King and his wife Coretta were warmly welcomed by Nehru, who changed his schedule in order to meet them. They had an opportunity to visit a religious community or “ashram” that Gandhi had founded, and they discussed non-violence with many of Gandhi’s disciples.

9.8 King is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize

In 1964, the change in public opinion produced by the non-violent black civil rights movement resulted in the passage of the civil rights act. In the same year, Dr. King was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He accepted it, not as an individual, but on behalf of all civil rights workers; and he immediately gave all the prize money to the movement.

9.9 Opposition to the Vietnam War

In 1967, a year before his assassination, Dr. King forcefully condemned the Viet Nam war in an address at a massive peace rally in New York City. He felt that opposition to war followed naturally from his advocacy of non-violence. Speaking against the Viet Nam War, Dr. King said: “We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men. They move sadly and apathetically as we herd them off the land of their fathers into concentration camps where minimal social needs are rarely met. They know they must move on or be destroyed by our bombs ... primarily women and children and the aged watch as we poison their water, as we kill a million acres of their crops. They must weep as the bulldozers roar through their areas preparing to destroy the precious trees. They wander into the hospitals. So far we may have killed a million of them, [in Vietnam by 1967] mostly children. They wander into the towns and see thousands of the children, homeless, without clothes, running in packs on the streets like animals. They see the children degraded by our soldiers as they beg for food. They see the children selling their sisters to our soldiers, soliciting for their mothers.”

An excerpt from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s Riverside Church speech

This I believe to be the privilege and the burden of all of us who deem ourselves bound by allegiances and loyalties which are broader and deeper than nationalism and which go beyond our nation’s self-defined goals and positions. We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for the victims of our nation and for those it calls “enemy,” for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers.

And as I ponder the madness of Vietnam and search within myself for ways to understand and respond in compassion, my mind goes constantly to the people of that peninsula. I speak now not of the soldiers of each side, not of the ideologies of the Liberation Front, not of the junta in Saigon, but simply of the people who have been living under the curse of war for almost three continuous decades now. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution there until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries.

They must see Americans as strange liberators. The Vietnamese people proclaimed their own independence in 1954 – in 1945 rather – after a combined French and Japanese occupation and before the communist revolution in China. They were led by Ho Chi Minh. Even though they quoted the American Declaration of Independence in their own document of freedom, we refused to recognize them. Instead, we decided to support France in its reconquest of her former colony. Our government felt then that the Vietnamese people were not ready for independence, and we again fell victim to the deadly Western arrogance that has poisoned the international atmosphere for so long. With that tragic decision we rejected a revolutionary government seeking self-determination and a government that had been established not by China – for whom the Vietnamese have no great love – but by clearly indigenous forces that included some communists. For the peasants this new government meant real land reform, one of the most important needs in their lives.

For nine years following 1945 we denied the people of Vietnam the right of independence. For nine years we vigorously supported the French in their abortive effort to re-colonize Vietnam. Before the end of the war we were meeting eighty percent of the French war costs. Even before the French were defeated at Dien Bien Phu, they began to despair of their reckless action, but we did not. We encouraged them with our huge financial and military supplies to continue the war even after they had lost the will. Soon we would be paying almost the full costs of this tragic attempt at recolonization.

After the French were defeated, it looked as if independence and land reform would come again through the Geneva Agreement. But instead there came the United States, determined that Ho should not unify the temporarily divided nation, and the peasants watched again as we supported one of the most vicious modern dictators, our chosen man, Premier Diem. The peasants watched and cringed as Diem ruthlessly rooted out all opposition, supported their extortionist landlords, and refused even to discuss reunification with the North. The peasants watched as all this was presided over by United States' influence and then by increasing numbers of United States troops who came to help quell the insurgency that Diem's methods had aroused. When Diem was overthrown they may have been happy, but the long line of military dictators seemed to offer no real change, especially in terms of their need for land and peace.

The only change came from America, as we increased our troop commitments in support of governments which were singularly corrupt, inept, and without popular support. All the while the people read our leaflets and received the regular promises of peace and democracy and land reform. Now they languish under our bombs and consider us, not their fellow Vietnamese, the real enemy. They move sadly and apathetically as we herd them off the land of their fathers into concentration camps where minimal social needs are rarely met. They know they must move on or be destroyed by our bombs.

So they go, primarily women and children and the aged. They watch as we poison their water, as we kill a million acres of their crops. They must weep as the bulldozers roar through their areas preparing to destroy the precious trees. They wander into the hospitals with at least twenty casualties from American firepower for one Vietcong-inflicted injury. So far we may have killed a million of them, mostly children. They wander into the towns and see thousands of the children, homeless, without clothes, running in packs on the streets like animals. They see the children degraded by our soldiers as they beg for food. They see the children selling their sisters to our soldiers, soliciting for their mothers.

What do the peasants think as we ally ourselves with the landlords and as we refuse to put any action into our many words concerning land reform? What do they think as we test out our latest weapons on them, just as the Germans tested out new medicine and new tortures in the concentration camps of Europe? Where are the roots of the independent Vietnam we claim to be building? Is it among these voiceless ones?

We have destroyed their two most cherished institutions: the family and the village. We have destroyed their land and their crops. We have cooperated in the crushing – in the crushing of the nation's only non-Communist revolutionary political force, the unified Buddhist Church. We have supported the enemies of the peasants of Saigon. We have corrupted their women and children and killed their men.

Now there is little left to build on, save bitterness. Soon, the only solid – solid physical foundations remaining will be found at our military bases and in the concrete of the concentration camps we call "fortified hamlets." The peasants may well wonder if we plan to build our new Vietnam on such grounds as these. Could we blame them for such thoughts? We must speak for them and raise the questions they cannot raise. These, too, are our brothers.

Perhaps a more difficult but no less necessary task is to speak for those who have been designated as our enemies. What of the National Liberation Front, that strangely anonymous group we call "VC" or "communists"? What must they think of the United States of America when they realize that we permitted the repression and cruelty of Diem, which helped to bring them into being as a resistance group in the South? What do they think of our condoning the violence which led to their own taking up of arms? How can they believe in

our integrity when now we speak of "aggression from the North" as if there were nothing more essential to the war? How can they trust us when now we charge them with violence after the murderous reign of Diem and charge them with violence while we pour every new weapon of death into their land? Surely we must understand their feelings, even if we do not condone their actions. Surely we must see that the men we supported pressed them to their violence. Surely we must see that our own computerized plans of destruction simply dwarf their greatest acts.

How do they judge us when our officials know that their membership is less than twenty-five percent communist, and yet insist on giving them the blanket name? What must they be thinking when they know that we are aware of their control of major sections of Vietnam, and yet we appear ready to allow national elections in which this highly organized political parallel government will not have a part? They ask how we can speak of free elections when the Saigon press is censored and controlled by the military junta. And they are surely right to wonder what kind of new government we plan to help form without them, the only party in real touch with the peasants. They question our political goals and they deny the reality of a peace settlement from which they will be excluded. Their questions are frighteningly relevant. Is our nation planning to build on political myth again, and then shore it up upon the power of new violence?

Here is the true meaning and value of compassion and nonviolence, when it helps us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves. For from his view we may indeed see the basic weaknesses of our own condition, and if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of the brothers who are called the opposition.

So, too, with Hanoi. In the North, where our bombs now pummel the land, and our mines endanger the waterways, we are met by a deep but understandable mistrust. To speak for them is to explain this lack of confidence in Western words, and especially their distrust of American intentions now. In Hanoi are the men who led the nation to independence against the Japanese and the French, the men who sought membership in the French Commonwealth and were betrayed by the weakness of Paris and the willfulness of the colonial armies. It was they who led a second struggle against French domination at tremendous costs, and then were persuaded to give up the land they controlled between the thirteenth and seventeenth parallel as a temporary measure at Geneva. After 1954 they watched us conspire with Diem to prevent elections which could have surely brought Ho Chi Minh to power over a united Vietnam, and they realized they had been betrayed again. When we ask why they do not leap to negotiate, these things must be remembered.

Also, it must be clear that the leaders of Hanoi considered the presence of American troops in support of the Diem regime to have been the initial military breach of the Geneva Agreement concerning foreign troops. They remind us

that they did not begin to send troops in large numbers and even supplies into the South until American forces had moved into the tens of thousands.

Hanoi remembers how our leaders refused to tell us the truth about the earlier North Vietnamese overtures for peace, how the president claimed that none existed when they had clearly been made. Ho Chi Minh has watched as America has spoken of peace and built up its forces, and now he has surely heard the increasing international rumors of American plans for an invasion of the North. He knows the bombing and shelling and mining we are doing are part of traditional pre-invasion strategy. Perhaps only his sense of humor and of irony can save him when he hears the most powerful nation of the world speaking of aggression as it drops thousands of bombs on a poor, weak nation more than eight hundred – rather, eight thousand miles away from its shores.

At this point I should make it clear that while I have tried in these last few minutes to give a voice to the voiceless in Vietnam and to understand the arguments of those who are called "enemy," I am as deeply concerned about our own troops there as anything else. For it occurs to me that what we are submitting them to in Vietnam is not simply the brutalizing process that goes on in any war where armies face each other and seek to destroy. We are adding cynicism to the process of death, for they must know after a short period there that none of the things we claim to be fighting for are really involved. Before long they must know that their government has sent them into a struggle among Vietnamese, and the more sophisticated surely realize that we are on the side of the wealthy, and the secure, while we create a hell for the poor.

Somehow this madness must cease. We must stop now. I speak as a child of God and brother to the suffering poor of Vietnam. I speak for those whose land is being laid waste, whose homes are being destroyed, whose culture is being subverted. I speak of the – for the poor of America who are paying the double price of smashed hopes at home, and death and corruption in Vietnam. I speak as a citizen of the world, for the world as it stands aghast at the path we have taken. I speak as one who loves America, to the leaders of our own nation: The great initiative in this war is ours; the initiative to stop it must be ours.

This is the message of the great Buddhist leaders of Vietnam. Recently one of them wrote these words, and I quote: "Each day the war goes on the hatred increases in the heart of the Vietnamese and in the hearts of those of humanitarian instinct. The Americans are forcing even their friends into becoming their enemies. It is curious that the Americans, who calculate so carefully on the possibilities of military victory, do not realize that in the process they are incurring deep psychological and political defeat. The image of America will never again be the image of revolution, freedom, and democracy, but the image of violence and militarism".

If we continue, there will be no doubt in my mind and in the mind of the world that we have no honorable intentions in Vietnam. If we do not stop our

war against the people of Vietnam immediately, the world will be left with no other alternative than to see this as some horrible, clumsy, and deadly game we have decided to play. The world now demands a maturity of America that we may not be able to achieve. It demands that we admit that we have been wrong from the beginning of our adventure in Vietnam, that we have been detrimental to the life of the Vietnamese people. The situation is one in which we must be ready to turn sharply from our present ways. In order to atone for our sins and errors in Vietnam, we should take the initiative in bringing a halt to this tragic war.

I would like to suggest five concrete things that our government should do [immediately] to begin the long and difficult process of extricating ourselves from this nightmarish conflict:

Number one: End all bombing in North and South Vietnam.

Number two: Declare a unilateral cease-fire in the hope that such action will create the atmosphere for negotiation.

Three: Take immediate steps to prevent other battlegrounds in Southeast Asia by curtailing our military buildup in Thailand and our interference in Laos.

Four: Realistically accept the fact that the National Liberation Front has substantial support in South Vietnam and must thereby play a role in any meaningful negotiations and any future Vietnam government.

Five: Set a date that we will remove all foreign troops from Vietnam in accordance with the 1954 Geneva Agreement...

In 1957, a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that our nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years, we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which has now justified the presence of U.S. military advisors in Venezuela. This need to maintain social stability for our investments accounts for the counterrevolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrillas in Cambodia and why American napalm and Green Beret forces have already been active against rebels in Peru.

It is with such activity in mind that the words of the late John F. Kennedy come back to haunt us. Five years ago he said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken, the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin...we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of our past and present policies. On the one hand, we are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice which produces beggars needs restructuring.

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa, and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say, "This is not just." It will look at our alliance with the landed gentry of South America and say, "This is not just." The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just.

A true revolution of values will lay hand on the world order and say of war, "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.

9.10 Opposition to nuclear weapons

In his book, "Strength to Love", Dr. King wrote, "Wisdom born of experience should tell us that war is obsolete. There may have been a time when war served a negative good by preventing the spread of an evil force, but the power of modern weapons eliminates even the possibility that war may serve as a negative good. If we assume that life is worth living, and that man has a right to survival, then we must find an alternative to war ... I am convinced that the Church cannot be silent while mankind faces the threat of nuclear annihilation. If the church is true to her mission, she must call for an end to the nuclear arms race."



Figure 9.14: Martin Luther King Jr. speaking in Washington. Source: American Civil Liberties Union of Virginia, acluva.org

9.11 Assassination

On April 4, 1968, Dr. King was shot and killed. A number of people, including members of his own family, believe that he was killed because of his opposition to the Viet Nam War. This conclusion is supported by the result of a 1999 trial initiated by members of the King family. Summing up the arguments to the jury, the family's lawyer said "We are dealing in conspiracy with agents of the City of Memphis and the governments of the State of Tennessee and the United States of America. We ask that you find that a conspiracy existed." After two and a half hour's deliberation, the jury found that Lloyd Jowers and "others, including governmental agencies, were parties to this conspiracy". The verdict of the jury remains judicially valid today, and it has never been overturned in a court of law, although massive efforts have been made to discredit it.

Redemptive love

Concerning the Christian principle of loving one's enemies, Dr. King wrote: "Why should we love our enemies? Returning hate for hate multiplies hate, adding deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate. Only love can do that ... Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend. We never get rid of an enemy by meeting hate with hate; we get rid of an enemy by getting rid of enmity... It is this attitude that made it possible for Lincoln to speak a kind word about the South during the Civil War, when feeling was most bitter. Asked by a shocked bystander how he could do this, Lincoln said, 'Madam, do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?' This is the power of redemptive love."

To a large extent, the black civil rights movement of the '50's and '60's succeeded in ending legalized racial discrimination in America. If the methods used had been violent, the movement could easily have degenerated into a nightmare of interracial hatred; but by remembering the Christian message, "Love your enemy; do good to them that spitefully use you", Martin Luther King Jr. raised the ethical level of the civil rights movement; and the final result was harmony and understanding between the black and white communities. Later the nonviolent methods of Gandhi and King were successfully applied to the South African struggle against Apartheid by Nelson Mandela and his followers.

Here are a few more things that Martin Luther King said

I have decided to stick to love...Hate is too great a burden to bear

Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase.

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.

In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.

If you can't fly then run, if you can't run then walk, if you can't walk then crawl, but whatever you do you have to keep moving forward.

Only in the darkness can you see the stars.

There comes a time when a person must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because conscience tells him it is right.

Everybody can be great...because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

Forgiveness is not an occasional act, it is a constant attitude.

We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.

There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies.

We must live together as brothers or perish together as fools.

Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.

True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice.

Science investigates; religion interprets. Science gives man knowledge, which is power; religion gives man wisdom, which is control. Science deals mainly with facts; religion deals mainly with values. The two are not rivals.

The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.

We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor, it must be demanded by the oppressed.

Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of Now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy.

The time is always right to do what is right.

For when people get caught up with that which is right and they are willing to sacrifice for it, there is no stopping point short of victory.

All we say to America is, 'Be true to what you said on paper.' If I lived in... any totalitarian country, maybe I could understand the denial of certain basic First Amendment privileges, because they hadn't committed themselves to that over there. But somewhere I read of the freedom of assembly. Somewhere I read of the freedom of speech. Somewhere I read of the freedom of the press. Somewhere I read that the greatness of America is the right to protest for right.

We've got some difficult days ahead. But it really doesn't matter with me now because I've been to the mountaintop . . . I've looked over and I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we as a people will get to the promised land.

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Chapter 10

A BULWARK AGAINST EQUALITY

Why did so many of the British upper class support Hitler's rise to power and why did they allow Germany to rearm, in violation of the terms of the Treaty of Versailles? It seems that they regarded Hitler as a bulwark against the movements for social reform that threatened to rob them of their excessive wealth and privileges.

10.1 Unity Mitford and Hitler

Unity Valkyrie Freeman-Mitford (1914-1948) was one of the two Mitford sisters who became notorious for their advocacy of fascism and anti-semitism. Unity's sister Diana left her husband to have an affair with Sir Oswald Mosley, leader of the British Union of Fascists, whom she later married.

Mosley's son, Nicholas, stated that: "Unity became a very extrovert member of the party, which was her way ... She joined my father's party and she used to turn up, she used to go around in a black shirt uniform, and she used to turn up at communist meetings and she used to do the fascist salute and heckle the speaker. That was the sort of person she was". He adds that although his father admired Unity's commitment, Mosley felt "She wasn't doing him any good, because she was making an exhibition of herself."

The two sisters, Unity and Diana, travelled to Germany to attend the Nuremberg Rally as part of a delegation from the British Union of Fascists. Unity said later "The first time I saw him I knew there was no one I would rather meet." According to her biographer, Anne de Courcy, "The Nuremberg rally had a profound effect on both Diana and Unity [...] Unity was already, as it were, convinced about Hitler, but this turned conviction into worship. From then on she wanted to be near Hitler as much as possible"

In 1934, Unity returned to Germany, where she enrolled in a language school in Munich, near to the Nazi headquarters. A biographer, Pryce Jones commented that "She set her mind on getting Hitler, and she discovered that Hitler's movements could be ascertained. It's one of the extraordinary things about Hitler's daily life that he was so available to the



Figure 10.1: David Bertram Ogilvy Freeman-Mitford, 2nd Baron Redesdale (1878-1958), with his family in 1928. He was a fascist and anti-semitic, like his daughters, Unity and Diana.

public. You knew which café he'd be in, you knew which restaurant he'd be in, which hotel, and he would just go and meet people over sticky buns and cakes, and it was possible to meet him like that. And he was in the habit of eating in the Osteria Bavaria in Munich and she started sitting in the Osteria Bavaria every day. So he would have to come into the front part of the restaurant where there was this English girl."

After ten months of this stalking, Hitler finally invited Unity over to his table. They talked for 30 minutes, and Hitler paid her bill. In a letter to her father, Unity wrote, "It was the most wonderful and beautiful [day] of my life. I am so happy that I wouldn't mind a bit, dying. I'd suppose I am the luckiest girl in the world. For me he is the greatest man of all time".

For his part, Hitler was fascinated with this young blond English girl whose middle name was Valkyrie, and who seemed to be curiously connected to German culture. In fact, Unity's grandfather, Algernon Freeman-Mitford, had been a friend of Hitler's idol, Richard Wagner. Unity and Hitler became close. She became part of his inner circle, and he used their friendship to make Eva Braun jealous.



Figure 10.2: Unity Mitford and Hitler. When Britain declared war on Germany in September 1939, a distraught Unity went to the Englischer Garten park in Munich (the English Garden) and shot herself in the head.

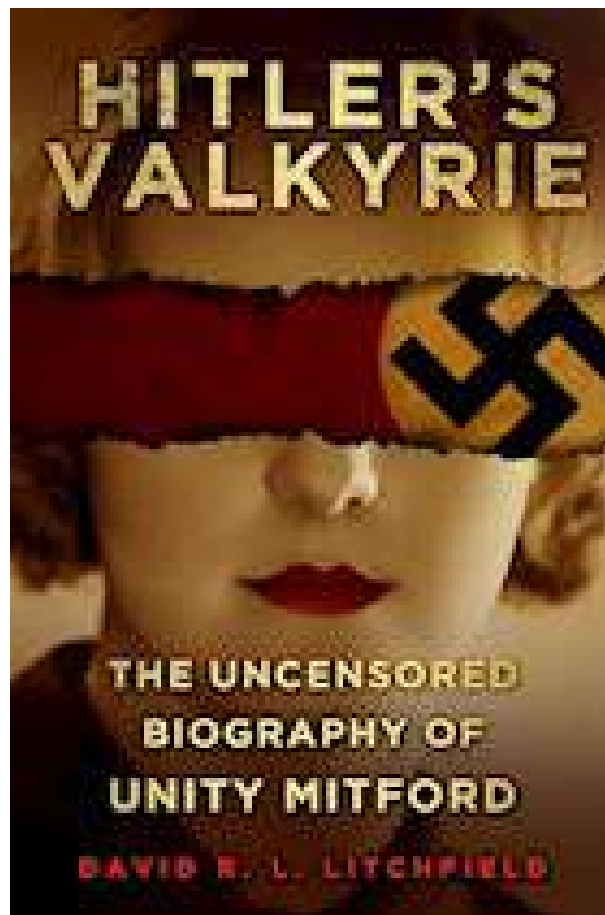


Figure 10.3: A book about the relationship between Unity and Hitler. Upon her return to Britain - with a bullet remaining lodged in her brain - Unity was vilified as an enemy of the state and the Home Office faced calls to have her interned.



Figure 10.4: Unity's sister Diana married Sir Oswald Mosley, leader of the British Union of Fascists.



Figure 10.5: Unity “was right in the inner circle of Nazi leadership” according to her biographer, David Pryce-Jones.

10.2 The British Union of Fascists

Some prominent members and supporters of the British Union of Fascists

- William Edward David Allen MP was the Unionist Member of Parliament for Belfast West.
- John Beckett MP was the Labour Member of Parliament for Peckham.
- Frank Bossard was a British Spy
- Patrick Boyle, 8th Earl of Glasgow was a member of the House of Lords
- Sir Malcolm Campbell was a racing motorist and motoring journalist.
- A. K. Chesterton was a journalist
- Lady Cynthia Curzon (known as 'Cimmie') was the second daughter of George Curzon, Lord Curzon of Kedleston, and the wife of Sir Oswald Mosley until her death in 1933.
- Robert Forgan MP was the Labour Member of Parliament for West Renfrewshire.
- Major General John Frederick Charles Fuller was a military historian and strategist.
- Billy Fullerton, leader of the Billy Boys gang from Glasgow.
- Arthur Gilligan was the Captain of the England cricket team
- Sir Reginald Goodall was a noted English conductor.
- Group Captain Sir Louis Leisler Greig was a British naval surgeon, courtier and intimate of King George VI.
- Harold Sidney Harmsworth, 1st Viscount Rothermere was the owner of the Daily Mail and a member of the House of Lords.
- Josslyn Hay, 22nd Earl of Erroll was a member of the House of Lords
- William Joyce, later nicknamed Lord Haw-Haw
- David Freeman-Mitford, 2nd Baron Redesdale, in addition to his wife, Lady Redesdale, and two of his daughters:
- Diana Mitford (Lady Mosley, after marriage to Sir Oswald Mosley in 1936)
- The Hon. Unity Mitford
- St John Philby was an explorer, and father of Kim Philby.
- Sir Alliott Verdon Roe was a pilot and businessman
- Edward Frederick Langley Russell, 2nd Baron Russell of Liverpool was a member of the House of Lords
- Lady Russell
- Edward Russell, 26th Baron de Clifford was a member of the House of Lords
- Hastings Russell, 12th Duke of Bedford was a member of the House of Lords
- Frank Cyril Tiarks was the Director of the Bank of England.
- Sir Frederick Toone was the manager of the England Cricket team



Figure 10.6: Sir Oswald Mosley, leader of the British Union of Fascists.



Figure 10.7: Italy's *Duce* Benito Mussolini (left) with Leader Oswald Mosley (right) during Mosley's visit to Italy in 1936.

10.3 Hitler and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor

The Windsors visit Germany in 1937

After marrying the twice-divorced American, Wally Simpson, Edward VIII had abdicated from his position as King of England. He and his new wife were afterwards known as the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Edward's new wife was never accepted by British society, and Edward was anxious that she should experience the deference shown to the wife of royalty on an official visit. He therefore accepted an invitation to visit Germany, ostensibly to visit factories and examine the conditions of the workers.

According to Deborah Cadbury, "Adolf Hitler and his foreign minister, Joachim von Ribbentrop, savored the prospect of a tour of Nazi Germany by Britain's ex-king. Of all the pieces moving swiftly across the chessboard of European diplomacy, the former king turning up in the heart of Berlin was an unexpected bonus."

According to Wikipedia, "The couple were chaperoned in Germany by Robert Ley, and they visited many factories - some producing material as part of the arms race - being greeted by the British national anthem and Nazi salutes, which were often returned by the Duke. They also dined regularly with high ranking Nazis such as Goebbels, Göring, von Ribbentrop, Speer, and, the highlight of their tour, Hitler in Berchtesgaden. There, he and the Duke had a long discussion, although it is uncertain precisely what they talked about as the minutes to their meeting were later lost. At the same time, the Duchess took high tea with Hitler's deputy, Rudolf Hess. Hitler was openly sympathetic to the Windsors while the British Government, for its part, was helpless to affect the course of events, particularly as it had forbidden its diplomatic staff in Germany to have any high-level interaction with the couple. Popular opinion of the couple soon declined, and the second leg of the Windsors' tour to America was cancelled."

Meeting with Hitler

The high point of the Windsor's tour was a meeting with Adolf Hitler in his Bavarian retreat, which was known as the Berghof. According to a contemporary witness, "The Duchess was visibly impressed with the Führer's personality, and he apparently indicated that they had become fast friends by giving her an affectionate farewell. [Hitler] took both their hands in his saying a long goodbye, after which he stiffened to a rigid Nazi salute that the Duke returned."



Figure 10.8: Hitler received the Duke and Duchess of Windsor with all the ceremony that would have been due to royalty.



Figure 10.9: In fact, Hitler hoped to make the Windsors into a pro-Nazi King and Queen of England.

10.4 Hitler: A bulwark for the Establishment

Here are some quotations from an essay by Ian Kenneth Buckley entitled *Australia's Foreign Wars, Origins, Costs, Future? 8. Supporting Germany's Rearmament & the Steady Slide to WWII*. Reading these quotations from the carefully researched essay, we can see clearly why so many prominent figures in England's "Establishment" made the fatal mistake of supporting German rearmament, despite the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles, and despite Winston Churchill's many warnings.

Hitler and a rearmed Germany were seen as bulwarks against the real threat: a more equal distribution of wealth. A communist revolution had taken place in Russia. It was feared that this revolution might spread to Germany or even to England. Hitler was known to be a fervent opponent of communism. He was known to use strong measures to suppress and ban the Communist Party, and he was known to have plans to increase German "lebensraum" by attacking Russia. Therefore, since communism was seen to be the great enemy, it was logical for the British Establishment to support the rearmament of Germany.

Understanding Appeasement: What drove British Policy?

To better understand the motivation behind the British governments' policy of so-called 'appeasement', in fact their 'accommodation' to and often frank encouragement of Germany's rearmament and foreign policy aims under Hitler, we need to go back to the early post-WWI scene. In Russia, long decades of domestic oppression capped by the terrible sufferings endured during the Great War, had culminated in the revolution of 1917 and, as related above, capitulation to Germany. Fighting on the Eastern front stopped, allowing Germany to transfer many divisions to the Western Front and for a while the possibility of a German victory seemed all too real. With all combatants close to exhaustion, it was a close call, but when the United States took sides in 1917 and entered the battle lines in force in mid 1918, the balance tipped in favour of the Allies. Only then was it possible for the European 'victors' finally to proudly proclaim not only that Germany had 'started the war' but that it, with its allies, had 'lost' it.

However, as we have seen, since all sides (other than the USA and Japan) had suffered such extreme human carnage, vast material wastage and debt, the greater reality was that all had lost, - millions of families bereaved, millions maimed in body and mind, all survivors exhausted, all prime combatant countries' economies ruined. Understandably, then, there was a very widespread dissatisfaction with the old ways of doing things which led most people not only to seek, but to *expect* genuine reforms. That brought great fear in high places - fear of any disturbance to the old ways, the 'old order', fear that revolution (which had already occurred in Russia and was all too close in Germany) might,

like a virus, infect other Western Powers - even France and Britain. This fear, already very strong at the war's end, was further aggravated by the failure to deal with the old social and economic inequalities, especially when these led to total collapse of the market economies, to the Great Depression with its massive unemployment and hardship in the midst of plenty. And the societal response to these greatly worsened conditions simply heightened the fears of the overly privileged to the point of obsession.

In the early days after World War I and Russia's revolution, the most urgent concern was for the German situation. Might not the defeated, suffering, demoralised Germans opt for a more egalitarian, a 'socialist' solution to their predicament? For Lloyd George, who had been Britain's Prime Minister for most of the war and was its chief representative at the 1919 Paris Peace Conference, that concern overshadowed all others. We see this in his *'Fontainebleu Memorandum'* presented to Peace Conference delegates. In this he seemed at first to recognise that the defeated nations must not be saddled with inequalities and injustices which would only make for a further World War - perhaps 'a mere 30 years on'. All sounded pure wisdom, the sort of common sense that could guarantee the security of one's own country along with that of others. However, the motivation behind Lloyd George's Conference message was anything but pure. For soon we learn *"But there is a consideration in favour of long-sighted peace which influences me even more than the desire to leave no causes justifying a fresh outbreak 30 years hence.There is a deep sense not only of discontent, but of anger and revolt amongst the workmen against pre-war conditions. The whole existing order is questioned by the mass of the population from one end of Europe to the other."*

In particular he was concerned that such conditions in the defeated Germany could, following the Russian example, make it 'go Bolshevik'. And even more alarming, that Britain and France could go the same way. So his prime worry, his overriding concern (which persisted throughout the 1920s and '30s) was not the avoidance of conditions certain to lead to a 'fresh outbreak', a future European war, but the threat to his concept of the 'long-sighted peace', the long-revered 'traditional arrangements' for the creation and (mal)distribution of wealth, both nationally and internationally.

Thus, while in his *Memorandum*, Lloyd George wrote that *"...we will open to her (i.e., Germany) the raw materials and markets of the world on equal terms with ourselves, and will do everything possible to enable the German peoples to get upon their legs again. We cannot both cripple her and expect her to pay."* he at the same time had no plans to carry out the moves essential for that pacific future. Obviously these would have included: (i) the sharing of responsibility for the war's origin, (ii) limiting German reparations

to invasion-caused material damage, (iii) accepting German exports as Reparations payments, (iv) implementing universal arms limitation; (v) honouring the pledges for the self-determination of peoples; and (vi) instituting fair dealing in economic affairs both at home and abroad. But in the event, these were either absent or severely constrained by the over-riding urge to maintain the 'Old Order' as it was before the war.

That of course meant upholding the 'normal' divide between rich and poor, both nationally and internationally (including the application of the Versailles' Treaty's 'guilt', 'economic' and 'Reparations' Clauses on Germany), maintaining and extending Britain's colonial possessions, and thwarting moves towards overcoming its entrenched poverty at home, what Churchill referred to as "the social problem" - let alone instituting any degree of 'communism', 'socialism' or 'egalitarianism'. Indeed, it was to mean perpetuating all sorts of inequalities and injustices which all too soon were to lead to the Great Depression and then a Second World War, not 30 but a mere 20 years after the First. And since the principal concern of the powerful voices within Britain was the avoidance of risk to any significant redistribution of wealth, that concern was translated into policies designed to block such trends, including their absurd support of German rearmament under Hitler - one known to be a fervent anti-communist and, moreover, one known to have territorial designs on Eastern Europe and Soviet Russia, the communist USSR...

Churchill's summing up

Commenting on [Chamberlain's] extraordinary about-face, Churchill wrote *"Look back and see what we had successively accepted and thrown away: a Germany rearmed in violation of a solemn treaty; air superiority or even air parity cast away; the Rhineland forcibly occupied and the Siegfried Line built or building; the Berlin-Rome Axis established; Austria devoured and digested by the Reich; Czechoslovakia deserted and ruined by the Munich Pact, its fortress line in German hands, its mighty arsenal of Skoda henceforward making munitions for the German armies; President Roosevelt's effort to tabilise or bring to a head the European situation by the intervention of the United States waved aside with one hand and Soviet Russia's undoubted willingness to join the Western Powers and go all lengths to save Czechoslovakia ignored on the other; the services of thirty five Czech divisions against the still un-ripened German army cast away, when great Britain could herself supply only two to strengthen the front in France; all gone with the wind.History may be scoured and ransacked to find a parallel to this sudden and complete reversal of five or six years' policy of easy-going placatory appeasement, and its transformation almost overnight into a readiness to accept an obviously imminent war on far worse conditions and on the greatest scale.which*

must surely lead to the slaughter of tens of millions of people.”

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Chapter 11

RACISM, IMPERIALISM AND EXCEPTIONALISM

11.1 The history of racism

It seems to be possible for nations, and the majority of their citizens, to commit the worst imaginable atrocities, including torture, murder and genocide, while feeling that what they are doing is both noble and good. Some understanding of how this is possible can be gained by watching the 3-part BBC documentary, “The History of Racism”.¹

The series was broadcast by BBC Four in March 2007, and videos of the broadcasts are available on the Internet. Watching this eye-opening documentary can give us much insight into the link between racism and colonialism. We can also begin to see how both racism and colonialism are linked to US exceptionalism and neocolonialism.

11.2 Heart of Darkness

Looking at the BBC documentary we can see how often in human history economic greed and colonial exploitation have been justified by racist theories. The documentary describes almost unbelievable cruelties committed against the peoples of the Americas and Africa by Europeans. For example, in the Congo, a vast region which King Leopold II of Belgium claimed as his private property, the women of villages were held as hostages while the men were forced to gather rubber in the forests. Since neither the men nor the women could produce food under these circumstances, starvation was the result.

Leopold’s private army of 90,000 men were issued ammunition, and to make sure that they used it in the proper way, the army was ordered to cut off the hands of their victims and send them back as proof that the bullets had not been wasted. Human hands became a kind of currency, and hands were cut off from men, women and children when rubber

¹<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efl6T8lovqY>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IdBDRbjx9jo>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCJHJWaNL-g>



Figure 11.1: **Half of the population of Belgian Congo died during the rule of Leopold II.**

quotas were not fulfilled. Sometimes more than a thousand human hands were gathered in a single day. During the rule of Leopold, roughly 10,000,000 Congolese were killed, which was approximately half the population of the region.

According to the racist theories that supported these atrocities, it was the duty of philanthropic Europeans like Leopold to bring civilization and the Christian religion to Africa. Similar theories were used to justify the genocides committed by Europeans against the native inhabitants of the Americas.

Racist theories were also used to justify enormous cruelties committed by the British colonial government in India. For example, during the great famine of 1876-1878, in which ten million people died, the Viceroy, Lord Lytton, oversaw the export to England of a record 6.4 million hundredweight of wheat.

Meanwhile, in Europe, almost everyone was proud of the role which they were playing in the world. All that they read in newspapers and in books or heard from the pulpits of their churches supported the idea that they were serving the non-Europeans by bringing them the benefits of civilization and Christianity. On the whole, the mood of Europe during this orgy of external cruelty and exploitation, was self-congratulatory.

Can we not see a parallel with the self-congratulatory mood of the American people and their allies, who export violence, murder, torture and neocolonialism to the whole world, and who justify it by thinking of themselves as "exceptional"?

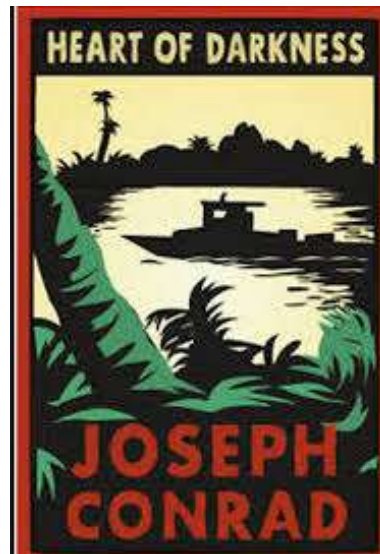


Figure 11.2: Joseph Conrad's famous book was written against the background of Leopold's atrocities.



Figure 11.3: **Heart of Darkness:** In Leopold's Congo, human hands became a currency.



Figure 11.4: **Heart of Darkness: Part of a palace built by Leopold II to glorify his “humanitarian” activities in the Congo.**

11.3 The racism of Cecil Rhodes

Cecil Rhodes, who was born in Bishop’s Stortford in Hertfordshire, came to South Africa in the late 1800s and made his fortune in the country’s diamond mines before moving into politics. He served as prime minister of the Cape Colony and later founded the southern African territory of Rhodesia, which would later become independent Zimbabwe. He was the architect of South Africa’s notorious apartheid system, and a rabid advocate of British imperialism. Social Darwinism and the eugenics movement may have contributed to the racism and imperialism of Cecil Rhodes.

In a December 2015 article in *The Telegraph*, Dalia Gebrial wrote: “Cecil Rhodes was a man responsible for untold, unending devastation and violence. An architect of South African apartheid, he explicitly believed in the existence of an Anglo-Saxon master race - an ideology that drove him to not only steal approximately one [square] million miles of South African land, but to facilitate the deaths of hundreds of thousands of black South Africans.

“His establishment of a paramilitary private army, the British South Africa Company’s Police (BSACP) resulted in the systematic murder of approximately 60,000 people; his amendment of the Masters and Servants Act (1890) reintroduced conditions of torture for black labourers; his infamous racist ‘land grabs’ set up a system in which the unlawful and illegitimate acquisition of land through armed force was routine.

“ In 1887 he told the House of Assembly in Cape Town: ‘The native is to be treated as a child and denied the franchise. We must adopt a system of despotism in our relations with the barbarians of South Africa.’ His 1892 Franchise and Ballot Act effectively eliminated African voting rights. He repeatedly reminded his colleagues of the ‘extreme caution’ they must exercise when it comes to ‘granting the franchise to coloured people.

Rhodes wanted to create an international movement to extend British influence. He once said: “Why should we not form a secret society with but one object, the furtherance of the British Empire and the bringing of the whole world under British rule, for the recovery of the United States, for making the Anglo-Saxon race but one Empire?”

Rhodes did, in fact, establish this secret society, and it remains very influential today. According to G. Edward Griffin², “Financed by Nathan Rothschild and the Bank of England, he [Rhodes] established a monopoly over the diamond output of South Africa and most of the gold as well. He formed a secret society which included many of the top leaders of British government. Their elitist goal was nothing less than world domination and the establishment of a modern feudalist society controlled by themselves through the world’s central banks. In America, the Council on Foreign Relations (CFR) was an outgrowth of that group.”

11.4 Nazi atrocities

During the World War II Holocaust, six million Jews were systematically murdered. This amounted to two thirds of the Jewish population of Europe. A broader definition of the Holocaust includes the murder of the Roma and the “incurably sick”. as well as ethnic Poles, other Slavic groups, Soviet citizens and prisoners of war, homosexuals, Jehovah’s Witnesses, black people, and political opponents.

At least three million Soviet prisoners of war died in German custody, but this figure is small compared with the total number of lives lost in the Soviet Union during World War II. Depending on which historian you believe, the USSR lost at least 11,000,000 soldiers (killed and missing) as well as somewhere between 7,000,000 and 20,000,000 million of its civilians. The total number of people killed in World War II is approximately 60,000,000. If deaths from war-related disease and famine are included, this figure becomes an estimated 80,000,000.

²in his book, *The Creature from Jeckyll Island*



Figure 11.5: Nazi genocides: A pile of corpses in the Buchenwald extermination camp.



Figure 11.6: The idea of the superiority of one race over another was at the root of Nazi atrocities.



Figure 11.7: Nazi racism was built on the idea that Aryans are superior to all other races. But who is to decide? Will not each ethnic group or nation always decide that they themselves are the “chosen people”, loved by God and superior to all others?



Figure 11.8: Baba Yar.



Figure 11.9: Polish farmers killed by German forces, German-occupied Poland, 1943.



Figure 11.10: Polish teachers from Bydgoszcz guarded by members of Volksdeutscher Selbstschutz before execution,



Figure 11.11: Mass murder of Soviet civilians near Minsk, 1943.



Figure 11.12: The anti-Jewish pogrom in Kaunas, in which thousands of Jews were killed in the last few days of June 1941.



Figure 11.13: German police shooting women and children from the Mizocz Ghetto, 14 October 1942.

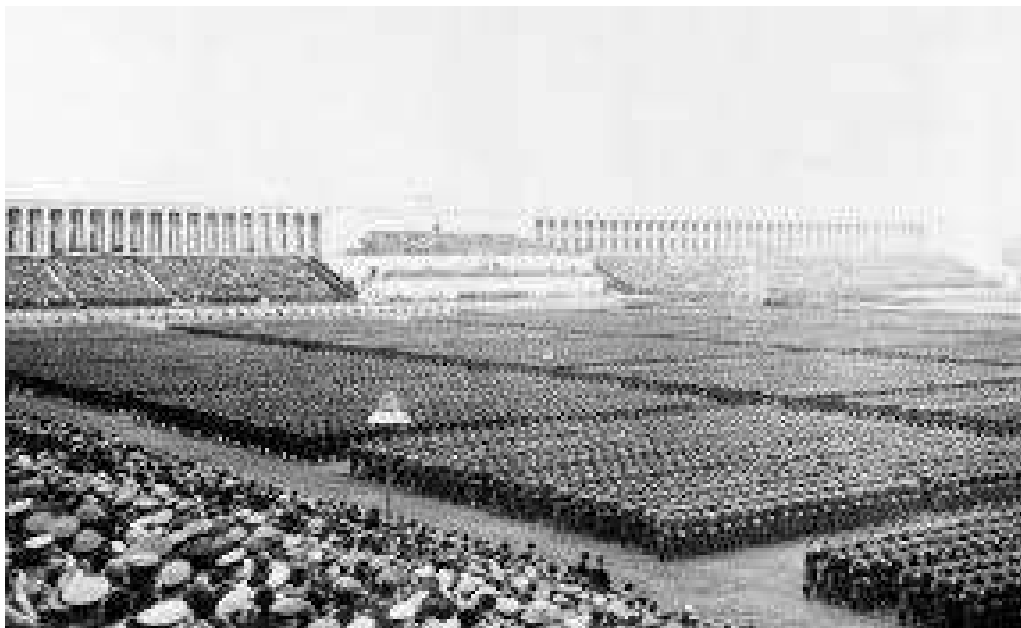


Figure 11.14: Crowds of Germans applauding Adolf Hitler at a rally in Nuremberg.



Figure 11.15: Another photo from Nuremberg. Racism is popular!

11.5 Donald trump was elected on a platform of racism

Here is a list taken from an article by German Lopaz, entitled *Donald Trump's long history of racism, from the 1970s to 2019*³.

- Trump launched his campaign in 2015 by calling Mexican immigrants “rapists” who are “bringing crime” and “bringing drugs” to the US. His campaign was largely built on building a wall to keep these immigrants out of the US.
- As a candidate in 2015, Trump called for a ban on all Muslims coming into the US. His administration eventually implemented a significantly watered-down version of the policy.
- When asked at a 2016 Republican debate whether all 1.6 billion Muslims hate the US, Trump said, “I mean a lot of them. I mean a lot of them.”
- He argued in 2016 that Judge Gonzalo Curiel - who was overseeing the Trump University lawsuit - should recuse himself from the case because of his Mexican heritage and membership in a Latino lawyers association. House Speaker Paul Ryan, who endorsed Trump, later called such comments “the textbook definition of a racist comment.”
- Trump has been repeatedly slow to condemn white supremacists who endorse him, and he regularly retweeted messages from white supremacists and neo-Nazis during his presidential campaign.

³<https://www.vox.com/2016/7/25/12270880/donald-trump-racist-racism-history>

- He tweeted and later deleted an image that showed Hillary Clinton in front of a pile of money and by a Jewish Star of David that said, “Most Corrupt Candidate Ever!” The tweet had some very obvious anti-Semitic imagery, but Trump insisted that the star was a sheriff’s badge, and said his campaign shouldn’t have deleted it.
- Trump has repeatedly referred to Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA) as “Pocahontas,” using her controversial - and later walked-back - claims to Native American heritage as a punchline.
- At the 2016 Republican convention, Trump officially seized the mantle of the “law and order” candidate - an obvious dog whistle playing to white fears of black crime, even though crime in the US is historically low. His speeches, comments, and executive actions after he took office have continued this line of messaging.
- In a pitch to black voters in 2016, Trump said, “You’re living in poverty, your schools are no good, you have no jobs, 58 percent of your youth is unemployed. What the hell do you have to lose?”
- Trump stereotyped a black reporter at a press conference in February 2017. When April Ryan asked him if he plans to meet and work with the Congressional Black Caucus, he repeatedly asked her to set up the meeting - even as she insisted that she’s “just a reporter.”
- In the week after white supremacist protests in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017, Trump repeatedly said that “many sides” and “both sides” were to blame for the violence and chaos that ensued - suggesting that the white supremacist protesters were morally equivalent to counterprotesters that stood against racism. He also said that there were “some very fine people” among the white supremacists. All of this seemed like a dog whistle to white supremacists - and many of them took it as one, with white nationalist Richard Spencer praising Trump for “defending the truth.”
- Throughout 2017, Trump repeatedly attacked NFL players who, by kneeling or otherwise silently protesting during the national anthem, demonstrated against systemic racism in America.
- Trump reportedly said in 2017 that people who came to the US from Haiti “all have AIDS,” and he lamented that people who came to the US from Nigeria would never “go back to their huts” once they saw America. The White House denied that Trump ever made these comments.
- Speaking about immigration in a bipartisan meeting in January 2018, Trump reportedly asked, in reference to Haiti and African countries, “Why are we having all these people from shithole countries come here?” He then reportedly suggested that the US should take more people from countries like Norway. The implication: Immigrants from predominantly white countries are good, while immigrants from predominantly black countries are bad.

The disastrous 2016 US election

In the United States, campaigns for the presidential election of 2016 might have been an occasion for a realistic discussion of the enormously important challenges which we now face, not only in the America, but also throughout the world.

Most thoughtful people agree that the two most important issues facing humanity today are the threat of catastrophic and uncontrollable climate change, and the threat of nuclear war. Each of these threatened disasters has the potential to destroy human civilization and much of the biosphere. But on the whole these vitally important issues were not discussed in an honest way in the mainstream media. Instead the campaign spectacle presented to us by the media was washed down into the murky depths of stupidity by rivers of money from the fossil fuel giants and the military industrial complex.

The Republican presidential candidates were almost single-voiced in denying the reality of climate change, and they were almost unanimously behind foreign policy options that would push the world to the brink of nuclear war.

Unless rapid action is taken, the world may soon pass a tipping point after which human efforts to avoid catastrophic climate change will be useless because feedback loops will have taken over. However, our present situation is by no means hopeless, because of the extremely rapid rate of growth of renewable energy. What can governments do to help? They can stop subsidizing the fossil fuel industry! Without massive fossil fuel subsidies, renewables would be the cheaper option, and economic forces alone would drive the urgently-needed transition to 100% renewable energy.

A report by RNE21, a global renewable energy policy network, states that “Global subsidies for fossil fuels remain high despite reform efforts. Estimates range from USD 550 billion (International Energy Agency) to USD 5.6 trillion per year (International Monetary Fund), depending on how ‘subsidy’ is defined and calculated.”

“Growth in renewable energy (and energy efficiency improvements) is tempered by subsidies to fossil fuels and nuclear power, particularly in developing countries. Subsidies keep conventional energy prices artificially low, which makes it more difficult for renewable energy to compete...”

“Creating a level playing field can lead to a more efficient allocation of financial resources, helping to strengthen to advance the development of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Removing fossil fuel and energy subsidies globally would reflect more accurately the true cost of energy generation.”⁴

There is, so to speak, an elephant in the room; but no one wants to talk about it. Everyone (with a very few exceptions) pretends not to see it. They pretend that it is not there. What is this metaphorical elephant? It is the Pentagon’s colossal budget, which is far too sacred a thing to be mentioned in an election campaign.

The size of this budget is almost beyond comprehension: 610 billion dollars per year. This does not include nuclear weapons research, maintenance, cleanup and production, which are paid for by the Department of Energy. Nor does it include payments in pensions

⁴<http://www.ren21.net/status-of-renewables/global-status-report/>

to military retirees and widows, nor interest on debt for past wars, nor the State Department's financing foreign arms sales and military-related development assistance, nor special emergency grants for current wars. Nor are the expenses of the Department of Homeland Security included in the Pentagon's budget, nor those of the CIA, nor the huge budget of NSA and other dark branches of the US government. One can only guess at the total figure if everything should be included, but it is probably well over a trillion dollars per year.

The hidden presence in the room is a trillion-dollar elephant. Perhaps we should include subsidies to fossil fuel giants. Then we would have a multi-trillion-dollar elephant. But it is too sacred to be mentioned. Cut Medicare! Cut pensions! Cut Social Security! Abolish food stamps! Sacrifice support for education! We are running out of money! (Meanwhile the elephant stands there, too holy to be seen.)

Against expectations, Donald Trump who, in the words of Michael Moore, is a "wretched, ignorant, dangerous part-time clown and full-time sociopath", was elected in 2016. What happened? Disillusioned by the way in which the immensely popular Senator Bernie Sanders was sabotaged by the media and by the Democratic National Committee, and despising Hillary Clinton for her involvement in US wars and Wall Street banks, many progressive voters stayed away from the polls. In their absence, Trump won narrowly. He lost the popular vote, but won the electoral vote. Today, the White House is a morass of dissension, erratic decisions and lies.



Figure 11.16: Is this the person to whom we ought to entrust the future of our planet? When elected, Donald Trump not only pulled the United States out of the Paris Agreement; he also sabotaged the Environmental Protection Agency to such an extent that the carefully collected facts on climate change that the agency had accumulated had to be secretly saved by scientists to prevent their destruction by the Trump administration. Furthermore, Donald Trump's administration not only subsidizes giant coal corporations. It also has sabotages renewable energy initiatives in the United States.



Figure 11.17: When Senator Bernie Sanders began his campaign for the Democratic presidential nomination in 2016, few people believed that he could succeed. But as his campaign gained momentum, enormous crowds were attracted to his reformist speeches, and small individual donors supported his expenses. Although the crowds at Sanders' speeches were at least four times the size of those attending the rallies of other candidates, they were not reported in the mass media. Sanders' campaign was also sabotaged by the corporate-controlled Democratic National Committee. His huge popularity remains undimmed today, despite his losses in the 2016 and 2020 primaries. He advocates a social system for the United States similar to these which have made the Scandinavian countries leaders in both human development and human happiness indices.



Figure 11.18: Dr. Jill Stein was the Green Party's presidential candidate in 2016. She was the only candidate who was willing to talk about the "elephant in the room" - the obscenely enormous military budget that consumed almost a trillion dollars that could otherwise have been used for social goals, health, education and infrastructure.



Figure 11.19: Disillusioned progressive voters who stayed at home were responsible for Trump's victory. The corporation-dominated Democratic National Committee has made the same mistake in the 2020 election. They did not allow a truly progressive candidate to run for President. A ticket with Elizabeth Warren for President and Bernie Sanders for Vice-President (or the reverse) would certainly beat Trump. The ticket with Joe Biden for President is in danger of losing. Biden is dangerously similar to Hillary Clinton. He is tainted by corporate money and has blood from the Iraq War on his hands. With Biden as the Democrat's candidate, progressive voters could stay home in disgust in 2020, just as they did in 2016. This must not happen! Trump's neo-fascism, climate change denial, support for fossil fuels, and COVID-19 incompetence are such serious threats that we absolutely must not have another four years of his rule. Trump is so extremely bad that progressives must vote for Biden.

11.6 Children in cages

Inhumane treatment at the border

Here are some excerpts from the written testimony of Clara Long Deputy Washington Director (Acting) Senior Researcher, US Program Human Rights Watch. The testimony was submitted to the U.S. House Committee on Oversight and Reform for a hearing on July 19, 2019.

Our in-depth interviews with children revealed that the US Border Patrol is holding many children, including some who are much too young to take care of themselves, in jail - like border facilities for weeks at a time without contact with family members, or regular access to showers, clean clothes, toothbrushes, or proper beds. Many were sick. Many, including children as young as 2 or 3, were separated from adult caretakers without any provisions for their care besides that provided by unrelated older children also being held in detention. These conditions are consistent with those Human Rights Watch documented in our February 2018 report, "In the Freezer." In contrast with the conditions as of February 2018, the harms of CBP detention for children are now compounding over weeks instead of days.

On my first day at Clint, I spoke with an 11-year-old boy who was caring for his 3-year-old brother. Both were fending for themselves in cinder-block cells with dozens of other children for three weeks. When I met them, the little one was quiet with matted hair, a hacking cough, muddy pants and eyes that fluttered closed with fatigue. As we spoke, he fell asleep on two office chairs drawn together. "I am the one who takes care of him here," the older brother told us. "There was a teenage girl with curly hair who was helping me take care of him for a while. I don't know her name. But she's gone now. Now, no one helps me to take care of him."

A 14-year-old told our team she was taking care of a 4-year-old girl who had been placed in her cell with no relatives. "I take her to the bathroom, give her my extra food if she is hungry, and tell people to leave her alone if they are bothering her", she said. "She has been sick the whole time I have been taking care of her, and is coughing and has mucous. She doesn't talk hardly at all, just 'yes' and 'no'. She wears diapers and I change them for her."...

We also spoke with children who had been held for some period of time in quarantine cells. A 14-year-old girl told us, "I was in the first cell for seven days, sleeping with no mattress. It is hard to sleep when you don't have a mattress. I then came down with the flu. I then went into the flu cell for seven days. When you are in the flu cell, you also sleep on the floor, but you have a mattress. There were 21 other kids in that space with the flu. I had a fever in there and I was shaking. Some of the other kids were vomiting. They all had fevers. No one was taking care of the kids with the flu.... We were not allowed



to leave the flu cell, ever. It was very boring. I did nothing to entertain myself, nor was anything offered. It was sad, very sad. I felt locked up and closed in.”

An 11-year-old boy held in CBP custody for 12 days, despite having parents in New Jersey, said, “About three days ago I got a fever. They moved me alone to a flu cell. There is no one to take care of you there. They just give you pills twice a day. I also am having an allergic reaction all over my skin. My skin is itchy and red and my nose is stuffed up. Two times they gave me a pill for it but not anymore”

A 7-year-old girl I attempted to interview entered the room silently but burst into tears when we asked whom she traveled with to the US. “My aunt,” she said, with a keening cry. She was so upset we decided not to attempt to interview her, a situation that happened several times during our visit. A bracelet on her wrist had the words “US parent” and a phone number written in permanent marker. We called the number on the spot and found out that no one had informed her desperate parents where she was being held. Some of the most emotional moments of our visit came witnessing children speak for the first time with their parents on an attorney’s phone.

Based on our interviews, US officials at the border seem to be making no discernible effort to release children to caregivers while children are in Customs and Border Protection custody - though many have parents in the US - rather than holding them for weeks in overcrowded cells, incommunicado from their desperate loved ones.







The definition of genocide

Here is the UN's definition of genocide under the statutes of the International Criminal Court:

“In the present Convention, genocide means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

a Killing members of the group;

b Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;

c Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;

d Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;

(e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.”

Does not the treatment of children at the US southern border fulfill this definition?

11.7 Demonizing the Squad

On Sunday, July 14, Trump Tweeted

“So interesting to see ‘Progressive’ Democrat Congresswomen, who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe, the worst, most corrupt and inept anywhere in the world (if they even have a functioning government at all), now loudly and viciously telling the people of the United States, the greatest and most powerful Nation on earth, how our government is to be run,”



Figure 11.20: The “Squad”, four first-term congresswomen: Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (lower left) has made extremely important contributions to the struggle to avoid catastrophic climate change. Highly intelligent, vocal, eloquent and witty, she is a thorn in the Republican’s side.

“Why don’t they go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came. Then come back and show us how it is done. These places need your help badly, you can’t leave fast enough. I’m sure that Nancy Pelosi would be very happy to quickly work out free travel arrangements!”

His targets were the four first-term congresswomen known as the Squad: Representatives Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D-NY), Ayanna Pressley (D-MA), Rashida Tlaib (D-MI), and Ilhan Omar (D-MN). Of the four, only Omar was born outside the United States. Trump later accused the four women of hating America and not loving Israel enough. This is one more example of Trump’s racist rhetoric.

The United States is a multi-ethnic country, whose internal cohesion can easily be destroyed by racism. During most of its history, the US has had substantial Spanish-speaking and Italian-speaking minorities, as well as great religious diversity. During the 1960’s the civil rights movement fought against racial prejudice and gradually achieved most of its goals. Thus, over a very long period of time, the United States learned to avoid racial and religious insults in its media, and this hard-earned wisdom has allowed the very markedly multi-ethnic US society to function with a minimum of racial and religious conflicts. Trump’s racism risks destroying these hard-earned lessons.

11.8 The murder of George Floyd

A quotation from Wikipedia

“The George Floyd protests are an ongoing series of protests and civil unrest which began in Minneapolis in the United States on May 26, 2020. The protests began as part of the responses to the killing of George Floyd, a 46-year-old African-American man who was killed during an arrest after Derek Chauvin, a Minneapolis Police Department officer, knelt on Floyd’s neck for nearly eight minutes as three other officers looked on. Chauvin and the other three officers involved in the arrest which led to Floyd’s death were later arrested.

“Local protests began in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul metropolitan area of Minnesota before quickly spreading nationwide and in over 2,000 cities and towns in over 60 countries in support of the Black Lives Matter movement. Protests continued throughout June, July, and August, with polls at the time estimating that between 15 million and 26 million people had participated at some point in the demonstrations in the United States, making the protests the largest in United States history...

“The protests precipitated a cultural reckoning on racial injustice in the United States and have led to numerous legislative proposals on federal, state and municipal levels intended to combat police misconduct, systemic racism, qualified immunity and police brutality in the United States, while the Trump administration has drawn widespread criticism for what critics called its hard-line rhetoric and aggressive, militarized response. The protests led to a wave



Figure 11.21: Frame from witness video, showing Derek Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck

of monument removals and name changes throughout the world. The protests have been ongoing during the global COVID-19 pandemic.”



Figure 11.22: George Floyd in 2016



Figure 11.23: A makeshift memorial outside the store where Floyd was murdered.



Figure 11.24: Protesters in Minneapolis, Minnesota where George Floyd was murdered and the unrest began.



Figure 11.25: Police and National Guard at a protest in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.



Figure 11.26: Demonstrators and firefighters on a torched street in Minneapolis, Minnesota.



Figure 11.27: Protest near the Justice Center in Portland, Oregon.



11.9 Crisis means both danger and opportunity

In written Chinese, the word “crisis” is represented by two characters. One of these, taken alone, means “danger”. The other, by itself, means “opportunity”.

A crisis nearly always leads to great change. There is a danger that this will be a change for the worse. But there also is the opportunity to change society for the better - to reform and improve it.

Both paths are present in a crisis like our present one. We must strive with all our strength to make society take the right path.

Our present crisis

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which is in itself a crisis, many American cities have erupted in massive protests over the senseless killing by police of yet another black man - George Floyd. The country is deeply divided.

Throughout the world there have been anti-racist protests, partly in sympathy with the US protesters, and partly because racism exists in many countries.

Donald Trump, who was elected on an openly racist platform, and who has been a racist in both word and deed during his term of office, has reacted by threatening to use the US army against citizens of his own country, calling the demonstrators “lowlifes and losers”, and telling governors, “If you don’t dominate, you are wasting your time”.

After hiding in a White House bunker, Donald Trump ordered officers to clear a path for him so that he could be photographed holding a Bible in front of St. John’s Episcopal Church. The forces used tear gas and flash grenades against peaceful protesters in Lafayette Square.

Trump’s threats to use federal troops were too much for defense secretary, Mark Esper, who insisted that military personnel “be used as a matter of last resort, and only in the most urgent and dire of situations”.

Another rebuke came from Trump’s former secretary of defense, James Mattis, who said, “Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people. We know that we are better than the abuse of executive authority that we witnessed in Lafayette Square. We must reject and hold accountable those in office who would make a mockery of our constitution”.

What will happen if Trump loses the 2020 election but refuses to give up the White House, claiming that the votes were counted incorrectly?

Will the military support him? This danger has to be considered. We must remember the testimony before Congress of Trump’s former associate Michael Cohen, who said, “I fear that if he loses the election in 2020, there will never be a peaceful transition of power”.

We stand at a critical point in history. Each of us has the duty to strive with all our strength to persuade our societies to make the right choice.

Which path will we take?

The present crisis will undoubtedly lead to great change, but will it be takeovers by neo-fascist leaders such as Trump? Or will the change be social reforms? Will the Green New Deal be part of our recovery from the present economic crisis?

Suggestions for further reading

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Chapter 12

SECRECY AND OTHER THREATS TO DEMOCRACY

12.1 Edward Snowden's revelations

Can a government, many of whose operations are secret, be a democracy? Obviously this is impossible. The recent attempts of the United States to arrest whistleblower Edward Snowden call attention to the glaring contradiction between secrecy and democracy.

In a democracy, the power of judging and controlling governmental policy is supposed to be in the hands of the people. It is completely clear that if the people do not know what their government is doing, then they cannot judge or control governmental policy, and democracy has been abolished. There has always been a glaring contradiction between democracy and secret branches of the government, such as the CIA, which conducts its assassinations and its dirty wars in South America without any public knowledge or control.

The gross, wholesale electronic spying on citizens revealed by Snowden seems to be specifically aimed at eliminating democracy. It is aimed at instilling universal fear and conformity, fear of blackmail and fear of being out of step, so that the public will not dare to oppose whatever the government does, no matter how criminal or unconstitutional.

Henry Kissinger famously remarked: "The illegal we do at once. The unconstitutional takes a little longer". Well, Henry, that may have been true in your time, but today the unconstitutional does not take long at all.

The Magna Carta is trashed. No one dares to speak up. Habeas Corpus is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The United Nations Charter is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The Fourth Amendment to the US Constitution is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The President claims the right to kill both US and foreign citizens, at his own whim. No one dares to speak up.

But perhaps this is unjust. Perhaps some people would dare to protest, except that they cannot get their protests published in the mainstream media. We must remember that the media are owned by the same corporate oligarchs who own the government.

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What is the excuse for the massive spying reported by Snowden, spying not only on US citizens but also on the citizens of other countries throughout the world? "We want to protect you from terrorism.", the government answers. But terrorism is not a real threat, it is an invented one. It was invented by the military-industrial complex because, at the end of the Cold War, this enormous money-making conglomerate lacked enemies.

Globally, the number of people killed by terrorism is vanishingly small compared to the number of children who die from starvation every year. It is even vanishingly small compared with the number of people who are killed in automobile accidents. It is certainly small compared with the number of people killed in wars aimed at gaining western hegemony over oil-rich regions of the world.

But in Shelley's words, "We are many; they are few!" The people who want democracy greatly outnumber those who profit from maintaining a government based on secrecy and fear. Let us "rise like lions after slumbers, in unvanquishable numbers". Let us abolish governmental secrecy and reclaim our democracy.

12.2 Julian Assange and journalistic freedom

The jaws of power

"Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories." Thomas Jefferson, (1743-1826)

"The jaws of power are always open to devour, and her arm is always stretched out, if possible, to destroy the freedom of thinking, speaking, and writing." John Adams, (1735-1826)

According to the Nuremberg Principles, the citizens of a country have a responsibility for the crimes that their governments commit. But to prevent these crimes, the people need to have some knowledge of what is going on. Indeed, democracy cannot function at all without this knowledge.

What are we to think when governments make every effort to keep their actions secret from their own citizens? We can only conclude that although they may call themselves democracies, such governments are in fact oligarchies or dictatorships.

At the end of World War I, it was realized that secret treaties had been responsible for its outbreak, and an effort was made to ensure that diplomacy would be more open in the future. Needless to say, these efforts did not succeed, and diplomacy has remained a realm of secrecy.

Many governments have agencies for performing undercover operations (usually very dirty ones). We can think, for example of the KGB, the CIA, M5, or Mossad. How

can countries that have such agencies claim to be democracies, when the voters have no knowledge of or influence over the acts that are committed by the secret agencies of their governments?

Nuclear weapons were developed in secret. It is doubtful whether the people of the United States would have approved of the development of such antihuman weapons, or their use against an already-defeated Japan, if they had known that these things were going to happen. The true motive for the nuclear bombings was also kept secret. In the words of General Groves, speaking confidentially to colleagues at Los Alamos, the real motive was “to control the Soviet Union”.

The true circumstances surrounding the start of the Vietnam war would never have been known if Daniel Ellsberg had not leaked the Pentagon Papers. Ellsberg thought that once the American public realized that their country’s entry into the war was based on a lie, the war would end. It did not end immediately, but undoubtedly Ellsberg’s action contributed to the end of the war.

We do not know what will happen to Julian Assange. If his captors send him to the US, and if he dies there for the crime of publishing leaked documents (a crime that he shares with the New York Times), he will not be the first martyr to the truth. The ageing Galileo was threatened with torture and forced to recant his heresy - that the earth moves around the sun. Galileo spent the remainder of his days in house arrest. Giordano Bruno was less lucky. He was burned at the stake for maintaining that the universe is larger than it was then believed to be. If Julian Assange becomes a martyr to the truth like Galileo or Bruno, his name will be honored by generations in the future, and the shame of his captors will be remembered too.

Honours and awards won by Julian Assange

- 2008, The Economist New Media Award
- 2009, Amnesty International UK Media Awards
- 2010, Time Person of the Year, Reader’s Choice
- 2010, Sam Adams Award
- 2010, Le Monde Readers’ Choice Award for Person of the Year
- 2011, Free Dacia Award
- 2011, Sydney Peace Foundation Gold Medal
- 2011, Martha Gellhorn Prize for Journalism
- 2011, Voltaire Award for Free Speech
- 2012, Big Brother Award Italy 2012 “Hero of Privacy”
- 2013, Global Exchange Human Rights Award, People’s Choice
- 2013, Yoko Ono Lennon Courage Award for the Arts
- 2013, New York Festivals World’s Best TV & Films Silver World Medal
- 2014, Union of Journalists in Kazakhstan Top Prize
- 2019, GUE/NGL Galizia prize[
- 2019, Gavin MacFadyen award
- 2019, Catalan Dignity Prize.



Figure 12.1: A recent drawing of Julian Assange.

- 2020, Stuttgart Peace Prize.

Freedom of information in Iceland

The Icelandic parliamentarian, Birgitta Jónsdóttir, has taken an important step towards solving one of the central problems that the world is facing today. The problem is this: How can we regain democratic government when the mainstream media are completely controlled the corporate oligarchy?

Contrary to the wishes of the people, social services continue to be cut in favor of obscenely bloated military budgets, perpetual foreign wars, and environment-destroying subsidization of the fossil fuel industry. Despite the will of the people, the US government exposes our beautiful earth to the deadly risks of all-destroying thermonuclear war and out-of-control global warming.

The United States is by no means the only country with an oligarchic non-democratic government. Globally, countries with truly democratic and sane governments are the exception rather than the rule. Therefore the problem is a global one, and let us repeat it: How can we regain democratic government when the mainstream media are completely controlled the corporate oligarchy?



Figure 12.2: Assange at the “New Media Days 09” in Copenhagen November 2009.



Figure 12.3: Assange in 2014.



Figure 12.4: Gun camera footage of the airstrike of 12 July 2007 in Baghdad, showing the deaths of journalists Namir Noor-Eldeen and Saeed Chmagh by a US helicopter. The pilots laughed and joked while they knowingly killed civilians. They were never punished for their crimes. Instead Assange is being punished for revealing those crimes.



Figure 12.5: Demonstration in support of Assange in front of Sydney Town Hall, 10 December 2010.



Figure 12.6: Ecuadoran foreign minister Ricardo Patino met with Assange at the Ecuadorian Embassy on 16 June 2013. In its formal statement, Ecuador said that “as a consequence of Assange’s determined defense to freedom of expression and freedom of press... in any given moment, a situation may come where his life, safety or personal integrity will be in danger”. Many other Latin American countries supported Ecuador in this stance.

Collateral Murder, a quotations from Wikipedia

“The July 12, 2007, Baghdad airstrikes were a series of air-to-ground attacks conducted by a team of two U.S. AH-64 Apache helicopters in Al-Amin al-Thaniyah, New Baghdad during the Iraqi insurgency which followed the Iraq War. On April 5, 2010, the attacks received worldwide coverage and controversy following the release of 39 minutes of gunsight footage by the Internet whistleblower website WikiLeaks. The footage was portrayed as classified,[7] but its confessed leaker, U.S. Army soldier Chelsea Manning, testified in 2013 that the video was not classified. The video, which WikiLeaks titled *Collateral Murder*, showed the crew firing on a group of men and laughing at some of the casualties, some of whom were civilians and reporters. An anonymous U.S. military official confirmed the authenticity of the footage, which provoked global discussion on the legality and morality of the attacks.”



Figure 12.7: Assange speaks on the steps of St Paul's Cathedral in London, 16 October 2011.



Figure 12.8: Icelandic parliamentarian Birgitta Jónsdóttir.

12.3 The deep state

Can a government, many of whose operations are secret, be a democracy? Obviously this is impossible. The recent attempts of the United States to arrest whistleblower Edward Snowden call attention to the glaring contradiction between secrecy and democracy.

In a democracy, the power of judging and controlling governmental policy is supposed to be in the hands of the people. It is completely clear that if the people do not know what their government is doing, then they cannot judge or control governmental policy, and democracy has been abolished. There has always been a glaring contradiction between democracy and secret branches of the government, such as the CIA, which conducts its assassinations and its dirty wars in South America without any public knowledge or control.

The gross, wholesale electronic spying on citizens revealed by Snowden seems to be specifically aimed at eliminating democracy. It is aimed at instilling universal fear and conformity, fear of blackmail and fear of being out of step, so that the public will not dare to oppose whatever the government does, no matter how criminal or unconstitutional.

Henry Kissinger famously remarked: “The illegal we do at once. The unconstitutional takes a little longer”. Well, Henry, that may have been true in your time, but today the unconstitutional does not take long at all.

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In order to make the American people really fear terrorism, and in order to make them willing to give up their civil liberties, a big event was needed, something like the 9/11



Figure 12.9: The sales of George Orwell's 1984 soared after Snowden's revelations.





Figure 12.10: Susan Lindauer

attacks on the World Trade Center.

There is strong evidence, available on the Internet for anyone who wishes to look at it, that the US government knew well in advance that the 9/11 attacks would take place, and that government agents made the disaster worse than it otherwise would have been by planting explosives in the buildings of the World Trade Center. For example, CIA insider Susan Lindauer has testified that the US government knew about the planned attacks as early as April, 2001. Other experts have testified that explosives must have been used to bring the buildings down.

Numerous samples of the dust from the disaster were collected by people in New York City, and chemical analysis of the dust has shown the presence of nanothermite, a compound that produces intense heat. Pools of recently-melted steel were found in the ruins of the buildings before these were sealed off from the public. An ordinary fire does not produce temperatures high enough to melt steel.

Thus it seems probable that the US government participated in the 9/11 attacks, and used them in much the same way that the Nazis used the Reichstag fire, to abridge civil liberties and to justify a foreign invasion. Soon afterward, the Patriot Act was passed. It's Orwellian name is easily understood by anyone who has read "1984".

But in Shelley's words, "We are many; they are few!" The people who want democracy greatly outnumber those who profit from maintaining a government based on secrecy and fear. Let us "rise like lions after slumbers, in unvanquishable numbers". Let us abolish governmental secrecy and reclaim our democracy.

Governmental secrecy is not something new. Secret diplomacy contributed to the outbreak of World War I, and the secret Sykes-Picot agreement later contributed to the bitterness of conflicts in the Middle East. However, in recent years, governmental secrecy has grown enormously.

The revelations of Edward Snowden and others have shown that the number of people involved in secret operations of the United States government is now as large as the entire population of Norway: roughly 5 million. The influence of this dark side of government has become so great that no president is able to resist it.

In a recent article, John Chuckman remarked that “The CIA is now so firmly entrenched and so immensely well financed (much of it off the books, including everything from secret budget items to the peddling of drugs and weapons) that it is all but impossible for a president to oppose it the way Kennedy did. Obama, who has proved himself to be a fairly weak character from the start, certainly has given the CIA anything it wants. The dirty business of ISIS in Syria and Iraq is one project. The coup in Ukraine is another. The pushing of NATO’s face right against Russia’s borders is another. Several attempted coups in Venezuela are still more. And the creation of a drone air force for extra-judicial killings in half a dozen countries is yet another. They don’t resemble projects we would expect from a smiley-faced intelligent man who sometimes wore sandals and refused to wear a flag pin on his lapel during his first election campaign.”¹

Of course the United States government is by no means alone in practicing excessive secrecy: Scott Horton recently wrote an article entitled *How to Rein in a Secretive Shadow Government Is Our National Security Crisis*. He dedicated the article to the Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov because, as he said, “Sakharov recognized that the Soviet Union rested on a colossal false premise: it was not so much socialism (though Sakharov was certainly a critic of socialism) as it was the obsession with secrecy, which obstructed the search for truth, avoided the exposure of mistakes, and led to the rise of powerful bureaucratic elites who were at once incompetent and prone to violence.”

¹<http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article41222.htm>

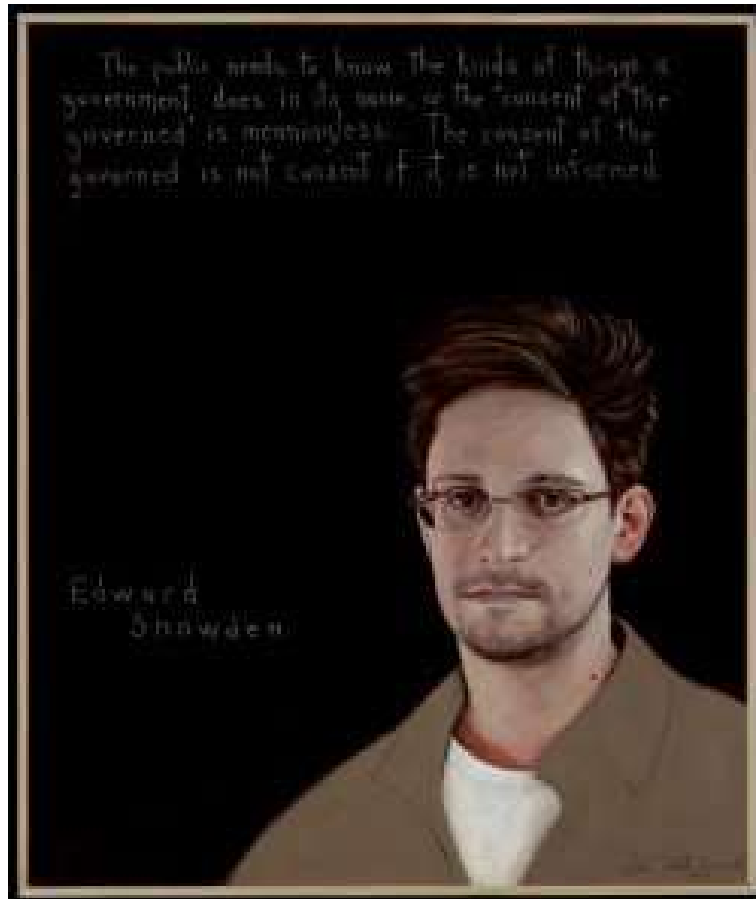


Figure 12.11: The revelations of Edward Snowden and others have shown that the number of people involved in secret operations of the United States government is now as large as the entire population of Norway: roughly 5 million.

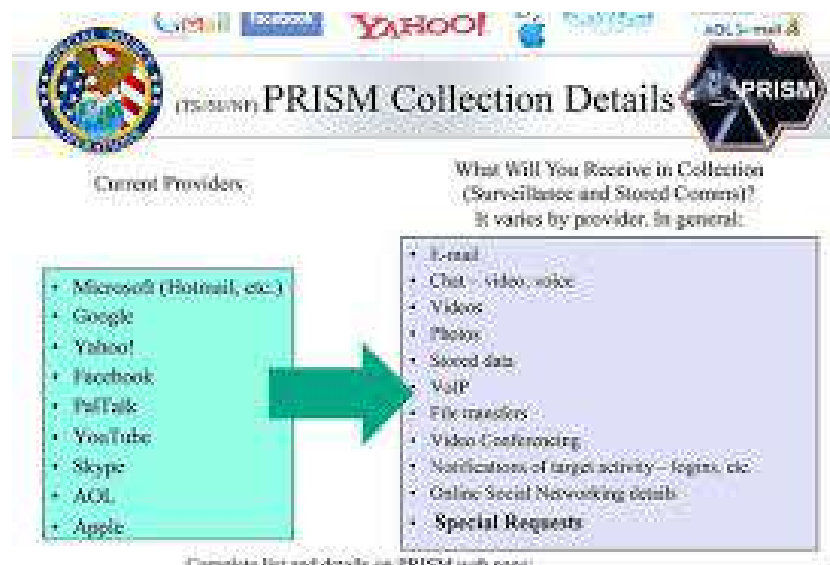


Figure 12.12: One of the power points used by NSA to sell their comprehensive collection of private data.



Figure 12.13: The data of major Internet corporations was stolen without their knowledge or consent.



Figure 12.14: These huge buildings in Fort Meade, Maryland, are the main headquarters of NSA.



Figure 12.15: Angela Merkel's telephone was bugged by NSA. In a cartoon depicting the incident, she says "Tell the Americans to stop listening to our telephone conversations". Her aide replies, "You just did".



Figure 12.16: Big Brother is watching you.

12.4 *The United States of Secrets*

A review by *Variety*

Here are some excerpts from *Variety*'s review of the first two parts of the series:

"Methodical and comprehensive, *Frontline*'s documentary *The United States of Secrets* offers a blow-by-blow account of the Bush administration's embrace of potentially illegal spying/eavesdropping techniques, President Obama's decision to continue them (despite campaign promises to the contrary) and, most compellingly, those who sought to blow the whistle on government overreach, culminating with Edward Snowden's unprecedented dump of classified documents. If the two-part project breaks little new ground, it's an utterly thorough primer on what transpired that almost plays like a John Le Carre thriller, with remarkably candid interviews from participants on all sides...

"*United States of Secrets* also details the role played by the Fourth Estate, as frustrated officials reluctantly began going to the press, feeling they had no other recourse to beat back constitutional intrusions. Yet the New York Times, after nailing down the story, ultimately balked at running it, at the urging of the Bush administration..."

A review by *Network Knowledge*

Another review, by *Network Knowledge*, makes the following comments:

"WSEC/PBS Springfield will premiere a compelling two-part series entitled FRONTLINE - United States of Secrets. These programs go behind the headlines to reveal the dramatic story of how the U.S. government came to monitor and collect the communications of millions of people around the world - including ordinary Americans - and the lengths they went to trying to hide the massive surveillance program from the public.

"In part one, premiering Tuesday, May 13 at 8PM on WSEC/PBS Springfield, FRONTLINE filmmaker Michael Kirk goes inside Washington and the National Security Agency,

piecing together the secret history of the unprecedented surveillance program that began in the wake of September 11 and continues today even after the revelations of its existence by NSA contractor Edward Snowden.

“Then, in part two, premiering Tuesday, May 20 at 9PM, veteran FRONTLINE filmmaker Martin Smith continues the story, exploring the secret relationship between Silicon Valley and the National Security Agency, and investigating how the government and tech companies have worked together to gather and warehouse your data.

“Part political thriller and part spy novel, *United States of Secrets* series is the definitive history of domestic surveillance in a post 9/11 world. With new revelations about government spying coming out almost daily, the series will be gripping viewing for those who want to understand the context of the Snowden affair and what it means for all Americans.”

12.5 Censorship of the news

Many modern governments have become very expert in manipulating public opinion through mass media. They only allow the public to hear a version of the “news” that has been handed down by powerholders. Of course, people can turn to the alternative media that are available on the Internet. But on the whole, the vision of the world presented on television screens and in major newspapers is the “truth” that is accepted by the majority of the public, and it is this picture of events that influences political decisions. Censorship of the news by the power elite is a form of secrecy, since it withholds information that is needed for a democracy to function properly.

12.6 Coups, torture and illegal killing

During the period from 1945 to the present, the US interfered, militarily or covertly, in the internal affairs of a large number of nations: China, 1945-49; Italy, 1947-48; Greece, 1947-49; Philippines, 1946-53; South Korea, 1945-53; Albania, 1949-53; Germany, 1950s; Iran, 1953; Guatemala, 1953-1990s; Middle East, 1956-58; Indonesia, 1957-58; British Guiana/Guyana, 1953-64; Vietnam, 1950-73; Cambodia, 1955-73; The Congo/Zaire, 1960-65; Brazil, 1961-64; Dominican Republic, 1963-66; Cuba, 1959-present; Indonesia, 1965; Chile, 1964-73; Greece, 1964-74; East Timor, 1975-present; Nicaragua, 1978-89; Grenada, 1979-84; Libya, 1981-89; Panama, 1989; Iraq, 1990-present; Afghanistan 1979-92; El Salvador, 1980-92; Haiti, 1987-94; Yugoslavia, 1999; and Afghanistan, 2001-present, Syria, 2013-present; Egypt, 2013-present, and Ukraine, 2013-present. Most of these interventions were explained to the American people as being necessary to combat communism (or more recently, terrorism), but an underlying motive was undoubtedly the desire to put in place governments and laws that would be favorable to the economic interests of the US and its allies.

For the sake of balance, we should remember that during the Cold War period, the Soviet Union and China also intervened in the internal affairs of many countries, for example in



Figure 12.17: **Extrajudicial killing of civilians by means of drones is also shrouded by secrecy, and it too is a gross violation of democratic principles.**

Korea in 1950-53, Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and so on; another very long list. These Cold War interventions were also unjustifiable, like those mentioned above. Nothing can justify military or covert interference by superpowers in the internal affairs of smaller countries, since people have a right to live under governments of their own choosing even if those governments are not optimal.

Many people in Latin America and elsewhere have been tortured: The long history of CIA torture was recently investigated, but only small portions of the 6000-page report are available to the public. The rest remains secret.

Extrajudicial killing of civilians by means of drones is also shrouded by secrecy, and it too is a gross violation of democratic principles.²

12.7 Secret trade deals

The Trans-Pacific Partnership is one of the trade deals that is currently being negotiated in secret. Not even the US congress is allowed to know the details of the document. However, enough information has been leaked to make it clear that if the agreement is passed, foreign corporations would be allowed to “sue” the US government for loss of profits because of (for example) environmental regulations. The “trial” would be outside the legal system, before a tribunal of lawyers representing the corporations. A similar secret trade deal with Europe, the Trans-Atlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP), is also being “fast-tracked”. One can hardly imagine greater violations of democratic principles.³

²<http://www.globalresearch.ca/lawless-drone-killings/5355535>

³<http://www.citizen.org/Page.aspx?pid=5411>

<https://www.transcend.org/tms/2015/03/world-at-a-crossroads-stop-the-fast-track-to-a-future-of-global-corporate-rule/>

<http://talkingpointsmemo.com/livewire/princeton-experts-say-us-no-longer-democracy>

We can also consider the “non-discrimination” principle adopted by GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). This principle states that participating countries “cannot discriminate between like products on the basis of the method of production”. This single principle allows multinational commerce to escape from all the humanitarian and environmental reforms that have been achieved since the start of the Industrial Revolution. No matter if the method of production involves destruction of a tropical rain forest, no matter if forced labor was used, we are not allowed to discriminate “on the basis of the method of production”.

The present situation is that agriculture, trade and industry have become global, but the world still lacks adequate institutions at the global level to watch over what is happening and to ensure respect for human needs and respect for the natural environment. Today’s global economic interdependence, instantaneous worldwide communication, and the need for peaceful resolution of international conflicts all call for strong governmental institutions at the global level, but the United Nations today lacks many things that would be necessary if it is to perform such a role: It lacks a legislature with the power to make laws binding on individuals and corporations. It lacks mechanisms for enforcing such laws. And it lacks a large and dependable source of income.

It would be logical to improve the United Nations by giving it the things just mentioned, and by giving it at the same time the task of regulating multinational corporations to ensure that they act in a socially and ecologically responsible manner. It would also be logical to entitle the UN to a fee for acting as a referee in relationships between multinationals and the developing countries. These reforms must come someday because of the logic of our present situation. I hope that they will come soon.

The CEO’s of Wall Street call for less government, more deregulation and more globalization. They are delighted that the work of the reform movement is being undone in the name of “freedom”. But is this really what is needed? We need instead to reform our economic system and to give it both a social conscience and an ecological conscience. Governments already accept their responsibility for education. In the future they must also accept the responsibility for ensuring that their citizens can make a smooth transition from education to secure jobs. The free market alone cannot do this the powers of government are needed. Let us restore democracy! Let us have governments that work for the welfare of all their citizens, rather than for the enormous enrichment of the few!

12.8 Secrecy, democracy and nuclear weapons

Nuclear weapons were developed in secret. The decision to use them on the civilian populations of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in an already-defeated Japan was made in secret. Since 1945, secrecy has surrounded all aspects of nuclear weapons, and for this reason it is clear that they are essentially undemocratic.

Nuclear disarmament has been one of the core aspirations of the international community since the first use of nuclear weapons in 1945. A nuclear war, even a limited one, would have global humanitarian and environmental consequences, and thus it is a responsibility

of all governments, including those of non-nuclear countries, to protect their citizens and engage in processes leading to a world without nuclear weapons.

Now a new process has been established by the United Nations General Assembly, an Open Ended Working Group (OEWG) to Take Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations. The OEWG convened at the UN offices in Geneva on May 14, 2013. Among the topics discussed was a Model Nuclear Weapons Convention.

The Model Nuclear Weapons Convention prohibits development, testing, production, stockpiling, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons. States possessing nuclear weapons will be required to destroy their arsenals according to a series of phases. The Convention also prohibits the production of weapons usable fissile material and requires delivery vehicles to be destroyed or converted to make them non-nuclear capable.

Verification will include declarations and reports from States, routine inspections, challenge inspections, on-site sensors, satellite photography, radionuclide sampling and other remote sensors, information sharing with other organizations, and citizen reporting. Persons reporting suspected violations of the convention will be provided protection through the Convention including the right of asylum.

Thus we can see that the protection of whistleblowers is an integral feature of the Model Nuclear Weapons Convention now being discussed. As Sir Joseph Rotblat (1908-2005, Nobel Laureate 1995) frequently emphasized in his speeches, societal verification must be an integral part of the process of “going to zero” (i.e, the total elimination of nuclear weapons). This is because nuclear weapons are small enough to be easily hidden. How will we know whether a nation has destroyed all of its nuclear arsenal? We have to depend on information from insiders, whose loyalty to the whole of humanity prompts them to become whistleblowers. And for this to be possible, they need to be protected.

In general, if the world is ever to be free from the threat of complete destruction by modern weapons, we will need a new global ethic, an ethic as advanced as our technology. Of course we can continue to be loyal to our families, our localities and our countries. But this must be supplemented by a higher loyalty: a loyalty to humanity as a whole.

12.9 Freedom from fear

In order to justify secrecy, enormous dark branches of government and mass illegal spying, governments say: “We are protecting you from terrorism”. But terrorism is not a real threat, since our chances of dying from a terrorist attack are vanishingly small compared to (for example) preventable disease or an automobile accident. If we are ever to reclaim our democracy, we must free ourselves from fear.

12.10 *Inside Job*

Peter Bradshaw's review in *The Guardian*

"If you're growing, you're not in recession ... right?" The speaker is Hank Paulson, the former US treasury secretary, and, as it happens, the former CEO of Goldman Sachs. In Charles Ferguson's documentary about the great financial crash, Paulson's shrugging remark sums up the attitude of the super-rich banking apparatchiks and their eager political supporters. As long as the bubble's getting bigger, there's no worry about the bubble contracting ... right? But that is not what happens to bubbles. In 2008, the pop was heard around the world.

This film is as gripping as any thriller. Aided by some fascinating interviews, Ferguson lays out an awful story. In the 1980s, the markets and financial services were deregulated, and the driving force for this liberalization was Alan Greenspan, formidable chairman of the US federal reserve board from 1987 to 2006. Banks and loan companies were freer to gamble with their depositors' money; they were themselves freer to borrow more; they were free to offer investors dizzyingly complex financial instruments, with income streams from different debts bundled up, including high-interest home loans offered to high-risk borrowers - the so-called "sub-prime" market that offered mouthwateringly high returns.

The good times rolled. The banks ballooned. They offered their traders mind-blowing bonuses to encourage risk-taking chutzpah, corporate loyalty, and a neurotically driven pursuit of profit. Ferguson argues that crucially, the banks were allowed to insure against bad debts with credit default swaps - any number of these insurance policies could be purchased against one particular risk. Chillingly, the banks now had a vested interest in selling insanely risky products, as they themselves were lavishly insured with these swaps.

Perhaps the most sensational aspect of this film is Ferguson's contention that the crash corrupted the discipline of economics itself. Distinguished economists from America's Ivy League universities were drafted in by banks to compose reports sycophantically supporting reckless deregulation. They were massively paid for these consultancies. The banks bought the prestige of the academics, and their universities' prestige, too. Ferguson speaks to many of these economists, who clearly thought they were going to be interviewed as wry, dispassionate observers. It is really something to see the expression of shock, outrage and fear on their faces as they realize they're in the dock. One splutters with vexation; another gives vent to a ripe Freudian slip. Asked by Ferguson if he has any regrets about his behaviour, he says: "I have no comments ... uh, no regrets."

This is what Ferguson means by "inside job". There is a revolving door between the banks and the higher reaches of government, and to some extent

the groves of academe. Bank CEOs become government officials, creating laws convenient for their once and future employers.

Perhaps only the pen of Tom Wolfe could do justice to these harassed, bald, middle-aged masters of the universe, as they appear in Ferguson's film. The director shows how their body-language is always the same: somehow more guilty-looking when they are in the White House rose garden in their career pomp, being introduced to the press, than when they are facing openly hostile Senate hearings. They look uneasy, shifty, in weirdly ill-fitting suits, as if they are oppressed by the scrutiny, and worn out, possibly, by the strain of suppressing their own scruples. Their financial capacity far outstrips their capacity for enjoying themselves. They look very unhappy. Occasionally, British figures including Mervyn King and Alistair Darling are to be glimpsed in these photos, reminding us that we Brits have been ardent deregulators, as well.

One of Ferguson's interviewees is Charles Morris, author of *The Two Trillion Dollar Meltdown*, who amusingly discusses the effects this mega-windfall has on the individual banker's mind. He became absurdly rich and "he thought it was because he was smart".

I was reminded of Michael Lewis's *Liar's Poker*, his very funny book about the financial mentality of the 80s boom. He noted that if a regular person won the lottery, he might roll around on the floor, kicking his legs up with glee, but when bankers won their arbitrary lottery, they instead became solemn, pompous, overwhelmed with their own importance and stateliness. Their recklessness and excess coexisted with an almost priestly sense of worth. Even more than rich lawyers, rich bankers felt that their money proved their superior cleverness and also moral worthiness as the generators of prosperity. Yet that prosperity didn't trickle down very far.

Generally, this is the sort of film that is praised because it is not as wacky and tricky as Michael Moore. Yet it is clearly influenced by him - it's like a Moore film with the gags and stunts removed. And it's worth noting that without Moore's pioneering work, this documentary could not have been made.

Once again, the phrase that comes to mind is Milton Friedman's: socialism for the rich, free enterprise for the rest. An ordinary person defaults on his debt, he gets to live in his car. A banker defaults, and the taxpayer can be relied on to bail him out. No wonder the bonuses are back. But what can be done about all this? Ferguson has no answers, other than a faintly unedifying hint that bankers could be brought low if rumours about their systemic addiction to drugs and prostitutes could be made to stick legally - like Al Capone's tax evasion. But only a new political mood for regulation will do, and this still seems far away.

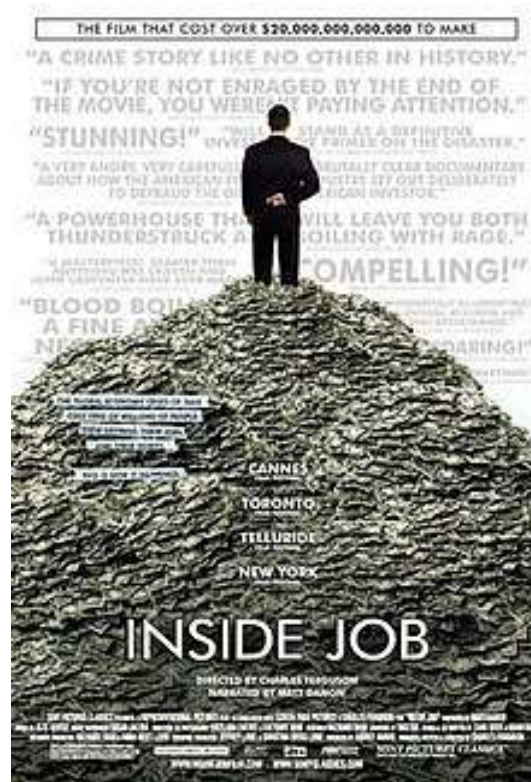


Figure 12.18: A poster advertising the Academy-Award-winning documentary film *Inside Job*.

12.11 Threats of war

Donald Trump has frequently threatened foreign countries with war, even nuclear war. For example, regarding the conflict with North Korea, Trump said “Rocket man is on a suicide mission for himself and his regime. If [the US] is forced to defend itself or its allies, we will have no choice but to totally destroy North Korea”. Trump has also threatened Iran with war. Such threats are a crime under both the Nuremberg Principles and the United Nations Charter.

12.12 Alt-right

The Associated Press gives the following definition of the alt-right movement:

“The ‘alt-right’ or ‘alternative right’ is a name currently embraced by some white supremacists and white nationalists to refer to themselves and their ideology, which emphasizes preserving and protecting the white race in the United States in addition to, or over, other traditional conservative positions such as limited government, low taxes and strict law-and-order. The movement has been described as a mix of racism, white nationalism and populism ... criticizes ‘multiculturalism’ and more rights for non-whites, women, Jews, Muslims, gays, immigrants and other minorities. Its members reject the American democratic ideal that all should have equality under the law regardless of creed, gender, ethnic origin or race.”

Wikipedia states that “The alt-right, an abbreviation of alternative right, is a loosely connected far-right, white supremacist, white nationalist, white separatist, anti-immigration and sometimes antisemitic movement based in the United States. A largely online phenomenon, the alt-right originated in the U.S. during the 2010s although it has since established a presence in various other countries. The term is ill-defined, having been used in different ways by various self-described ‘alt-rightists’, media commentators, and academics.

“In 2010, the American white nationalist Richard B. Spencer launched The Alternative Right webzine to disseminate his ideas. Spencer’s ‘alternative right’ was influenced by earlier forms of American white nationalism, as well as paleoconservatism, the Dark Enlightenment, and the Nouvelle Droite. Critics charged it with being a rebranding of white supremacy. His term was shortened to “alt-right” and popularised by far-right participants of /pol/, the politics board of web forum 4chan. It came to be associated with other white nationalist websites and groups, including Andrew Anglin’s Daily Stormer, Brad Griffin’s Occidental Dissent, and Matthew Heimbach’s Traditionalist Worker Party...

“The alt-right is a white nationalist, biologically racist movement. Part of its membership supports anti-immigrationist policies to ensure a continued white majority in the United States. Others call for the breakup of the country to form a white separatist ethno-state in North America. Some alt-rightists seek to make white nationalism socially respectable in the U.S., while others - known as the ‘1488’ scene - adopt openly white supremacist and neo-Nazi stances. Some alt-rightists are anti-semitic, promoting a conspiracy theory



Figure 12.19: Prominent alt-rightists were instrumental in organizing the "Unite the Right" rally in Charlottesville, Virginia in August 2017. Here, rally participants carry Confederate battle flags, Gadsden flags and a Nazi flag.

that there is a Jewish plot to bring about white genocide; other alt-rightists view most Jews as members of the white race. The alt-right is anti-feminist, advocates for a more patriarchal society, and intersects with the men's rights movement and other sectors of the online manosphere...

"Membership was overwhelmingly white and male, with academic and anti-fascist observers linking its growth to deteriorating living standards and prospects, anxieties about the place of white masculinity, and anger at increasingly visible left-wing forms of identity politics like the Black Lives Matter movement. Constituent groups using the "alt-right" label have been characterized as hate groups,[2][3] while alt-right material has been a contributing factor in the radicalization of young white men responsible for a range of far-right murders and terrorist attacks in the U.S. since 2014."

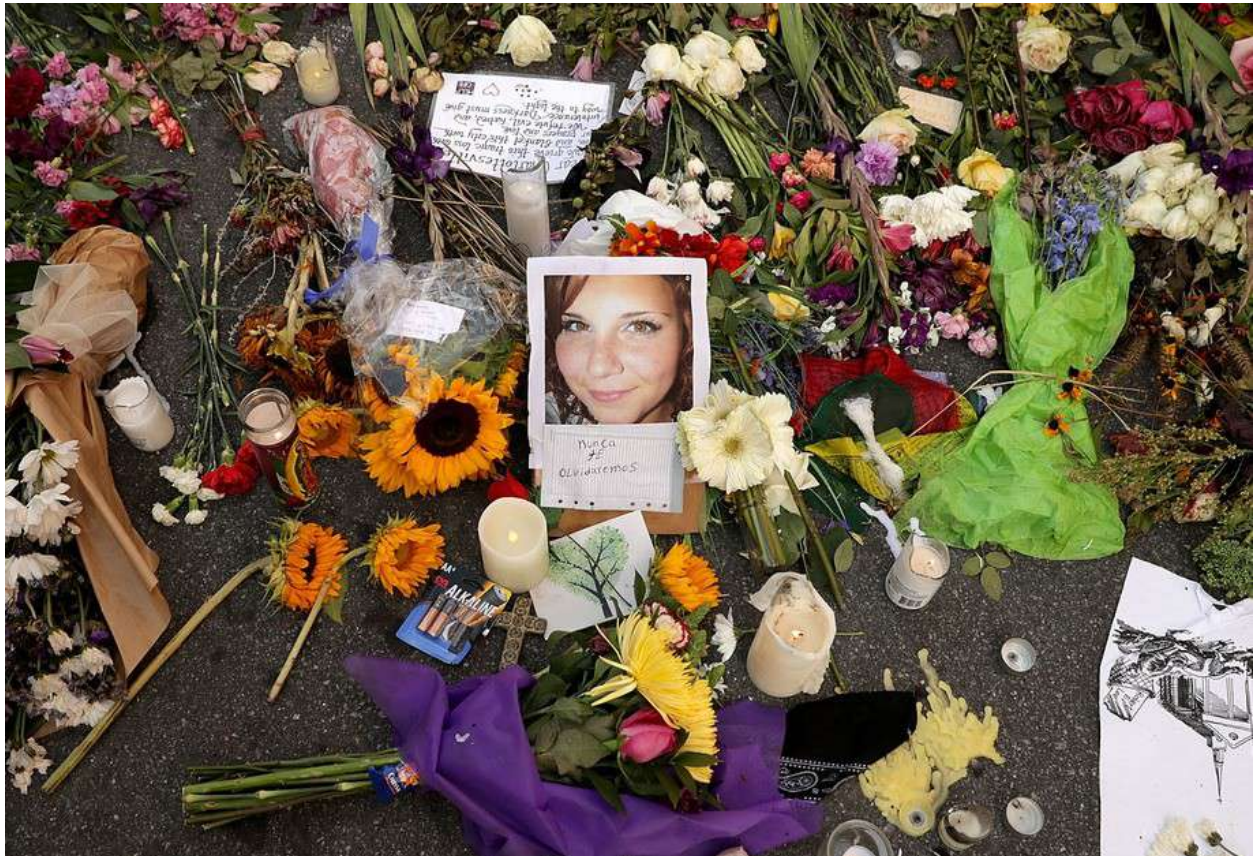


Figure 12.20: Heather Heyer was murdered in 2017 by a white nationalist rally participant in Charlottesville. Since then, mass shootings in Poway, Gilroy, and El Paso and elsewhere have been each linked to white nationalist beliefs.



Figure 12.21: Breitbart News amplified and popularised alt-right ideas under the editorship of “alt-lite” figure Steve Bannon.



Figure 12.22: The alt-right largely rallied behind the presidential candidacy of Donald Trump, although he later distanced himself from the movement.



Figure 12.23: A participant at the Unite the Right rally giving a Nazi salute in front of counter-protesters.



Figure 12.24: The alt-rightist was then punched in an altercation with counter-protesters.



Figure 12.25: Protestors at the 2017 Unite the Right rally, which was promoted by the alt-right. One man carries the logo of Vanguard America, and another has a t-shirt praising German Nazi leader Adolf Hitler.



Figure 12.26: An attendee at the Unite the Right rally carrying a firearm and wearing a Confederate Battle Flag T-shirt.



Figure 12.27: “Trump is Alt-Right with Us.” Anti-Trump protesters highlight what they regard as his links to the alt-right and to historical fascism by dressing as Hitler and Mussolini.

12.13 Proud Boys

Wikipedia states that “The Proud Boys is a far-right neo-fascist organization which admits only men as members and promotes political violence. It is based in the United States and has a presence in Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom. The group was started in 2016 by Vice Media co-founder and former commentator Gavin McInnes, taking its name from the song ‘Proud of Your Boy’ from the Disney film *Aladdin*. Proud Boys emerged as part of the alt-right, but in early 2017, McInnes began distancing himself from the alt-right, saying the alt-right’s focus is race while his focus is what he defines as ‘Western values’. This re-branding effort intensified after the Unite the Right Rally ⁴.

“The group sees men - especially white men - and Western culture as under siege; their views have elements of white genocide conspiracy theory. While the group claims it does not support white supremacist views, its members often participate in racist rallies, events, and organizations. The organization glorifies violence, and members engage in violence at events it attends; the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) has called it an ‘alt-right fight club’.

“The organization has been described as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center and NPR’s *The Takeaway*, and Spencer, McInnes, and the Proud Boys have been described as hipster racists by Vox and Media Matters for America. McInnes says victim mentality of women and other historically oppressed groups is unhealthy: ‘There is an incentive to be a victim. It is cool to be a victim.’ He sees white men and Western culture as ‘under siege’ and described criticism of his ideas as “victim blaming”. Their views have elements of white genocide conspiracy theory. The group is part of the ‘alt lite’ and it is ‘overtly Islamophobic’...

“The organization glorifies political violence against leftists, re-enacting political assassinations, wearing shirts that praise Augusto Pinochet’s murders of leftists, and participating directly in political violence. McInnes has said ‘I want violence, I want punching in the face. I’m disappointed in Trump supporters for not punching enough.’ He stated, ‘We don’t start fights [...] but we will finish them.’ Heidi Beirich, the Intelligence Project director for the Southern Poverty Law Center, said that this form of intentional aggression was not common among far-right groups in the past; she said: ‘We’re going to show up and we’re intending to get in fights, that’s a new thing.’ In August 2018, Twitter shut down the official account for the group, as well as McInnes’ account, under its policy prohibiting violent extremist groups; at the time, the group’s profile photo was a member punching a counter-protester.

⁴Wikipedia describes this event as follows: “The Unite the Right rally was a white supremacist rally that occurred in Charlottesville, Virginia, from August 11 to 12, 2017. Protesters were members of the far-right and included self-identified members of the alt-right, neo-Confederates, neo-fascists,[13] white nationalists, neo-Nazis, Klansmen, and various right-wing militias. The marchers chanted racist and antisemitic slogans, carried semi-automatic rifles, Nazi and neo-Nazi symbols (such as the swastika, Odal rune, Black Sun, and Iron Cross), the Valknut, Confederate battle flags, Deus Vult crosses, flags and other symbols of various past and present anti-Muslim and antisemitic groups.”



Figure 12.28: Proud Boys founder Gavin McInnes.



Figure 12.29: A member of Proud Boys.

12.14 Evangelicals

Here is an excerpt from a December 31, 2018 article in the New York Times by Katherine Stewart:

The month before the 2018 midterms, a thousand theaters screened “The Trump Prophecy,” a film that tells the story of Mark Taylor, a former firefighter who claims that God told him in 2011 that Donald Trump would be elected president.

At a critical moment in the film, just after the actor representing Mr. Taylor collapses in the flashing light of an epiphany, he picks up a Bible and turns to the 45th chapter of the book of Isaiah, which describes the anointment of King Cyrus by God. In the next scene, we hear Mr. Trump being interviewed on “The 700 Club,” a popular Christian television show.

As Lance Wallnau, an evangelical author and speaker who appears in the film, once said, “I believe the 45th president is meant to be an Isaiah 45 Cyrus,” who will “restore the crumbling walls that separate us from cultural collapse.”

Cyrus, in case you’ve forgotten, was born in the sixth century B.C.E. and became the first emperor of Persia. Isaiah 45 celebrates Cyrus for freeing a population of Jews who were held captive in Babylon. Cyrus is the model for a nonbeliever appointed by God as a vessel for the purposes of the faithful.

The identification of the 45th president with an ancient Middle Eastern potentate isn’t a fringe thing. “The Trump Prophecy” was produced with the help of professors and students at Liberty University, whose president, Jerry Falwell Jr., has been instrumental in rallying evangelical support for Mr. Trump. Jeanine Pirro of Fox News has picked up on the meme, as has Ron Dermer, the Israeli ambassador to the United States, among many others.

As the Trump presidency falls under siege on multiple fronts, it has become increasingly clear that the so-called values voters will be among the last to leave the citadel. A lot of attention has been paid to the supposed paradox of evangelicals backing such an imperfect man, but the real problem is that our idea of Christian nationalism hasn’t caught up with the reality. We still buy the line that the hard core of the Christian right is just an interest group working to protect its values. But what we don’t get is that Mr. Trump’s supposedly anti-Christian attributes and anti-democratic attributes are a vital part of his attraction.

Today’s Christian nationalists talk a good game about respecting the Constitution and America’s founders, but at bottom they sound as if they prefer autocrats to democrats. In fact, what they really want is a king. “It is God that raises up a king,” according to Paula White, a prosperity gospel preacher who has advised Mr. Trump.

Ralph Drollinger, who has led weekly Bible study groups in the White House attended by Vice President Mike Pence and many other cabinet members, likes the word “king” so much that he frequently turns it into a verb. “Get ready



Figure 12.30: Apparently insanity rules the United States today. The Evangelical Right believes that Trump was sent by God to be King, despite the fact that, according to Glenn Kessler, author of the Washington Post's Fact Checker column, Trump told an average of 15 lies per day in 2018, bringing the total number of documented lies since he took office in January 2017 to 7,645. But neither Trump's lies, nor his racism and mysogeny, nor his cruel authorization of imprisonment of very young children and even babies, are his worst crimes. His most serious offense is a crime against human civilization and the biosphere: his support for coal, his climate change denial, his sabotaging of renewable energy, and his withdrawal from the Paris agreement. These actions, and support for them by Republicans, caused Noam Chomsky to call the Republican Party "the most dangerous organization in history".

to king in our future lives," he tells his followers. "Christian believers will - soon, I hope - become the consummate, perfect governing authorities!"

The great thing about kings like Cyrus, as far as today's Christian nationalists are concerned, is that they don't have to follow rules. They are the law. This makes them ideal leaders in paranoid times.



Figure 12.31: An artist's impression of Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton.



Figure 12.32: Stars and stripes.



Figure 12.33: Anti-Mexican language used by Trump is very similar to the language used by the El Paso mass murderer. A recent article *Ex-FBI Official, FBI reluctant to probe white supremacists because Trump considers them his base*, quotes Dave Gomez as saying “There’s some reluctance among agents to bring forth an investigation that targets what the president perceives as his base.”



Figure 12.34: Family members mourning the victims of the El Paso murders.



Figure 12.35: A woman lights a candle at a makeshift memorial outside Walmart, near the scene of a mass shooting which left 22 people dead, on August 4, 2019, in El Paso, Texas.

12.15 The El Paso mass murders

On the morning of August 3, 2019, 21-year-old Patrick Wood Crusius, a Republican follower of Donald Trump, walked into a Walmart in El Paso Texas. carrying an AK-47 automatic weapon. He opened fire on the largely Latino customers, killing 22 people and seriously injuring 24 others. In a manifesto, which he published on the Internet just before the murders, he wrote “In general, I support the Christchurch shooter and his manifesto. This attack is a response to the Hispanic invasion of Texas. They are the instigators, not me. I am simply defending my country from cultural and ethnic replacement brought on by an invasion.” The language and ideas used by Crusius are similar to those of Donald Trump, who often speaks of a Mexican invasion.

The following day, there was another mass shooting, this time in Dayton, Ohio. Again an automatic attack rifle was used. Nine people were killed.

Between January and February, 2019, President Donald Trump’s Facebook page ran about 2,200 ads referring to immigration as an “invasion”.

12.16 Right-wing parties in Europe and elsewhere.

Brexit

Across the developed world, the reaction to threatened migration of refugees from climate change has been less than generous, to say the least. The recent decision of Britain to leave the European Union was motivated largely by the fear of British workers that EU laws would force their country to accept large numbers of refugees.

Swings to the right in Europe

In Germany, Angela Merkel’s generous policies towards refugees have cost her votes, while an openly racist party, the Alternative for Germany (AfD) party, has gained in strength. Frauke Petry, 40, the party’s leader, has said border guards might need to turn guns on anyone crossing a frontier illegally. The party’s policy platform says “Islam does not belong in Germany” and calls for a ban on the construction of mosques.

In September, 2017, eight people from the neo-Nazi Freital Group were put on trial in Dresden for bomb attacks on homes for asylum applicants. Hundreds of similar assaults occur in Germany every year, but they had never before been tried as terrorism in a federal court.

In the German election, which took place on Sunday, October 1, 2017, Angela Merkel won a fourth term as Chancellor, but her party won only 33% of the votes, a percentage much reduced from the 41% won in the election of 2013. Angela Merkel was paying a high price for her refugee-friendly policies.

Meanwhile the far right anti-immigration AfD party made a historic breakthrough, winning 13.5% of the vote, thus becoming the first overtly nationalist party to sit in the

Bundestag in 60 years. The Greens have already complained that “Nazis have returned to parliament”. In fact, members of the AfD party have begun to say that Germans should stop being ashamed of their country’s Nazi past.

In France, the National Front is a nationalist party that uses populist rhetoric to promote its anti-immigration and anti-European Union positions. The party favors protectionist economic policies and would clamp down on government benefits for immigrants.

Similarly, in the Netherlands, the anti-European Union, anti-Islam Party for Freedom has called for closing all Islamic schools and recording the ethnicity of all Dutch citizens. In early November, the party was leading in polls ahead of next year’s parliamentary elections.

Other far-right anti-immigrant parties in Europe include Golden Dawn (Greece), Jobbic (Hungary), Sweden Democrats (Sweden), Freedom Party (Austria), and People’s Party - Our Slovakia (Slovakia). All of these parties have gained in strength because of the widespread fear of immigration.

Populism in the United States

The election of Donald Trump, who ran for President in 2016 on an openly racist and anti-immigrant platform, can also be seen as the result of fear of immigration, especially on the part of industrial workers.

A more humane response to the refugee crisis

In the long-term future, climate change will make the refugee crisis much more severe. Heat and drought will make large regions of the world uninhabitable, and will threaten many populations with famine. The severity of the refugee crisis will depend on how quickly we reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

While making many parts of the world uninhabitable, long-term climate change will make other regions more suitable for human habitation and agriculture. For example, farming will become more possible in Siberia, Greenland, the Canadian Arctic, Alaska and Patagonia. A humane response to the refugee crisis could include the generous opening of these regions to refugees.

The global population of humans is currently increasing by almost a billion people every decade. Global population must be stabilized, and in the long run, gradually reduced. Money currently wasted (or worse than wasted) on armaments could be used instead to promote universal primary health care, and with it, universal access to the knowledge and materials needed for family planning.

Finally, reduced consumption of meat, particularly beef, would shorten the food chain thus make more food available for famine relief.

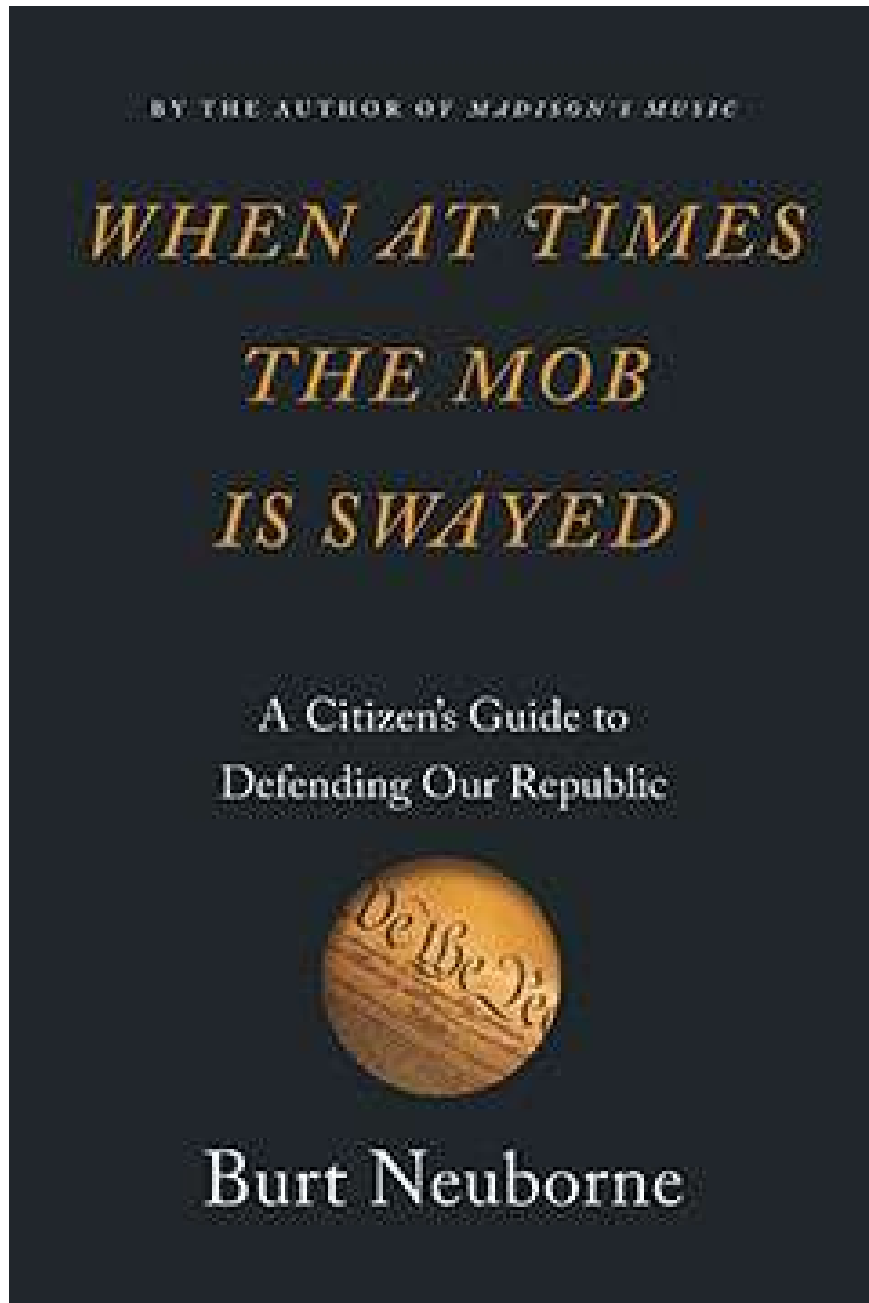


Figure 12.36: Burt Neuborne's brilliant book on the current crisis of American democracy is a warning that we must take very seriously.



12.17 Trump copies Hitler's rhetoric

Book review: *When at Times the Mob Is Swayed*

Below are some quotations from an article by Steven Rosenfeld, published by *Common Dreams* on Friday, August 9, 2019. Rosenfeld's article is a review of a book by Bert Neuborne entitled *When at Times the Mob Is Swayed: A Citizen's Guide to Defending Our Republic*.

Neuborne doesn't make this comparison [between Trump and Hitler] lightly. His 55-year career began by challenging the constitutionality of the Vietnam War in the 1960s. He became the ACLU's national legal director in the 1980s under Ronald Reagan. He was founding legal director of the Brennan Center for Justice at New York University Law School in the 1990s. He has been part of more than 200 Supreme Court cases and Holocaust reparation litigation.

"Why does an ignorant, narcissistic buffoon like Trump trigger such anxiety? Why do so many Americans feel it existentially (not just politically) important to resist our forty-fifth president?" he writes. "Partly it's just aesthetics. Trump is such a coarse and appalling man that it's hard to stomach his presence in Abraham Lincoln's house. But that's not enough to explain the intensity of my dread. LBJ was coarse. Gerald Ford and George W. Bush were dumb as rocks. Richard Nixon was an anti-Semite. Bill Clinton's mistreatment of women dishonored his office. Ronald Reagan was a dangerous ideologue. I opposed each of them when they appeared to exceed their constitutional powers. But I never felt a sense of existential dread. I never sensed that the very existence of a tolerant democracy was in play."

A younger Trump, according to his first wife's divorce filings, kept and studied a book translating and annotating Adolf Hitler's pre-World War II speeches in a locked bedside cabinet, Neuborne noted. The English edition of *My New Order*, published in 1941, also had analyses of the speeches' impact on his era's press and politics. "Ugly and appalling as they are, those speeches are masterpieces of demagogic manipulation," Neuborne says.

"Watching Trump work his crowds, though, I see a dangerously manipulative narcissist unleashing the demagogic spells that he learned from studying Hitler's speeches - spells that he cannot control and that are capable of eroding the fabric of American democracy," Neuborne says. "You see, we've seen what these rhetorical techniques can do. Much of Trump's rhetoric - as a candidate and in office - mirrors the strategies, even the language, used by Adolf Hitler in the early 1930s to erode German democracy."

Many Americans may seize or condemn Neuborne's analysis, which has more than 20 major points of comparison. The author repeatedly says his goal is not "equating" the men - as "it trivializes Hitler's obscene crimes to compare them to Trump's often pathetic foibles."

Indeed, the book has a larger frame: whether federal checks and balances - Congress, the Supreme Court, the Electoral College - can contain the havoc that Trump thrives on and the Republican Party at large has embraced. But the Trump-Hitler compilation is a stunning warning, because, as many Holocaust survivors have said, few Germans or Europeans expected what unfolded in the years after Hitler amassed power.

Here's how Neuborne introduces this section. Many recent presidents have been awful, "But then there was Donald Trump, the only president in recent American history to openly despise the twin ideals - individual dignity and fundamental equality - upon which the contemporary United States is built. When you confront the reality of a president like Trump, the state of both sets of brakes - internal [constitutional] and external [public resistance] - become hugely important because Donald Trump's political train runs on the most potent and dangerous fuel of all: a steady diet of fear, greed, loathing, lies, and envy. It's a toxic mixture that has destroyed democracies before, and can do so again.

"Give Trump credit," he continues. "He did his homework well and became the twenty-first-century master of divisive rhetoric. We're used to thinking of Hitler's Third Reich as the incomparably evil tyranny that it undoubtedly was. But Hitler didn't take power by force. He used a set of rhetorical tropes codified in Trump's bedside reading that persuaded enough Germans to welcome Hitler as a populist leader. The Nazis did not overthrow the Weimar Republic. It fell into their hands as the fruit of Hitler's satanic ability to mesmerize enough Germans to trade their birthright for a pottage of scapegoating, short-term economic gain, xenophobia, and racism. It could happen here."

Twenty points of similarity

Neuborne lists the following points of similarity between early Hitler and Trump:

1. Neither was elected by a majority. Trump lost the popular vote by 2.9 million votes, receiving votes by 25.3 percent of all eligible American voters. "That's just a little less than the percentage of the German electorate that turned to the Nazi Party in 1932-33," Neuborne writes. "Unlike the low turnouts in the United States, turnout in Weimar Germany averaged just over 80 percent of eligible voters." He continues, "Once installed as a minority chancellor in January 1933, Hitler set about demonizing his political opponents, and no one - not the vaunted, intellectually brilliant German judiciary; not the respected, well-trained German police; not the revered, aristocratic German military; not the widely admired, efficient German government bureaucracy; not the wealthy, immensely powerful leaders of German industry; and not the powerful center-right political leaders of the Reichstag - mounted a serious effort to stop him."

2. Both found direct communication channels to their base. By 1936's Olympics, Nazi narratives dominated German cultural and political life. "How on earth did Hitler pull it off? What satanic magic did Trump find in Hitler's speeches?" Neuborne asks. He addresses Hitler's extreme rhetoric soon enough, but notes that Hitler found a direct communication pathway - the Nazi Party gave out radios with only one channel, tuned to Hitler's voice, bypassing Germany's news media. Trump has an online equivalent.

"Donald Trump's tweets, often delivered between midnight and dawn, are the twenty-first century's technological embodiment of Hitler's free plastic radios," Neuborne says. "Trump's Twitter account, like Hitler's radios, enables a charismatic leader to establish and maintain a personal, unfiltered line of communication with an adoring political base of about 30-40 percent of the population, many (but not all) of whom are only too willing, even anxious, to swallow Trump's witches' brew of falsehoods, half-truths, personal invective, threats, xenophobia, national security scares, religious bigotry, white racism, exploitation of economic insecurity, and a never ending-search for scapegoats."

3. Both blame others and divide on racial lines. As Neuborne notes, "Hitler used his single-frequency radios to wax hysterical to his adoring base about his pathological racial and religious fantasies glorifying Aryans and demonizing Jews, blaming Jews (among other racial and religious scapegoats) for German society's ills." That is comparable to "Trump's tweets and public statements, whether dealing with black-led demonstrations against police violence, white-led racist mob violence, threats posed by undocumented aliens, immigration policy generally, protests by black and white professional athletes, college admission policies, hate speech, even response to hurricane damage in Puerto Rico," he says. Again and again, Trump uses "racially tinged messages calculated to divide whites from people of color."
4. Both relentlessly demonize opponents. "Hitler's radio harangues demonized his domestic political opponents, calling them parasites, criminals, cockroaches, and various categories of leftist scum," Neuborne notes. "Trump's tweets and speeches similarly demonize his political opponents. Trump talks about the country being 'infested' with dangerous aliens of color. He fantasizes about jailing Hillary Clinton, calls Mexicans rapists, refers to 'shithole countries,' degrades anyone who disagrees with him, and dreams of uprooting thousands of allegedly disloyal bureaucrats in the State Department, the Environmental Protection Agency, the FBI, and the CIA, who he calls 'the deep state' and who, he claims, are sabotaging American greatness."

5. They unceasingly attack objective truth. “Both Trump and Hitler maintained a relentless assault on the very idea of objective truth,” he continues. “Each began the assault by seeking to delegitimize the mainstream press. Hitler quickly coined the epithet *Lügenpresse* (literally ‘lying press’) to denigrate the mainstream press. Trump uses a paraphrase of Hitler’s lying press epithet - ‘fake news’ - cribbed, no doubt, from one of Hitler’s speeches. For Trump, the mainstream press is a ‘lying press’ that publishes ‘fake news.’” Hitler attacked his opponents as spreading false information to undermine his positions, Neuborne says, just as Trump has attacked “elites” for disseminating false news, “especially his possible links to the Kremlin.”
6. They relentlessly attack mainstream media. Trump’s assaults on the media echo Hitler’s, Neuborne says, noting that he “repeatedly attacks the ‘failing New York Times,’ leads crowds in chanting ‘CNN sucks,’ [and] is personally hostile to most reporters.” He cites the White House’s refusal to fly the flag at half-mast after the murder of five journalists in Annapolis in June 2018, Trump’s efforts to punish CNN by blocking a merger of its corporate parent, and trying to revoke federal Postal Service contracts held by Amazon, which was founded by Jeff Bezos, who also owns the Washington Post.
7. Their attacks on truth include science. Neuborne notes, “Both Trump and Hitler intensified their assault on objective truth by deriding scientific experts, especially academics who question Hitler’s views on race or Trump’s views on climate change, immigration, or economics. For both Trump and Hitler, the goal is (and was) to eviscerate the very idea of objective truth, turning everything into grist for a populist jury subject to manipulation by a master puppeteer. In both Trump’s and Hitler’s worlds, public opinion ultimately defines what is true and what is false.”
8. Their lies blur reality - and supporters spread them. “Trump’s pathological penchant for repeatedly lying about his behavior can only succeed in a world where his supporters feel free to embrace Trump’s ‘alternative facts’ and treat his hyperbolic exaggerations as the gospel truth,” Neuborne says. “Once Hitler had delegitimized the mainstream media by a series of systematic attacks on its integrity, he constructed a fawning alternative mass media designed to reinforce his direct radio messages and enhance his personal power. Trump is following the same path, simultaneously launching bitter attacks on the mainstream press while embracing the so-called alt-right media, co-opting both Sinclair Broadcasting and the Rupert Murdoch-owned Fox Broadcasting Company as, essentially, a Trump Broadcasting Network.”

9. Both orchestrated mass rallies to show status. “Once Hitler had cemented his personal communications link with his base via free radios and a fawning media and had badly eroded the idea of objective truth, he reinforced his emotional bond with his base by holding a series of carefully orchestrated mass meetings dedicated to cementing his status as a charismatic leader, or Führer,” Neuborne writes. “The powerful personal bonds nurtured by Trump’s tweets and Fox’s fawning are also systematically reinforced by periodic, carefully orchestrated mass rallies (even going so far as to co-opt a Boy Scout Jamboree in 2017), reinforcing Trump’s insatiable narcissism and his status as a charismatic leader.”
10. They embrace extreme nationalism. “Hitler’s strident appeals to the base invoked an extreme version of German nationalism, extolling a brilliant German past and promising to restore Germany to its rightful place as a preeminent nation,” Neuborne says. “Trump echoes Hitler’s jingoistic appeal to ultranationalist fervor, extolling American exceptionalism right down to the slogan ‘Make America Great Again,’ a paraphrase of Hitler’s promise to restore German greatness.”
11. Both made closing borders a centerpiece. “Hitler all but closed Germany’s borders, freezing non-Aryan migration into the country and rendering it impossible for Germans to escape without official permission. Like Hitler, Trump has also made closed borders a centerpiece of his administration,” Neuborne continues. “Hitler barred Jews. Trump bars Muslims and seekers of sanctuary from Central America. When the lower courts blocked Trump’s Muslim travel ban, he unilaterally issued executive orders replacing it with a thinly disguised substitute that ultimately narrowly won Supreme Court approval under a theory of extreme deference to the president.”
12. They embraced mass detention and deportations. “Hitler promised to make Germany free from Jews and Slavs. Trump promises to slow, stop, and even reverse the flow of non-white immigrants, substituting Muslims, Africans, Mexicans, and Central Americans of color for Jews and Slavs as scapegoats for the nation’s ills. Trump’s efforts to cast dragnets to arrest undocumented aliens where they work, live, and worship, followed by mass deportation... echo Hitler’s promise to defend Germany’s racial identity,” he writes, also noting that Trump has “stooped to tearing children from their parents [as Nazis in World War II would do] to punish desperate efforts by migrants to find a better life.”
13. Both used borders to protect selected industries. “Like Hitler, Trump seeks to use national borders to protect his favored national interests, threatening to ignite protectionist trade wars with Europe, China, and

Japan similar to the trade wars that, in earlier incarnations, helped to ignite World War I and World War II,” Neuborne writes. “Like Hitler, Trump aggressively uses our nation’s political and economic power to favor selected American corporate interests at the expense of foreign competitors and the environment, even at the price of international conflict, massive inefficiency, and irreversible pollution [climate change].”

14. They cemented their rule by enriching elites. “Hitler’s version of fascism shifted immense power - both political and financial - to the leaders of German industry. In fact, Hitler governed Germany largely through corporate executives,” he continues. “Trump has also presided over a massive empowerment - and enrichment - of corporate America. Under Trump, large corporations exercise immense political power while receiving huge economic windfalls and freedom from regulations designed to protect consumers and the labor force. Hitler despised the German labor movement, eventually destroying it and imprisoning its leaders. Trump also detests strong unions, seeking to undermine any effort to interfere with the ‘prerogatives of management.’”
15. Both rejected international norms. “Hitler’s foreign policy rejected international cooperation in favor of military and economic coercion, culminating in the annexation of the Sudetenland, the phony Hitler-Stalin nonaggression pact, the invasion of Czechoslovakia, and the horrors of global war,” Neuborne notes. “Like Hitler, Trump is deeply hostile to multinational cooperation, withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, the Paris Agreement on climate change, and the nuclear agreement with Iran, threatening to withdraw from the North American Free Trade Agreement, abandoning our Kurdish allies in Syria...”
16. They attack domestic democratic processes. “Hitler attacked the legitimacy of democracy itself, purging the voting rolls, challenging the integrity of the electoral process, and questioning the ability of democratic government to solve Germany’s problems,” Neuborne notes. “Trump has also attacked the democratic process, declining to agree to be bound by the outcome of the 2016 elections when he thought he might lose, supporting the massive purge of the voting rolls allegedly designed to avoid (nonexistent) fraud, championing measures that make it harder to vote, tolerating - if not fomenting - massive Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election, encouraging mob violence at rallies, darkly hinting at violence if Democrats hold power, and constantly casting doubt on the legitimacy of elections unless he wins.”
17. Both attack the judiciary and rule of law. “Hitler politicized and eventually destroyed the vaunted German justice system. Trump also seeks to

turn the American justice system into his personal playground,” Neuborne writes. “Like Hitler, Trump threatens the judicially enforced rule of law, bitterly attacking American judges who rule against him, slyly praising Andrew Jackson for defying the Supreme Court, and abusing the pardon power by pardoning an Arizona sheriff found guilty of criminal contempt of court for disobeying federal court orders to cease violating the Constitution.”

18. Both glorify the military and demand loyalty oaths. “Like Hitler, Trump glorifies the military, staffing his administration with layers of retired generals (who eventually were fired or resigned), relaxing control over the use of lethal force by the military and the police, and demanding a massive increase in military spending,” Neuborne writes. Just as Hitler “imposed an oath of personal loyalty on all German judges” and demanded courts defer to him, “Trump’s already gotten enough deference from five Republican [Supreme Court] justices to uphold a largely Muslim travel ban that is the epitome of racial and religious bigotry.” Trump has also demanded loyalty oaths. “He fired James Comey, a Republican appointed in 2013 as FBI director by President Obama, for refusing to swear an oath of personal loyalty to the president; excoriated and then sacked Jeff Sessions, his handpicked attorney general, for failing to suppress the criminal investigation into... Trump’s possible collusion with Russia in influencing the 2016 elections; repeatedly threatened to dismiss Robert Mueller, the special counsel carrying out the investigation; and called again and again for the jailing of Hillary Clinton, his 2016 opponent, leading crowds in chants of ‘lock her up.’” A new chant, “send her back,” has since emerged at Trump rallies directed at non-white Democratic congresswomen.
19. They proclaim unchecked power. “Like Hitler, Trump has intensified a disturbing trend that predated his administration of governing unilaterally, largely through executive orders or proclamations,” Neuborne says, citing the Muslim travel ban, trade tariffs, unraveling of health and environmental safety nets, ban on transgender military service, and efforts to end President Obama’s protection for Dreamers. “Like Hitler, Trump claims the power to overrule Congress and govern all by himself. In 1933, Hitler used the pretext of the Reichstag fire to declare a national emergency and seize the power to govern unilaterally. The German judiciary did nothing to stop him. German democracy never recovered. When Congress refused to give Trump funds for his border wall even after he threw a tantrum and shut down the government, Trump, like Hitler, declared a phony national emergency and claimed the power to ignore Congress,” Neuborne continues. “Don’t count on the Supreme Court to stop him. Five justices gave the game away on the President’s unilateral travel ban.

They just might do the same thing on the border wall.” It did in late July, ruling that Trump could divert congressionally appropriated funds from the Pentagon budget - undermining constitutional separation of powers.

20. Both relegate women to subordinate roles. “Finally,” writes Neuborne, “Hitler propounded a misogynistic, stereotypical view of women, valuing them exclusively as wives and mothers while excluding them from full participation in German political and economic life. Trump may be the most openly misogynist figure ever to hold high public office in the United States, crassly treating women as sexual objects, using nondisclosure agreements and violating campaign finance laws to shield his sexual misbehavior from public knowledge, attacking women who come forward to accuse men of abusive behavior, undermining reproductive freedom, and opposing efforts by women to achieve economic equality.”

Suggestions for further reading

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5. Bob Jessop, *The State: Past, Present, Future*, John Wiley & Sons, (2015).
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7. Alana Abramson, *President Trump's Allies Keep Talking About the 'Deep State.' What's That?*. Time, (8 March 2017).
8. Ishaan Tharoor, *Is Trump fighting the deep state or creating his own?*. The Washington Post, (February 1, 2017).
9. Michael Crowley, *The Deep State Is Real*. Politico Magazine, (September-October 2017).
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12. Fowler, Andrew (11 April 2011). *The Most Dangerous Man in the World: The Explosive True Story of Julian Assange and the Lies, Cover-ups and Conspiracies He Exposed*. Skyhorse Publishing Inc.
13. Robert Manne, *Making Trouble: Essays Against the New Australian Complacency* (Melbourne: Black Inc. Publishing, 2011).

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Chapter 13

THE EVOLUTION OF COOPERATION

“Alas, two souls are living in my breast!”

Goethe's Faust

“No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main. If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or thine own were...”

John Donne

13.1 Introduction

Human nature contains an element of tribalism, which we have inherited from our ancestors who lived in small generically-homogeneous tribes, competing for territory on the grasslands of Africa. But humans also have a genius for cooperation. Our enormously successful civilization has been built through the sharing of ideas and innovations. All cultural groups have contributed.

Today it is vital that the cooperative side of human nature should be supported by our educational systems, our mass media and our religious leaders.

13.2 The passions of mankind

The explosion of human knowledge

Cultural evolution depends on the non-genetic storage, transmission, diffusion and utilization of information. The development of human speech, the invention of writing, the development of paper and printing, and finally in modern times, mass media, computers and the Internet - all these have been crucial steps in society's explosive accumulation of information and knowledge. Human cultural evolution proceeds at a constantly-accelerating speed, so great in fact that it threatens to shake society to pieces.

Every species changes gradually through genetic evolution; but with humans, cultural evolution has rushed ahead with such a speed that it has completely outstripped the slow rate of genetic change. Genetically we are quite similar to our neolithic ancestors, but their world has been replaced by a world of quantum theory, relativity, supercomputers, antibiotics, genetic engineering and space telescopes - unfortunately also a world of nuclear weapons and nerve gas.

Because of the slowness of genetic evolution in comparison to the rapid and constantly-accelerating rate of cultural change, our bodies and emotions (as Malthus put it, the "passions of mankind") are not completely adapted to our new way of life. They still reflect the way of life of our hunter-gatherer ancestors.

Within rapidly-moving cultural evolution, we can observe that technical change now moves with such astonishing rapidity that neither social institutions, nor political structures, nor education, nor public opinion can keep pace. The lightning-like pace of technical progress has made many of our ideas and institutions obsolete. For example, the absolutely-sovereign nation-state and the institution of war have both become dangerous anachronisms in an era of instantaneous communication, global interdependence and all-destroying weapons.

In many respects, human cultural evolution can be regarded as an enormous success. However, at the start of the 21st century, most thoughtful observers agree that civilization is entering a period of crisis. As all curves move exponentially upward - population, production, consumption, rates of scientific discovery, and so on - one can observe signs of increasing environmental stress, while the continued existence and spread of nuclear weapons

threatens civilization with destruction. Thus while the explosive growth of knowledge has brought many benefits, the problem of achieving a stable, peaceful and sustainable world remains serious, challenging and unsolved.

Tribal emotions and nationalism

In discussing conflicts, we must be very careful to distinguish between two distinct types of aggression exhibited by both humans and animals. The first is intra-group aggression, which is often seen in rank-determining struggles, for example when two wolves fight for pack leadership, or when males fight for the privilege of mating with females. Another, completely different, type of aggression is seen when a group is threatened by outsiders. Most animals, including humans, then exhibit a communal defense response - self-sacrificing and heroic combat against whatever is perceived to be an external threat. It is this second type of aggression that makes war possible.

Arthur Koestler has described inter-group aggression in an essay entitled *The Urge to Self-Destruction*¹, where he writes: "Even a cursory glance at history should convince one that individual crimes, committed for selfish motives, play a quite insignificant role in the human tragedy compared with the numbers massacred in unselfish love of one's tribe, nation, dynasty, church or ideology... Wars are not fought for personal gain, but out of loyalty and devotion to king, country or cause..."

"We have seen on the screen the radiant love of the Führer on the faces of the Hitler Youth... They are transfixed with love, like monks in ecstasy on religious paintings. The sound of the nation's anthem, the sight of its proud flag, makes you feel part of a wonderfully loving community. The fanatic is prepared to lay down his life for the object of his worship, as the lover is prepared to die for his idol. He is, alas, also prepared to kill anybody who represents a supposed threat to the idol." The emotion described here by Koestler is the same as the communal defense mechanism ("militant enthusiasm") described below in biological terms by the Nobel Laureate ethologist Konrad Lorenz.

In *On Aggression*, Lorenz gives the following description of the emotions of a hero preparing to risk his life for the sake of the group: "In reality, militant enthusiasm is a specialized form of communal aggression, clearly distinct from and yet functionally related to the more primitive forms of individual aggression. Every man of normally strong emotions knows, from his own experience, the subjective phenomena that go hand in hand with the response of militant enthusiasm. A shiver runs down the back and, as more exact observation shows, along the outside of both arms. One soars elated, above all the ties of everyday life, one is ready to abandon all for the call of what, in the moment of this specific emotion, seems to be a sacred duty. All obstacles in its path become unimportant; the instinctive inhibitions against hurting or killing one's fellows lose, unfortunately, much of their power. Rational considerations, criticisms, and all reasonable arguments against the behavior dictated by militant enthusiasm are silenced by an amazing reversal of all values, making them appear

¹in *The Place of Value in a World of Facts*, A. Tiselius and S. Nielsson editors, Wiley, New York, (1970)

not only untenable, but base and dishonorable. Men may enjoy the feeling of absolute righteousness even while they commit atrocities. Conceptual thought and moral responsibility are at their lowest ebb. As the Ukrainian proverb says: 'When the banner is unfurled, all reason is in the trumpet'."

"The subjective experiences just described are correlated with the following objectively demonstrable phenomena. The tone of the striated musculature is raised, the carriage is stiffened, the arms are raised from the sides and slightly rotated inward, so that the elbows point outward. The head is proudly raised, the chin stuck out, and the facial muscles mime the 'hero face' familiar from the films. On the back and along the outer surface of the arms, the hair stands on end. This is the objectively observed aspect of the shiver!"

"Anybody who has ever seen the corresponding behavior of the male chimpanzee defending his band or family with self-sacrificing courage will doubt the purely spiritual character of human enthusiasm. The chimp, too, sticks out his chin, stiffens his body, and raises his elbows; his hair stands on end, producing a terrifying magnification of his body contours as seen from the front. The inward rotation of the arms obviously has the purpose of turning the longest-haired side outward to enhance the effect. The whole combination of body attitude and hair-raising constitutes a bluff. This is also seen when a cat humps its back, and is calculated to make the animal appear bigger and more dangerous than it really is. Our shiver, which in German poetry is called a 'Heiliger Schauer', a 'holy' shiver, turns out to be the vestige of a prehuman vegetative response for making a fur bristle which we no longer have. To the humble seeker for biological truth, there cannot be the slightest doubt that human militant enthusiasm evolved out of a communal defense response of our prehuman ancestor."

Lorenz goes on to say, "An impartial visitor from another planet, looking at man as he is today - in his hand the atom bomb, the product of his intelligence - in his heart the aggression drive, inherited from his anthropoid ancestors, which the same intelligence cannot control - such a visitor would not give mankind much chance of survival."

Members of tribe-like groups are bound together by strong bonds of altruism and loyalty. Echos of these bonds can be seen in present-day family groups, in team sports, in the fellowship of religious congregations, and in the bonds that link soldiers to their army comrades and to their nation.

Warfare involves not only a high degree of aggression, but also an extremely high degree of altruism. Soldiers kill, but they also sacrifice their own lives. Thus patriotism and duty are as essential to war as the willingness to kill.

Tribalism involves passionate attachment to one's own group, self-sacrifice for the sake of the group, willingness both to die and to kill if necessary to defend the group from its enemies, and belief that in case of a conflict, one's own group is always in the right. Unfortunately these emotions make war possible; and today a Third World War might lead to the destruction of civilization.



Figure 13.1: Nikolaas Tinbergen (left) and Konrad Lorenz. They and Karl von Frisch shared the 1973 Nobel Prize in Medicine and Physiology for studies of behavior patterns in animals.

13.3 Population genetics

The mystery of self-sacrifice in war

At first sight, the willingness of humans to die defending their social groups seems hard to explain from the standpoint of Darwinian natural selection. After the heroic death of such a human, he or she will be unable to produce more children, or to care for those already born. Therefore one might at first suppose that natural selection would work strongly to eliminate the trait of self-sacrifice from human nature. However, the theory of population genetics and group selection can explain both the willingness of humans to sacrifice themselves for their own group, and also the terrible aggression that they sometimes exhibit towards competing groups. It can explain both intra-group altruism and inter-group aggression.

Fisher, Haldane and Hamilton

The idea of group selection in evolution was proposed in the 1930's by J.B.S. Haldane and R.A. Fisher, and more recently it has been discussed by W.D. Hamilton.

If we examine altruism and aggression in humans, we notice that members of our species exhibit great altruism towards their own children. Kindness towards close relatives is also characteristic of human behavior, and the closer the biological relationship is between two humans, the greater is the altruism they tend to show towards each other. This



Figure 13.2: **Sir Ronald Aylmer Fischer (1890-1962).** In his book “**The Genetical Foundations of Natural Selection**”, published in 1930, Fischer laid the foundations of population genetics.

profile of altruism is easy to explain on the basis of Darwinian natural selection since two closely related individuals share many genes and, if they cooperate, the genes will be more effectively propagated.

To explain from an evolutionary point of view the communal defense mechanism discussed by Lorenz - the willingness of humans to kill and be killed in defense of their communities - we have only to imagine that our ancestors lived in small tribes and that marriage was likely to take place within a tribe rather than across tribal boundaries. Under these circumstances, each tribe would tend to consist of genetically similar individuals. The tribe itself, rather than the individual, would be the unit on which the evolutionary forces of natural selection would act.

According to the group selection model, a tribe whose members showed altruism towards each other would be more likely to survive than a tribe whose members cooperated less effectively. Since several tribes might be in competition for the same territory, successful aggression against a neighboring group could increase the chances for survival of one's own tribe. Thus, on the basis of the group selection model, one would expect humans to be kind and cooperative towards members of their own group, but at the same time to sometimes exhibit aggression towards members of other groups, especially in conflicts over territory. One would also expect intergroup conflicts to be most severe in cases where the boundaries

between groups are sharpest - where marriage is forbidden across the boundaries.

Language, religion and tribal markings

In biology, a species is defined to be a group of mutually fertile organisms. Thus all humans form a single species, since mixed marriages between all known races will produce children, and subsequent generations in mixed marriages are also fertile. However, although there is never a biological barrier to marriages across ethnic and racial boundaries, there are often very severe cultural barriers.

Irenäus Eibl-Eibesfeldt, a student of Konrad Lorenz, introduced the word *pseudospeciation* to denote cases where cultural barriers between two groups of humans are so strongly marked that marriages across the boundary are difficult and infrequent. In such cases, she pointed out, the two groups function as though they were separate species, although from a biological standpoint this is nonsense. When two such groups are competing for the same land, the same water, the same resources, and the same jobs, the conflicts between them can become very bitter indeed. Each group regards the other as being “not truly human”.

In his book *The Biology of War and Peace*, Eibl-Eibesfeldt discusses the “tribal markings” used by groups of humans to underline their own identity and to clearly mark the boundary between themselves and other groups. One of the illustrations in his book shows the marks left by ritual scarification on the faces of the members of certain African tribes. These scars would be hard to counterfeit, and they help to establish and strengthen tribal identity. Seeing a photograph of the marks left by ritual scarification on the faces of African tribesmen, it is impossible not to be reminded of the dueling scars that Prussian army officers once used to distinguish their caste from outsiders.

Surveying the human scene, one can find endless examples of signs that mark the bearer as a member of a particular group - signs that can be thought of as “tribal markings”: tattoos; piercing; bones through the nose or ears; elongated necks or ears; filed teeth; Chinese binding of feet; circumcision, both male and female; unique hair styles; decorations of the tongue, nose, or naval; peculiarities of dress, kilts, tartans, school ties, veils, chadours, and headdresses; caste markings in India; use or non-use of perfumes; codes of honor and value systems; traditions of hospitality and manners; peculiarities of diet (certain foods forbidden, others preferred); giving traditional names to children; knowledge of dances and songs; knowledge of recipes; knowledge of common stories, literature, myths, poetry or common history; festivals, ceremonies, and rituals; burial customs, treatment of the dead and ancestor worship; methods of building and decorating homes; games and sports peculiar to a culture; relationship to animals, knowledge of horses and ability to ride; nonrational systems of belief. Even a baseball hat worn backwards or the professed ability to enjoy atonal music can mark a person as a member of a special “tribe”. Undoubtedly there are many people in New York who would never think of marrying someone who could not appreciate the paintings of Jasper Johns, and many in London who would consider anyone had not read all the books of Virginia Wolfe to be entirely outside the bounds of civilization.

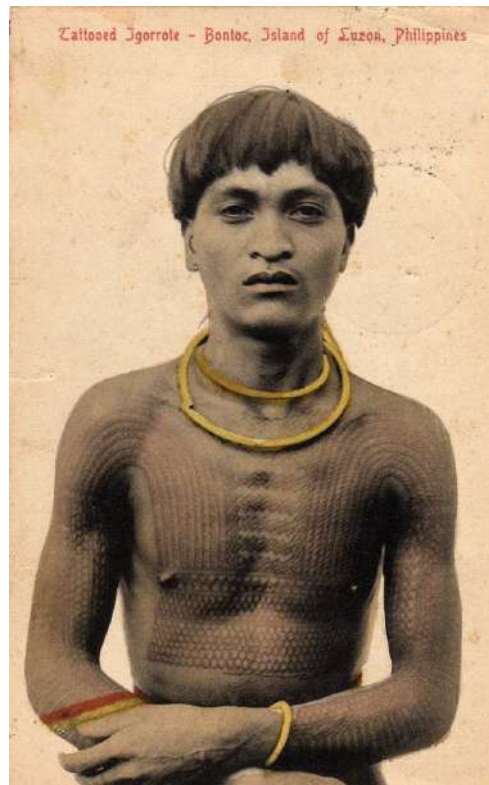


Figure 13.3: 1908 photo of a Filipino Bontoc warrior bearing a Head hunters 'Chaklag' Tattoo. Tribal markings help social groups to establish their identity and to sharply define the boundaries of the group. Within the group boundaries, humans tend to exhibit altruism, while across the boundaries, aggression is often exhibited. In modern nations, genetically dissimilar humans often use tribal markings to establish social cohesion over a larger group than would otherwise be possible.

By far the most important mark of ethnic identity is language, and within a particular language, dialect and accent. If the only purpose of language were communication, it would be logical for the people of a small country like Denmark to stop speaking Danish and go over to a more universally-understood international language such as English. However, language has another function in addition to communication: It is also a mark of identity. It establishes the boundary of the group.

Within a particular language, dialects and accents mark the boundaries of subgroups. For example, in England, great social significance is attached to accents and diction, a tendency that George Bernard Shaw satirized in his play, *Pygmalion*, which later gained greater fame as the musical comedy, *My Fair Lady*. This being the case, we can ask why all citizens of England do not follow the example of Eliza Doolittle in Shaw's play, and improve their social positions by acquiring Oxford accents. However, to do so would be to run the risk of being laughed at by one's peers and regarded as a traitor to one's own local community and friends. School children everywhere can be very cruel to any child who does not fit into the local pattern. At Eton, an Oxford accent is compulsory; but in a Yorkshire school, a child with an Oxford accent would suffer for it.

Next after language, the most important "tribal marking" is religion. It seems probable that in the early history of our hunter-gatherer ancestors, religion evolved as a mechanism for perpetuating tribal traditions and culture. Like language, and like the innate facial expressions studied by Darwin, religion is a universal characteristic of all human societies. All known races and cultures practice some sort of religion. Thus a tendency to be religious seems to be built into human nature, or at any rate, the needs that religion satisfies seem to be a part of our inherited makeup. Otherwise, religion would not be as universal as it is.

Formation of group identity

Although humans originally lived in small, genetically homogeneous tribes, the social and political groups of the modern world are much larger, and are often multiracial and multiethnic.

There are a number of large countries that are remarkable for their diversity, for example Brazil, Argentina and the United States. Nevertheless it has been possible to establish social cohesion and group identity within each of these enormous nations. India and China too, are mosaics of diverse peoples, but nevertheless, they function as coherent societies. Thus we see that group identity is a social construction, in which artificial "tribal markings" define the boundaries of the group.

As an example of the use of tribal markings to establish social cohesion over a large group of genetically dissimilar humans, one can think of the role of baseball and football in the United States. Affection for these sports and knowledge of their intricacies is able to establish social bonds that transcend racial and religious barriers.

One gains hope for the future by observing how it has been possible to produce both internal peace and social cohesion over very large areas of the globe - areas that contain extremely diverse populations. The difference between making large, ethnically diverse

countries function as coherent sociopolitical units and making the entire world function as a unit is not very great.

Since group identity is a social construction, it is not an impossible goal to think of enlarging the already-large groups of the modern world to include all of humanity.

13.4 Non-human examples of aggression and altruism

Aggression associated with mating

We must be careful not to confuse intergroup aggression with aggression associated with mating behavior. Among many species of fish, birds and animals, males fight for the privilege of mating. This type of aggression is often associated with sexual dimorphism, i.e. secondary differences in structure between males and females of the same species. For example, the large antlers of male deer are used for rank-determining fights, which confer greater reproductive success on the winner; but herds of deer do not engage in war with other herds. Thus there is a distinction between rank-determining aggression and inter-group aggression.

Chimpanzees and bonobos

The line of descent leading to humans diverged from the line leading to chimpanzees and bonobos between 5 and 6 million years ago. Chimps and bonobos look very similar, and until recent times, naturalists did not realize that they are separate species. However, modern studies have revealed the distinctness of the two species, as well as great differences in their social behavior. Chimpanzee groups are male-dominated, and far more aggressive than bonobo societies, which are female-dominated. Besides the aggression associated with mating (just discussed), chimpanzees also exhibit terrible inter-group aggression.

In his book *Before the Dawn*, Nicholas Wade describes what Jane Goodall, John Mitani, and other primatologists have discovered concerning male chimpanzees' aggression towards neighboring groups of their own species: "Chimpanzees carefully calculate the odds, and seek to minimize risk, a very necessary procedure if one fights on a regular basis. They prefer to attack an isolated individual, and then retreat into their own territory. If they encounter an opposing patrol, they will assess the size of their opponents' party, and retreat if outnumbered. Researchers have confirmed this behavior by playing the call of a single male to chimp parties of various sizes. They find that the chimps will approach if they number three or more; parties of two will slink away. Three against one is the preferred odds: two to hold the victim down, and a third to batter him to death." Interestingly, the female-dominated bonobo societies do not exhibit this type of inter-group warfare, which, among chimpanzees, is conducted exclusively by the males.

The social insects

The social² insects, ants, bees, wasps and termites, exhibit nearly perfect altruism towards members of their own group. This extreme form of altruism towards near relations (kin altruism) is closely connected with the peculiar method of reproduction of the social insects³. The workers are sterile or nearly sterile, while the queen is the only reproductive female. The result of this special method of reproduction is that very nearly perfect altruism is possible within a hive or nest, since genetic changes favoring antisocial behavior would be detrimental to the hive or nest as a whole. The hive or nest can, in some sense, be regarded as a superorganism, with the individuals cooperating totally in much the same way that cells cooperate within a multicellular organism. The social insects exhibit aggression towards members of their own species from other hives or nests, and can be said to engage in wars.

13.5 The evolution of cooperation

From Thomas Huxley to Lynn Margulis and symbiosis

Charles Darwin (1809-1882) was acutely aware of close and mutually beneficial relationships between organisms. For example, in his work on the fertilization of flowers, he studied the ways in which insects and plants can become exquisitely adapted to each other's needs.

On the other hand Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), although he was a strong supporter of Darwin, saw competition as the main mechanism of evolution. In his essay *Struggle for Existence and its Bearing Upon Man* Huxley wrote: "From the point of view of the moralist, the animal world is about on the same level as a gladiators' show. The creatures are fairly well treated and set to fight; hereby the strongest, the swiftest, and the cunningest live to fight another day. The spectator has no need to turn his thumbs down, as no quarter is granted."

²The technical term is *eusocial*.

³Interestingly a similar method of reproduction, associated with extreme intra-group altruism has evolved among mammals, but is represented by only two species: the naked mole rat and Damaraland mole rat.



Figure 13.4: Thomas Henry Huxley (1825-1895), caricatured in Vanity Fair. Huxley was a strong supporter of Darwin, but he placed much more emphasis on competition in evolution than Darwin did. In fact, Darwin himself was strongly aware of the great role that cooperation plays.

13.6 Peter Kropotkin

The activist, writer, revolutionary, scientist, economist, sociologist, historian, essayist, researcher, political scientist, biologist, geographer and philosophe Prince Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) was born into an ancient dynasty that had ruled Russia before the Romanoffs came to power. However, at the age of 12 he renounced his princely title, and rebuked his friends when they used it.

He was arrested for his revolutionary views, both in Russia and in France, but finally found refuge in England. Returning to Russia after the 1917 Russian Revolution, he was welcomed by cheering crowds numbering 10,000 or more, and offered the post of Minister of Education. He refused this post, however, and he criticized the dictatorial government that had come to power.

As a biologist, Kropotkin believed that cooperation is a more important evolutionary force than competition. In his book, *Mutual Aid: A Factor in Evolution*, he wrote:

“In the animal world we have seen that the vast majority of species live in societies, and that they find in association the best arms for the struggle for life: understood, of course, in its wide Darwinian sense - not as a struggle for the sheer means of existence, but as a struggle against all natural conditions unfavourable to the species. The animal species... in which individual struggle has been reduced to its narrowest limits[...] and the practice of mutual aid has attained the greatest development... are invariably the most numerous, the most prosperous, and the most open to further progress. The mutual protection which is obtained in this case, the possibility of attaining old age and of accumulating experience, the higher intellectual development, and the further growth of sociable habits, secure the maintenance of the species, its extension, and its further progressive evolution. The unsociable species, on the contrary, are doomed to decay.”

Peter Kropotkin's books

- In Russian and French Prisons, London: Ward and Downey; 1887.
- The Conquest of Bread (Paris, 1892) Project Gutenberg e-text, Project LibriVox audiobook
- The Great French Revolution, 1789-1793 (French original: Paris, 1893; English translation: London, 1909). e-text (in French), Anarchist Library e-text (in English)
- The Terror in Russia, 1909, RevoltLib e-text Words of a Rebel, 1885,
- Fields, Factories and Workshops (London and New York, 1898).
- Memoirs of a Revolutionist, London : Smith, Elder; 1899. Anarchist Library e-text, Anarchy Archives e-text
- Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution (London, 1902) Project Gutenberg e-text, Project LibriVox audiobook Russian Literature: Ideals and Realities (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1905). Anarchy Archives e-text

- The State: Its Historic Role, published 1946, Ethics: Origin and Development (unfinished). Included as first part of *Origen y evolución de la moral* (Spanish e-text)
- Modern Science and Anarchism, 1930,

Today, the insights of modern biology show that although competition plays an important role, most of the great upward steps in evolution have involved cooperation. The biologist Lynn Margulis (1938-) has been one of the pioneers of the modern viewpoint which recognizes symbiosis as a central mechanism in evolution.

One-celled organisms seen as examples of cooperation

The first small bacterial cells (prokaryotic cells) can be thought of as cooperative communities in which autocatalytic molecules thrived better together than they had previously done separately.

The next great upward step in evolution, the development of large and complex (eukaryotic) cells, also involved cooperation: Many of their components, for example mitochondria (small granular structures that are needed for respiration) and chloroplasts (the photosynthetic units of higher plants) are believed to have begun their existence as free-living prokaryotic cells. They now have become components of complex cells, cooperating biochemically with the other subcellular structures. Both mitochondria and chloroplasts possess their own DNA, which shows that they were once free-living bacteria-like organisms, but they have survived better in a cooperative relationship.

Cooperation between cells; multicellular organisms

Multicellular organisms evolved from cooperative communities of eukaryotic cells. Some insights into how this happened can be gained from examples which are just on the borderline between the multicellular organisms and single-celled ones. The cooperative behavior of a genus of unicellular eukaryotes called slime molds is particularly interesting because it gives us a glimpse of how multicellular organisms may have originated. The name of the slime molds is misleading, since they are not fungi, but are similar to amoebae. Under ordinary circumstances, the individual cells wander about independently searching for food, which they draw into their interiors and digest. However, when food is scarce, they send out a chemical signal of distress. (Researchers have analyzed the molecule which expresses slime mold unhappiness, and they have found it to be cyclic adenosine monophosphate.) At this signal, the cells congregate and the mass of cells begins to crawl, leaving a slimy trail. As it crawls, the community of cells gradually develops into a tall stalk, surmounted by a sphere - the "fruiting body". Inside the sphere, spores are produced by a sexual process. If a small animal, for example a mouse, passes by, the spores may adhere to its coat; and in this way they may be transported to another part of the forest where food is more plentiful. Thus slime molds represent a sort of missing link between unicellular and multicellular organisms. Normally the cells behave as individualists, wandering about independently, but when challenged by a shortage of food, the slime mold cells join



Figure 13.5: **Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921).** He was a prince of an ancient Russian dynasty by birth, but renounced his title. In Kropotkin's view, cooperation is more important than competition as an evolutionary force, and human nature is best suited to societies based on sharing rather than competitive individualism.



Figure 13.6: The biologist Lynn Margulis argued strongly that eukaryotic cells should be regarded as cooperative communities of simpler organisms that once lived independently. At first she was almost alone in this view, but today it is generally accepted. Most of the great upward steps in evolution have involved cooperation.



Figure 13.7: A photo showing several types of sponges. Sponges and slime molds are on the borderline between single celled organisms and multicellular ones. The single cells of these species can live independently, but they can also function as members of a cooperating colony. (Public domain)

together into an entity which closely resembles a multicellular organism. The cells even seem to exhibit altruism, since those forming the stalk have little chance of survival, and yet they are willing to perform their duty, holding up the sphere at the top so that the spores will survive and carry the genes of the community into the future.

Multicellular organisms often live in a symbiotic relationship with other species. For example, in both animals and humans, bacteria are essential for the digestion of food. Fungi on the roots of plants aid their absorption of water and nutrients. Communities of bacteria and other organisms living in the soil are essential for the recycling of nutrients. Insects are essential to many plants for pollination.



Figure 13.8: A honey bee collecting pollen. The almost perfectly altruistic behavior of bees towards members of their own hive is a consequence of their special method of reproduction, which insures that all the members of the hive are more closely related to each other than they would be to a potential offspring. A hive of bees can be regarded as a superorganism, with the individuals playing roles that are analogous to the roles played by individual cells in a multicellular organism. The degree of cooperation in human society is so great that it too can to some extent be regarded as a superorganism.

Cooperation in groups of animals and human groups

The social behavior of groups of animals, flocks of birds and communities of social insects involves cooperation as well as rudimentary forms of language. Various forms of language, including chemical signals, postures and vocal signals, are important tools for orchestrating cooperative behavior.

The highly developed language of humans made possible an entirely new form of evolution. In cultural evolution (as opposed to genetic evolution), information is passed between generations not in the form of a genetic code, but in the form of linguistic symbols. With the invention of writing, and later the invention of printing, the speed of human cultural evolution greatly increased. Cooperation is central to this new form of evolution. Cultural advances can be shared by all humans.

13.7 The evolution of human cooperation

Intertribal aggression in prehistoric humans

In his book *War Before Civilization* (Oxford University Press, 1996), Professor Lawrence H. Keeley of the University of Illinois states that 87% of all prehistoric tribal societies were at war at least once per year, with 65% fighting continuously with neighboring tribes. Keeley cites as an example a massacre at Crow Creek, South Dakota, where “archaeologists found the remains of more than 500 men, women and children, who had been slaughtered, scalped and mutilated a century and a half before the arrival of Columbus (ca. AD 1325).” Other examples include a 12,000 year old Nubian cemetery, where half of the bodies apparently died by violence. Also cited is a nineteenth century study of intertribal warfare among Australia’s indigenous Murgin people showing that over a twenty-year period, a quarter of the men died in war. Many more examples are given by Harvard archaeologist Stephen A. LeBlanc in *Constant Battles*, (St. Martin’s Press, 2003). Commenting on such studies, Nicolas Wade wrote (in *Before the Dawn*, Penguin Group, 2007), “Had the same casualty rate been suffered by the population of the twentieth century, its war deaths would have totaled two billion people.” Thus, despite the terrifying effectiveness of modern weapons, the percentage of the population killed by war seems to be much smaller today than it was in prehistoric times. However, we need to abolish nuclear weapons before a catastrophic thermonuclear war changes this hopeful statistic.

Trading in primitive societies

Although primitive societies engaged in frequent wars, they also cooperated through trade. Peter Watson, an English historian of ideas, believes that long-distance trade took place as early as 150,000 before the present. There is evidence that extensive trade in obsidian and flint took place during the stone age. Evidence for wide ranging prehistoric obsidian and flint trading networks has been found in North America. Ancient burial sites in Southeast

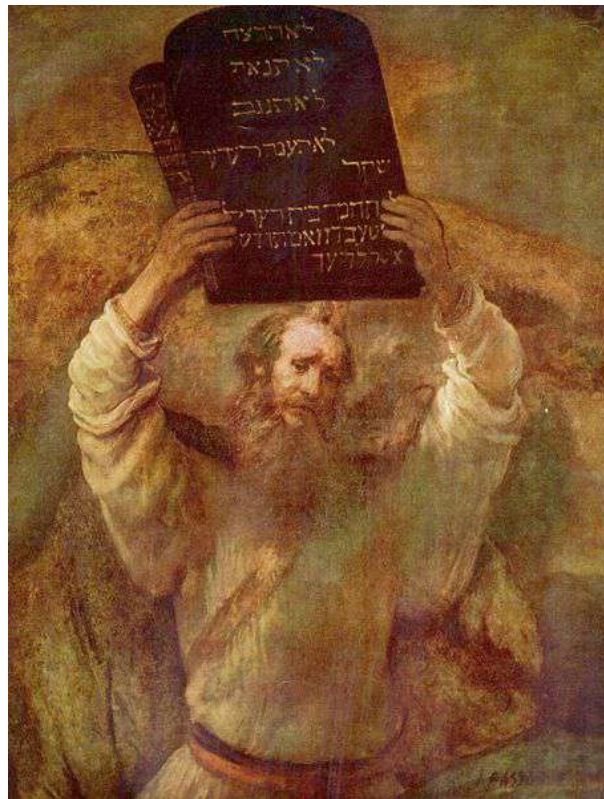


Figure 13.9: Moses depicted in a painting by Rembrandt. Many of the great ethical teachers of history lived at a time when the social unit was increasing in size - when tribalism needed to be replaced by a wider ethic.

Asia show that there too, prehistoric trading took place across very large distances. Analysis of jade jewelry from the Philippines, Thailand, Malaysia and Viet Nam shows that the jade originated in Taiwan.

The invention of writing was prompted by the necessities of trade. In prehistoric Mesopotamia, clay tokens marked with simple symbols were used for accounting as early as 8,000 BC. Often these tokens were kept in clay jars, and symbols on the outside of the jars indicated the contents. About 3,500 BC, the use of such tokens and markings led to the development of pictographic writing in Mesopotamia, and this was soon followed by the cuneiform script, still using soft clay as a medium. The clay tablets were later dried and baked to ensure permanency. The invention of writing led to a great acceleration of human cultural evolution. Since ideas could now be exchanged and preserved with great ease through writing, new advances in technique could be shared by an ever larger cooperating community of humans. Our species became more and more successful as its genius for cooperation developed.

Gracilization and decreasing sexual dimorphism

Early ancestors of modern humans had a relatively heavy (robust) bone structure in relation to their height. This robust bone structure seems to have been favored by frequent combat. During their evolution, modern humans became less robust and more gracile. In other words, their skeletons became lighter in relation to their height. Simultaneously the height and weight of males became less different from the height and weight of females. These trends are generally interpreted as indicating that combat became less important as present-day humans evolved.

Ethics and growth of the social unit

Early religions tended to be centered on particular tribes, and the ethics associated with them were usually tribal in nature. However, the more cosmopolitan societies that began to form after the Neolithic agricultural revolution required a more universal code of ethics. It is interesting to notice that many of the great ethical teachers of human history, for example Moses, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Lao Tzu, Confucius, Buddha, and Jesus, lived at the time when the change to larger social units was taking place. Tribalism was no longer appropriate. A wider ethic was needed.

Today the size of the social unit is again being enlarged, this time enlarged to include the entire world. Narrow loyalties have become inappropriate and there is an urgent need for a new ethic - a global ethic. Loyalty to one's nation needs to be supplemented by a higher loyalty to humanity as a whole.

Interdependence in modern human society

All of the great upward steps in the evolution of life on earth have involved cooperation: Prokaryotes, the first living cells, can be thought of as cooperative communities of

autocatalysts; large, complex eukaryote cells are now believed to have evolved as cooperative communities of prokaryotes; multicellular organisms are cooperative communities of eukaryotes; multicellular organisms cooperate to form societies; and different species cooperate to form ecosystems. Indeed, James Lovelock has pointed out that the earth as a whole is a complex interacting system that can be regarded as a huge organism.

The enormous success of humans as a species is due to their genius for cooperation. The success of humans is a success of cultural evolution, a new form of evolution in which information is passed between generations, not in the form of DNA sequences but in the form of speech, writing, printing and finally electronic signals. Cultural evolution is built on cooperation, and has reached great heights of success as the cooperating community has become larger and larger, ultimately including the entire world.

Without large-scale cooperation, modern science would never have evolved. It developed as a consequence of the invention of printing, which allowed painfully gained detailed knowledge to be widely shared. Science derives its great power from concentration. Attention and resources are brought to bear on a limited problem until all aspects of it are understood. It would make no sense to proceed in this way if knowledge were not permanent, and if the results of scientific research were not widely shared. But today the printed word and the electronic word spread the results of research freely to the entire world. The whole human community is the repository of shared knowledge.

The achievements of modern society are achievements of cooperation. We can fly, but no one builds an airplane alone. We can cure diseases, but only through the cooperative efforts of researchers, doctors and medicinal firms. We can photograph and understand distant galaxies, but the ability to do so is built on the efforts of many cooperating individuals.

An isolated sponge cell can survive, but an isolated human could hardly do so. Like an isolated bee, a human would quickly die without the support of the community. The comfort and well-being that we experience depends on far-away friendly hands and minds, since trade is global, and the exchange of ideas is also global.

Finally, we should be conscious of our cooperative relationships with other species. We could not live without the bacteria that help us to digest our food. We could not live without the complex communities of organisms in the soil that convert dead plant matter into fertile topsoil. We could not live without plants at the base of the food chain, but plants require pollination, and pollination frequently requires insects. An intricate cooperative network of inter-species relationships is necessary for human life, and indeed necessary for all life. Competition plays a role in evolution, but the role of cooperation is greater.

13.8 Two sides of human nature

Looking at human nature, both from the standpoint of evolution and from that of everyday experience, we see the two faces of Janus; one face shines radiantly; the other is dark and menacing. Two souls occupy the human breast, one warm and friendly, the other murderous. Humans have developed a genius for cooperation, the basis for culture and civilization; but they are also capable of genocide; they were capable of massacres during

the Crusades, capable of genocidal wars against the Amerinds, capable of the Holocaust, of Hiroshima, of the killing-fields of Cambodia, of Rwanda, and of Darfur

As an example of the two sides of human nature, we can think of Scandinavia. The Vikings were once feared throughout Europe. The Book of Common Prayer in England contains the phrase “Protect us from the fury of the Northmen!”. Today the same people are so peaceful and law-abiding that they can be taken as an example for how we would like a future world to look. Human nature has the possibility for both kinds of behavior depending on the circumstances. This being so, there are strong reasons to enlist the help of education and religion to make the bright side of human nature win over the dark side. Today, the mass media are an important component of education, and thus the mass media have a great responsibility for encouraging the cooperative and constructive side of human nature rather than the dark and destructive side. In the next chapter we will explore the question of how the media can better fulfill this responsibility.

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Chapter 14

INTOLERABLE ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

14.1 Shocking statistics

Intolerable and unjust economic inequality is increasing rapidly, both within and between nations. Statistics show that half of the world's net wealth belongs to the top 1%. They own as much as the remaining 99% of the world's peoples, the other 7.4 billion of us. Here are some excerpts from a recent article entitled '*How Their Rotten System Works*': *Global Billionaire Wealth Surged to Record \$10.2 Trillion Amid Covid-19 Catastrophe* by Kenny Stancil, published on October 7, 2020 by Common Dreams:

“While Covid-19 has taken the lives of over one million people across the globe and exacerbated economic precarity for millions more, the combined wealth held by the world's 2,189 billionaires has skyrocketes - increasing by 27.5% between April and July 2020 and reaching a record high of \$10.2 trillion.

“The surge in billionaires' wealth in the midst of a calamitous pandemic is captured in *Riding the Storm: Market Turbulence Accelerates Diverging Fortunes*, a report (pdf) published by Swiss bank UBS and consultancy firm PwC on Wednesday.

“The report attributed the growing fortunes of billionaires - there are 31 more of them in 2020 than there were in 2017 - to ‘the year's V-shaped rebound in asset prices,’ which benefited the rich even as middle- and low-income households continue to experience material hardship.

“Authors noted that billionaires in some sectors, particularly technology and healthcare, fared better than mega-wealthy individuals in other fields, such as media, finance, natural resources, and construction...

“ ‘Extreme wealth concentration is an ugly phenomenon from a moral perspective,’ Luke Hilyard, executive director of the High Pay Centre, a thinktank

that focuses on excessive compensation, told *The Guardian*. ‘But it’s also economically and socially destructive.’

“ ‘Billionaire wealth equates to a fortune almost impossible to spend over multiple lifetimes of absolute luxury,” Hilyard added. “Anyone accumulating riches on this scale could easily afford to raise the pay of the employees who generate their wealth, or contribute a great deal more in taxes to support vital public services, while remaining very well rewarded for whatever successes they’ve achieved.’

“Billionaires are cognizant of the fact that their intensified accumulation of wealth at a time of immense suffering for so many around the world could make them the targets of public outrage.”

14.2 Benefits of equality

The Industrial Revolution opened up an enormous gap in military strength between the industrialized nations and the rest of the world. Taking advantage of their superior weaponry, Europe, the United States and Japan rapidly carved up the remainder of the world into colonies, which acted as sources of raw materials and food, and as markets for manufactured goods. Between 1800 and 1914, the percentage of the earth under the domination of colonial powers increased to 85 percent, if former colonies are included.

The English economist and Fabian, John Atkinson Hobson (1858-1940), offered a famous explanation of the colonial era in his book “Imperialism: A Study” (1902). According to Hobson, the basic problem that led to colonial expansion was an excessively unequal distribution of incomes in the industrialized countries. The result of this unequal distribution was that neither the rich nor the poor could buy back the total output of their society. The incomes of the poor were insufficient, and rich were too few in number. The rich had finite needs, and tended to reinvest their money. As Hobson pointed out, reinvestment in new factories only made the situation worse by increasing output.

Hobson had been sent as a reporter by the *Manchester Guardian* to cover the Second Boer War. His experiences had convinced him that colonial wars have an economic motive. Such wars are fought, he believed, to facilitate investment of the excess money of the rich in African or Asian plantations and mines, and to make possible the overseas sale of excess manufactured goods. Hobson believed imperialism to be immoral, since it entails suffering both among colonial peoples and among the poor of the industrial nations. The cure that he recommended was a more equal distribution of incomes in the manufacturing countries.

Interestingly, TED Talks (ideas worth spreading) was recently under fire from many progressive groups for censoring a short talk by the adventure capitalist, Nick Hanauer, entitled “Income Inequality”. In this talk, Hanauer said exactly the same thing as John Hobson, but he applies the ideas, not to colonialism, but to current unemployment in the United States. Hanauer said that the rich are unable to consume the products of society because they are too few in number. To make an economy work, demand must be increased, and for this to happen, the distribution of incomes must become much more equal than it



Figure 14.1: **World wealth levels in 2004.** Countries with per capita wealth greater than 100,000 USD are shown in red, while those with per capita wealth less than 5,000 USD are shown in blue.

is today in the United States.

TED has now posted Hanauer’s talk, and the interested reader can find another wonderful TED talk dealing with the same issues from the standpoint of health and social problems. In a splendid lecture entitled “How economic inequality harms societies”, Richard Wilkinson demonstrates that there is almost no correlation between gross national product and a number of indicators of the quality of life, such as physical health, mental health, drug abuse, education, imprisonment, obesity, social mobility, trust, violence, teenage pregnancies and child well-being. On the other hand he offers comprehensive statistical evidence that these indicators are strongly correlated with the degree of inequality within countries, the outcomes being uniformly much better in nations where income is more equally distributed.

Warren Buffet famously remarked, “There’s class warfare, all right. But it’s my class, the rich class, that’s making war, and we’re winning.” However, the evidence presented by Hobson, Hanauer and Wilkinson shows conclusively that no one wins in a society where inequality is too great, and everyone wins when incomes are more evenly distributed.



Figure 14.2: In many countries, children live by scavaging from garbage dumps.



Figure 14.3: Even in rich countries, many millions of people live in poverty,

14.3 Extreme inequality today

Here are some quotations from a report by the Global Inequality organization: ¹

Inequality has been on the rise across the globe for several decades. Some countries have reduced the numbers of people living in extreme poverty. But economic gaps have continued to grow as the very richest amass unprecedented levels of wealth. Among industrial nations, the United States is by far the most top-heavy, with much greater shares of national wealth and income going to the richest 1 percent than any other country.

The world's richest 1 percent, those with more than \$1 million, own 45 percent of the world's wealth. Adults with less than \$10,000 in wealth make up 64 percent of the world's population but hold less than 2 percent of global wealth. The world's wealthiest individuals, those owning over \$100,000 in assets, total less than 10 percent of the global population but own 84 percent of global wealth. Credit Suisse defines "wealth" as the value of a household's financial assets plus real assets (principally housing), minus their debts.

"Ultra high net worth individuals" - the wealth management industry's term for people worth more than \$30 million - hold an astoundingly disproportionate share of global wealth. These wealth owners hold 11.3 percent of total global wealth, yet represent only a tiny fraction (0.003%) of the world population.

The world's 10 richest billionaires, according to Forbes, own \$745 billion in combined wealth, a sum greater than the total goods and services most nations produce on an annual basis. The globe is home to 2,208 billionaires, according to the 2018 Forbes ranking.

Those with extreme wealth have often accumulated their fortunes on the backs of people around the world who work for poor wages and under dangerous conditions. According to Oxfam, the wealth divide between the global billionaires and the bottom half of humanity is steadily growing. Between 2009 and 2017, the number of billionaires it took to equal the wealth of the world's poorest 50 percent fell from 380 to 42...

The United States has more wealth than any other nation. But America's top-heavy distribution of wealth leaves typical American adults with far less wealth than their counterparts in other industrial nations.

14.4 Oligarchy replaces democracy in many countries

The jaws of power

"Every government degenerates when trusted to the rulers of the people alone. The people themselves, therefore, are its only safe depositories." Thomas Jeffer-

¹<https://inequality.org/facts/global-inequality/>

son, (1743-1826)

“The jaws of power are always open to devour, and her arm is always stretched out, if possible, to destroy the freedom of thinking, speaking, and writing.”
John Adams, (1735-1826)

According to the Nuremberg Principles, the citizens of a country have a responsibility for the crimes that their governments commit. But to prevent these crimes, the people need to have some knowledge of what is going on. Indeed, democracy cannot function at all without this knowledge.

What are we to think when governments make every effort to keep their actions secret from their own citizens? We can only conclude that although they may call themselves democracies, such governments are in fact oligarchies or dictatorships.

At the end of World War I, it was realized that secret treaties had been responsible for its outbreak, and an effort was made to ensure that diplomacy would be more open in the future. Needless to say, these efforts did not succeed, and diplomacy has remained a realm of secrecy.

Many governments have agencies for performing undercover operations (usually very dirty ones). We can think, for example of the KGB, the CIA, M5, or Mossad. How can countries that have such agencies claim to be democracies, when the voters have no knowledge of or influence over the acts that are committed by the secret agencies of their governments?

Nuclear weapons were developed in secret. It is doubtful whether the people of the United States would have approved of the development of such antihuman weapons, or their use against an already-defeated Japan, if they had known that these things were going to happen. The true motive for the nuclear bombings was also kept secret. In the words of General Groves, speaking confidentially to colleagues at Los Alamos, the real motive was “to control the Soviet Union”.

The true circumstances surrounding the start of the Vietnam war would never have been known if Daniel Ellsberg had not leaked the Pentagon Papers. Ellsberg thought that once the American public realized that their country’s entry into the war was based on a lie, the war would end. It did not end immediately, but undoubtedly Ellsberg’s action contributed to the end of the war.

We do not know what will happen to Julian Assange. If his captors send him to the US, and if he is executed there for the crime of publishing leaked documents (a crime that he shares with the New York Times), he will not be the first martyr to the truth. The ageing Galileo was threatened with torture and forced to recant his heresy - that the earth moves around the sun. Galileo spent the remainder of his days in house arrest. Giordano Bruno was less lucky. He was burned at the stake for maintaining that the universe is larger than it was then believed to be. If Julian Assange becomes a martyr to the truth like Galileo or Bruno, his name will be honored by generations in the future, and the shame of his captors will be remembered too.

The deep state

Can a government, many of whose operations are secret, be a democracy? Obviously this is impossible. The recent attempts of the United States to arrest whistleblower Edward Snowden call attention to the glaring contradiction between secrecy and democracy.

In a democracy, the power of judging and controlling governmental policy is supposed to be in the hands of the people. It is completely clear that if the people do not know what their government is doing, then they cannot judge or control governmental policy, and democracy has been abolished. There has always been a glaring contradiction between democracy and secret branches of the government, such as the CIA, which conducts its assassinations and its dirty wars in South America without any public knowledge or control.

The gross, wholesale electronic spying on citizens revealed by Snowden seems to be specifically aimed at eliminating democracy. It is aimed at instilling universal fear and conformity, fear of blackmail and fear of being out of step, so that the public will not dare to oppose whatever the government does, no matter how criminal or unconstitutional.

Henry Kissinger famously remarked: “The illegal we do at once. The unconstitutional takes a little longer”. Well, Henry, that may have been true in your time, but today the unconstitutional does not take long at all.

The Magna Carta is trashed. No one dares to speak up. Habeas Corpus is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The United Nations Charter is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The Fourth Amendment to the US Constitution is trashed. No one dares to speak up. The President claims the right to kill both US and foreign citizens, at his own whim. No one dares to speak up.

But perhaps this is unjust. Perhaps some people would dare to protest, except that they cannot get their protests published in the mainstream media. We must remember that the media are owned by the same corporate oligarchs who own the government.

George Orwell, you should be living today! We need your voice today! After Snowden’s revelations, the sale of Orwell’s “1984” soared. It is now on the bestseller list. Sadly, Orwell’s dystopian prophesy has proved to be accurate in every detail.

What is the excuse for the massive spying reported by Snowden, spying not only on US citizens but also on the citizens of other countries throughout the world? “We want to protect you from terrorism.”, the government answers. But terrorism is not a real threat, it is an invented one. It was invented by the military-industrial complex because, at the end of the Cold War, this enormous money-making conglomerate lacked enemies.

Globally, the number of people killed by terrorism is vanishingly small compared to the number of children who die from starvation every year. It is even vanishingly small compared with the number of people who are killed in automobile accidents. It is certainly small compared with the number of people killed in wars aimed at gaining western hegemony over oil-rich regions of the world.

But in Shelley’s words, “We are many; they are few!” The people who want democracy greatly outnumber those who profit from maintaining a government based on secrecy and fear. Let us “rise like lions after slumbers, in unvanquishable numbers”. Let us abolish

governmental secrecy and reclaim our democracy.

14.5 Media in the service of powerholders

Throughout history, art was commissioned by rulers to communicate, and exaggerate, their power, glory, absolute rightness etc, to the populace. The pyramids gave visual support to the power of the Pharaoh; portraits of rulers are a traditional form of propaganda supporting monarchies; and palaces were built as symbols of power.

Modern powerholders are also aware of the importance of propaganda. Thus the media are a battleground where reformers struggle for attention, but are defeated with great regularity by the wealth and power of the establishment. This is a tragedy because today there is an urgent need to make public opinion aware of the serious problems facing civilization, and the steps that are needed to solve these problems. The mass media could potentially be a great force for public education, but often their role is not only unhelpful - it is negative.

It is certainly possible to find a few television programs and newspaper articles that present the facts about climate change in a realistic way. For example *The Guardian* gives outstanding climate change coverage. However, the mass media could do very much more. One has to conclude that the media are neglecting their great responsibilities at a time of acute crisis for human civilization and the biosphere. The same can be said of our educational systems at both both the primary and advanced levels. We urgently need much more public education about the severe dangers that we face today.

14.6 Television as a part of our educational system

In the mid-1950's, television became cheap enough so that ordinary people in the industrialized countries could afford to own sets. During the infancy of television, its power was underestimated. The great power of television is due to the fact that it grips two senses simultaneously, both vision and hearing. The viewer becomes an almost-hypnotized captive of the broadcast.

In the 1950's, this enormous power, which can be used both for good and for ill, was not yet fully apparent. Thus insufficient attention was given to the role of television in education, in setting norms, and in establishing values. Television was not seen as an integral part of the total educational system. It is interesting to compare the educational systems of traditional cultures with those of modern industrial societies.

In traditional societies, multigenerational families often live together in the same dwelling. In general, there is a great deal of contact between grandparents and grandchildren, with much transmission of values and norms between generations. Old people are regarded with great respect, since they are considered to be repositories of wisdom, knowledge, and culture.

By contrast, modern societies usually favor nuclear families, consisting of only parents

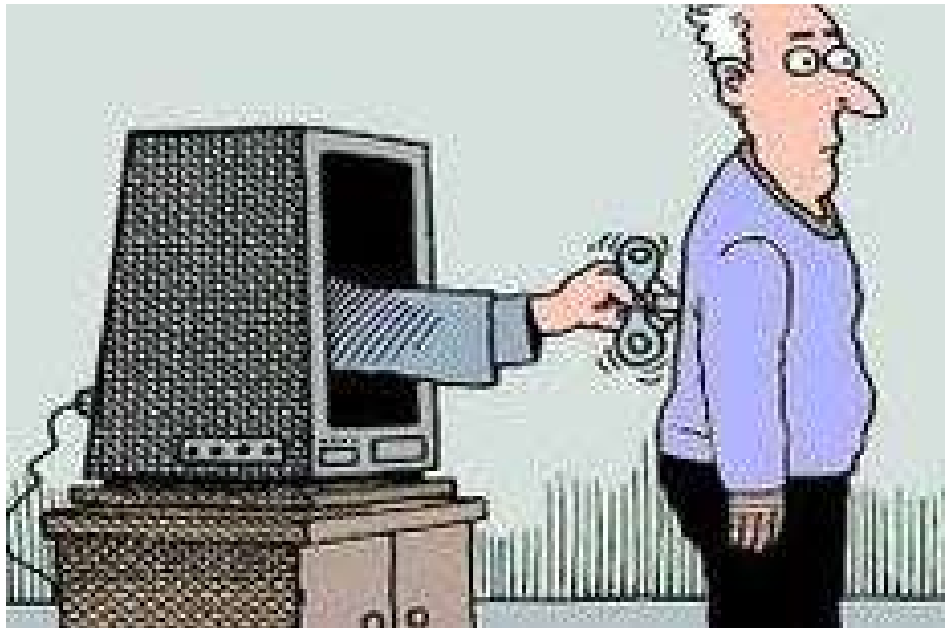


Figure 14.4: **The role of the media.**



Figure 14.5: **Liberty?**

and children. Old people are marginalized. They live by themselves in communities or homes especially for the old. Their cultural education knowledge and norms are not valued because they are “out of date”. In fact, during the life of a young person in one of the rapidly-changing industrial societies of the modern world, there is often a period when they rebel against the authority of their parents and are acutely embarrassed by their parents, who are “so old-fashioned that they don’t understand anything”.

Although the intergenerational transmission of values, norms, and culture is much less important in industrial societies than it is in traditional ones, modern young people of the West and North are by no means at a loss over where to find their values, fashions and role models. With every breath, they inhale the values and norms of the mass media. Totally surrounded by a world of television and film images, they accept this world as their own.

14.7 Neglect of climate change in the mass media

The predicament of humanity today has been called “a race between education and catastrophe”: How do the media fulfil this life-or-death responsibility? Do they give us insight? No, they give us pop music. Do they give us an understanding of the sweep of evolution and history? No, they give us sport. Do they give us an understanding of the ecological catastrophes that threaten our planet because of unrestricted growth of population and industries? No, they give us sit-coms and soap operas. Do they give us unbiased news? No, they give us news that has been edited to conform with the interests of powerful lobbys. Do they present us with the urgent need to leave fossil fuels in the ground? No, they do not, because this would offend the powerholders. Do they tell of the danger of passing tipping points after which human efforts to prevent catastrophic climate change will be useless? No, they give us programs about gardening and making food.

A consumer who subscribes to the “package” of broadcasts sold by a cable company can often search through all 95 channels without finding a single program that offers insight into the various problems that are facing the world today. What the viewer finds instead is a mixture of pro-establishment propaganda and entertainment. Meanwhile the neglected global problems are becoming progressively more severe.

In general, the mass media behave as though their role is to prevent the peoples of the world from joining hands and working to change the world and to save it from thermonuclear war, environmental catastrophes and threatened global famine. The television viewer sits slumped in a chair, passive, isolated, disempowered and stupefied. The future of the world hangs in the balance, the fate of children and grandchildren hangs in the balance, but the television viewer feels no impulse to work actively to change the world or to save it. The Roman emperors gave their people bread and circuses to numb them into political inactivity. The modern mass media seem to be playing a similar role.



Figure 14.6: Network administrators have noticed that programs about climate change often have low viewer ratings. Since they see delivering high viewer ratings to their advertisers as their primary duty, these executives seldom allow programs dealing with the danger of catastrophic climate change. The duty to save the earth from environmental catastrophe is neglected for the sake of money. As Al Gore said, “Instead of having a well-informed electorate, we have a well-amused audience”.

14.8 Climate change denial in mass media

The Wikipedia article on climate change denial describes it with the following words: “Although scientific opinion on climate change is that human activity is extremely likely to be the primary driver of climate change, the politics of global warming have been affected by climate change denial, hindering efforts to prevent climate change and adapt to the warming climate. Those promoting denial commonly use rhetorical tactics to give the appearance of a scientific controversy where there is none.”

It is not surprising that the fossil fuel industry supports, on a vast scale, politicians and mass media that deny the reality of climate change. The amounts of money at stake are vast. If catastrophic climate change is to be avoided, coal, oil and natural gas “assets” worth trillions of dollars must be left in the ground. Giant fossil fuel corporations are desperately attempting to turn these “assets” into cash.



Preventing an ecological apocalypse

Here are some excerpts from an article entitled “**Only Rebellion will prevent an ecological apocalypse**” by George Monbiot, which was published on April 15 2019 in The Guardian²:

No one is coming to save us. Mass civil disobedience is essential to force a political response.

Had we put as much effort into preventing environmental catastrophe as we’ve spent on making excuses for inaction, we would have solved it by now. Everywhere I look, I see people engaged in furious attempts to fend off the moral challenge it presents...

As the environmental crisis accelerates, and as protest movements like Youth-Strike4Climate and Extinction Rebellion make it harder not to see what we face, people discover more inventive means of shutting their eyes and shedding responsibility. Underlying these excuses is a deep-rooted belief that if we really are in trouble, someone somewhere will come to our rescue: “they” won’t let it happen. But there is no they, just us.

The political class, as anyone who has followed its progress over the past three years can surely now see, is chaotic, unwilling and, in isolation, strategically incapable of addressing even short-term crises, let alone a vast existential predicament. Yet a widespread and wilful naivety prevails: the belief that voting is the only political action required to change a system. Unless it is accompanied by the concentrated power of protest - articulating precise de-

²<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/apr/15/rebellion-prevent-ecological-apocalypse-civil-disobedience>

mands and creating space in which new political factions can grow - voting, while essential, remains a blunt and feeble instrument.

The media, with a few exceptions, is actively hostile. Even when broadcasters cover these issues, they carefully avoid any mention of power, talking about environmental collapse as if it is driven by mysterious, passive forces, and proposing microscopic fixes for vast structural problems. The BBC's Blue Planet Live series exemplified this tendency.

Those who govern the nation and shape public discourse cannot be trusted with the preservation of life on Earth. There is no benign authority preserving us from harm. No one is coming to save us. None of us can justifiably avoid the call to come together to save ourselves...

Predatory delay

Here are some excerpts from a May 3 2019 article by Bill Henderson entitled “Neoliberalism, Solution Aversion, Implicatory Denial and Predatory Delay”³:

Looking back at the history, that it's not really a failure of human beings and human nature that's the problem here. It's a hijacking of our political and economic system by the fossil fuel industry and a small number of like-minded people. It was our bad luck that this idea that markets solve all problems and that government should be left to wither away crested just at the moment when it could do the most damage.

Despite the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions globally if we are to lower the risks of catastrophic climate change, wealthy industrialized nations persist with a widespread public silence on the issue and fail to address climate change. This is despite there being ever more conclusive evidence of its severity. Why is there an undercurrent of inaction, despite the challenge of climate change being ever more daunting? One element is denial.

George Marshall discovered that there has not been a single proposal, debate or even position paper on limiting fossil fuel production put forward during international climate negotiations. From the very outset fossil fuel production lay outside the frame of the discussions and, as with other forms of socially constructed silence, the social norms among the negotiators and policy specialists kept it that way.

Global climate leadership is being redefined. There is a growing recognition that you cannot be a climate leader if you continue to enable new fossil fuel production, which is inconsistent with climate limits. If no major producers step up to stop the expansion of extraction and begin phasing out existing fields and mines, the Paris goals will become increasingly difficult to achieve.

³<https://countercurrents.org/2019/05/03/neoliberalism-solution-aversion-implicatory-denial-and-predatory-delay-bill-henderson/>

Wealthy fossil fuel producers have a responsibility to lead, and this must include planning for a just and equitable managed decline of existing production.

The (emissions reduction) curve we've been forced onto bends so steeply, that the pace of victory is part of victory itself. Winning slowly is basically the same thing as losing outright. We cannot afford to pursue past strategies, aimed at limited gains towards distant goals. In the face of both triumphant denialism and predatory delay, trying to achieve climate action by doing the same things, the same old ways, means defeat. It guarantees defeat.

A fast, emergency-scale transition to a post-fossil fuel world is absolutely necessary to address climate change. But this is excluded from consideration by policymakers because it is considered to be too disruptive. The orthodoxy is that there is time for an orderly economic transition within the current short-termist political paradigm. Discussion of what would be safe - less warming than we presently experience - is non-existent. And so we have a policy failure of epic proportions. Policymakers, in their magical thinking, imagine a mitigation path of gradual change, to be constructed over many decades in a growing, prosperous world...

14.9 Showing unsustainable lifestyles in mass media

Television and other mass media contribute indirectly to climate change denial by showing unsustainable lifestyles. Television dramas show the ubiquitous use of gasoline-powered automobiles and highways crowded with them. just as though there did not exist an urgent need to transform our transportation systems. Motor racing is shown. A program called "Top Gear" tells viewers about the desirability of various automobiles. In general, cyclists are not shown. In television dramas, the protagonists fly to various parts of the world for their holidays. The need for small local self-sustaining communities is not shown.

Advertisements in the mass media urge us to consume more, to fly, to purchase large houses, and to buy gasoline-driven automobiles, just as though such behavior ought to be the norm. Such norms are leading us towards environmental disaster.

14.10 Alternative media

Luckily, the mass media do not have a complete monopoly on public information. With a little effort, citizens who are concerned about the future can find alternative media. These include a large number of independent on-line news services that are supported by subscriber donations rather than by corporate sponsors. *YouTube* videos also represent an extremely important source of public information.



14.11 Outstanding voices calling for climate action

The Guardian

There are exceptions to the general rule that the mass media downplay or completely ignore the climate emergency. The Guardian is a newspaper with absolutely outstanding coverage of all issues related to climate change. No praise can be strong enough for the courageous environmental editorial policy of this famous old British newspaper.

Al Gore

Albert Arnold Gore Jr. served as the 45th Vice President of the United States from January 1985 to January 1993. He then ran for the office of President, but was defeated by George W. Bush in a controversial election whose outcome was finally decided by the US Supreme Court⁴.

Al Gore is the founder and current Chairman of the Alliance for Climate Protection. He was one of the first important political figures to call attention to the problem of steadily increasing CO₂ levels in the atmosphere and the threat of catastrophic climate change. He produced the highly influential documentary film *An Inconvenient Truth*⁵. Because of his important efforts to save the global environment, Al Gore shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

⁴Many people believe that Al Gore won the election.

⁵<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-SV13UQXdk>

Al Gore's TED talk: The Case for Optimism on Climate Change

In 2016, Al Gore gave an important talk to a TED audience⁶. in which he pointed out the an economic tipping point has just been passed. Solar energy and wind energy are now cheaper than energy form fossil fuels. This means that economic forces alone can drive a rapid transition to 100% renewable energy. Investors will realize that renewables represent an unparalleled investment opportunity.

Sir David Attenborough

In a 2011 interview in The Guardian, Sir David Attenborough was asked: "What will it take to wake people up about climate change?". He replied "Disaster. It's a terrible thing to say, isn't it? And even disaster doesn't always do it. I mean, goodness me, there have been disasters in North America, with hurricanes, and one thing and another, and floods; and still a lot of people would deny it, and say it's nothing to do with climate change. Well it visibly has to do with climate change!"

Sir David Attenborough's almost unbelievably enormous and impressive opus of television programs about the natural world have helped to raise public awareness of the importance of the natural environment. He also has made a number of television programs specifically related to questions such as saving threatened species, the dangers of exploding global human populations, and the destruction of forests for the sake of palm oil plantations.

Let us return to The Guardian's 2011 interview with Sir David. Had it been made in the autumn of 2017, the interview would certainly have included a discussion of recent hurricanes of unprecedented power and destructiveness, such as Harvey, Irma and Maria, as well as 2017's wildfires and Asian floods. It is possible that such events, which will certainly become more frequent and severe during the next few years, will provide the political will needed to silence climate change denial, to stop fossil fuel extraction, and to promote governmental policies favoring renewable energy.

Although the mass media almost have entirely neglected the link between climate change and recent disastrous hurricanes, floods droughts and wildfires, many individuals and organizations emphasized the cause and effect relationship. For example, UK airline billionaire Sir Richard Branson, whose Caribbean summer residence was destroyed by Hurricane Irma said:

"Look, you can never be 100 percent sure about links, But scientists have said the storms are going to get more and more and more intense and more and more often. We've had four storms within a month, all far greater than that have ever, ever, ever happened in history, Sadly, I think this is the start of things to come. Climate change is real. Ninety-nine percent of scientists know it's real. The whole world knows it's real except for maybe one person in the White House."

May Boeve, executive director of the NGO 350.org, said "With a few exceptions, the major TV networks completely failed to cover the scientifically proven ways that climate change is intensifying extreme weather events like hurricanes Harvey and Irma. That's not

⁶<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-SV13UQXdk>

just disappointing, it's dangerous. We won't be able to turn this crisis around if our media is asleep at the wheel."

Commenting on the destruction of Puerto Rico by Hurricane Maria, historian Juan Cole wrote: "When you vote for denialist politicians, you are selecting people who make policy. The policy they make will be clueless and will actively endanger the public. Climate change is real. We are causing it by our emissions. If you don't believe that, you are not a responsible steward of our infrastructure and of our lives."

When interviewed by Amy Goodman of *Democracy Now*, musician Stevie Wonder said: "... we should begin to love and value our planet, and anyone who believes that there is no such thing as global warming must be blind or unintelligent."

Another well-known musician, Beyoncé, added: "The effects of climate change are playing out around the world every day. Just this past week, we've seen devastation from the monsoon in India...and multiple catastrophic hurricanes. Irma alone has left a trail of death and destruction from the Caribbean to Florida to Southern United States. We have to be prepared for what comes next..."

In her September 2017 publication *Season of Smoke*⁷, prizewinning author Naomi Klein wrote:

"We hear about the record-setting amounts of water that Hurricane Harvey dumped on Houston and other Gulf cities and towns, mixing with petrochemicals to pollute and poison on an unfathomable scale. We hear too about the epic floods that have displaced hundreds of thousands of people from Bangladesh to Nigeria (though we don't hear enough). And we are witnessing, yet again, the fearsome force of water and wind as Hurricane Irma, one of the most powerful storms ever recorded, leaves devastation behind in the Caribbean, with Florida now in its sights.

"Yet for large parts of North America, Europe, and Africa, this summer has not been about water at all. In fact it has been about its absence; it's been about land so dry and heat so oppressive that forested mountains exploded into smoke like volcanoes. It's been about fires fierce enough to jump the Columbia River; fast enough to light up the outskirts of Los Angeles like an invading army; and pervasive enough to threaten natural treasures, like the tallest and most ancient sequoia trees and Glacier National Park.

"For millions of people from California to Greenland, Oregon to Portugal, British Columbia to Montana, Siberia to South Africa, the summer of 2017 has been the summer of fire. And more than anything else, it's been the summer of ubiquitous, inescapable smoke.

"For years, climate scientists have warned us that a warming world is an extreme world, in which humanity is buffeted by both brutalizing excesses and stifling absences of the core elements that have kept fragile life in equilibrium for millennia. At the end of the summer of 2017, with major cities submerged in water and others licked by flames, we are currently living through Exhibit A of this extreme world, one in which natural extremes come head-to-head with social, racial, and economic ones."

It seems likely that the climate-linked disasters of 2019 and 2020 will be even more severe

⁷<https://theintercept.com/2017/09/09/in-a-summer-of-wildfires-and-hurricanes-my-son-asks-why-is-everything-going-wrong/>



Figure 14.7: Sir David Attenborough: “Disaster. It’s a terrible thing to say, isn’t it?”

than those that we have witnessed during 2017 and 2018. But will such disasters be enough to wake us up?

The BBC has recently announced that Sir David Attenborough is currently producing a new series, *Blue Planet II*, which will focus on environmental issues.⁸

“My hope is that the world is coming to its senses ... I’m so old I remember a time when ... we didn’t talk about climate change, we talked about animals and species extermination,” Sir David told Greenpeace in an interview, “For the first time I’m beginning to think there is actually a groundswell, there is a change in the public view. I feel many more people are concerned and more aware of what the problems are. Young people - people who’ve got 50 years of their life ahead of them - they are thinking they ought to be doing something about this. That’s a huge change.”

Climate Change, The Facts

Now Sir David Attenborough has completed a new one-hour BBC program on the danger of catastrophic climate change. Here are some excerpts from an April 18 2019 review of the program by Rebecca Nicholson in *The Guardian*:

The Facts is a rousing call to arms. It is an alarm clock set at a horrifying volume. The first 40 minutes are given over to what Attenborough calls, without hyperbole, “our greatest threat in thousands of years”. Expert after expert explains the consequences of rising CO₂ levels, on the ice caps, on coastal regions, on weather and wildlife and society itself. The most powerful

⁸<http://www.bbcearth.com/blueplanet2/>



Figure 14.8: Speaking at the opening ceremony of COP24, the universally loved and respected naturalist Sir David Attenborough said: “If we don’t take action, the collapse of our civilizations and the extinction of much of the natural world is on the horizon.”

moments are in footage shot not by expert crews who have spent years on location, but on shaky cameras, capturing the very moment at which the reality of our warming planet struck the person holding the phone. In Cairns, Australia, flying foxes are unable to survive the extreme temperatures; rescuers survey the terrible massacre, and we learn that while 350 were saved, 11,000 died. A man and his son talk through their escape from raging wildfires, over the film they took while attempting to drive through a cavern of blazing red trees. These are horror movies playing out in miniature. It is difficult to watch even five minutes of this and remain somehow neutral, or unconvinced.

Yet as I kept on, scribbling down an increasingly grim list of statistics, most of which I knew, vaguely, though compiled like this they finally sound as dreadful as they truly are - 20 of the warmest years on record happened in the last 22 years; Greenland’s ice sheet is melting five times faster than it was 25 years ago - I started to wonder about responsibility, and if and where it would be placed. This would be a toothless film, in the end, if it were hamstrung by political neutrality, and if its inevitable “it’s not too late” message rested solely on individuals and what relatively little tweaks we might make as consumers. What about corporations? What about governments?

Then, at that exact moment, having played the despair through to its crescendo, the experts served up unvarnished honesty. They lined up to lay out the facts,

plain and simple. Fossil fuel companies are the most profitable businesses man has ever known, and they engage in PR offensives, using the same consultants as tobacco companies, and the resulting uncertainty and denial, designed to safeguard profits, has narrowed our window for action. It is unforgivable. I find it hard to believe that anyone, regardless of political affiliation, can watch footage of Trump calling climate change “a hoax ... a money-making industry” and not be left winded by such staggering ignorance or astonishing deceit, though it is, more likely, more bleakly, a catastrophic combination of the two. At least Nigel Lawson only appears here in archive footage, and his argument sounds limp, to put it kindly.

Climate Change: The Facts should not have to change minds, but perhaps it will change them anyway, or at least make this seem as pressing as it needs to be. With the Extinction Rebellion protests across London this week, disrupting day-to-day business, and this, on primetime BBC One, maybe the message will filter through. At the very least, it should incite indignation that more was not done, sooner, and then urgency and a decision to both change and push for change at a much higher level. Because there is, for a brief moment, just possibly, still time.

Greta Thunberg meets Pope Francis

On 19 April 2019, Greta Thunberg met briefly with Pope Francis at the end of his general audience. “Continue, continue!” the Pope told her, “Go on, go ahead!” Greta answered Pope Francis with the words: “Thank you for standing up for the climate, for speaking the truth. It means a lot.” Greta’s father, Svante Thunberg, expressed his gratitude to the pope: “Thank you so much for what you are doing. It means everything. Everything.”

The Pope has made fighting climate change and caring for God’s creation a pillar of his papacy. He wrote an entire encyclical about it, blaming a thirst for money for turning the Earth into a wasteland and demanding immediate action to curb global warming.

While in Rome, Greta Thunberg will also address the Italian Parliament and participate in a school strike for action to avoid catastrophic climate change.

In June, 2015, His Holiness Pope Francis I addressed the climate crisis in an encyclical entitled “*Laudato Si’*”⁹. Here are a few excerpts from this enormously important encyclical, which is addressed not only to the world’s 1.2 billion Catholics, but also to concerned people of all faiths. After reviewing the contributions of his predecessors, Pope Francis makes the following points:

23. The climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all. At the global level, it is a complex system linked to many of the essential conditions for human life. A very solid scientific consensus indicates that we are presently witnessing a disturbing warming of the climatic system. In recent decades

⁹<https://unfccc.int/news/pope-francis-releases-encyclical-on-climate-and-environment>

this warming has been accompanied by a constant rise in the sea level and, it would appear, by an increase of extreme weather events, even if a scientifically determinable cause cannot be assigned to each particular phenomenon. Humanity is called to recognize the need for changes of lifestyle, production and consumption, in order to combat this warming or at least the human causes which produce or aggravate it. It is true that there are other factors (such as volcanic activity, variations in the earth's orbit and axis, the solar cycle), yet a number of scientific studies indicate that most global warming in recent decades is due to the great concentration of greenhouse gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides and others) released mainly as a result of human activity. As these gases build up in the atmosphere, they hamper the escape of heat produced by sunlight at the earth's surface. The problem is aggravated by a model of development based on the intensive use of fossil fuels, which is at the heart of the worldwide energy system. Another determining factor has been an increase in changed uses of the soil, principally deforestation for agricultural purposes.

24. Warming has effects on the carbon cycle. It creates a vicious circle which aggravates the situation even more, affecting the availability of essential resources like drinking water, energy and agricultural production in warmer regions, and leading to the extinction of part of the planet's biodiversity. The melting in the polar ice caps and in high altitude plains can lead to the dangerous release of methane gas, while the decomposition of frozen organic material can further increase the emission of carbon dioxide. Things are made worse by the loss of tropical forests which would otherwise help to mitigate climate change. Carbon dioxide pollution increases the acidification of the oceans and compromises the marine food chain. If present trends continue, this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and an unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us. A rise in the sea level, for example, can create extremely serious situations, if we consider that a quarter of the world's population lives on the coast or nearby, and that the majority of our megacities are situated in coastal areas.

25. Climate change is a global problem with grave implications: environmental, social, economic, political and for the distribution of goods. It represents one of the principal challenges facing humanity in our day. Its worst impact will probably be felt by developing countries in coming decades. Many of the poor live in areas particularly affected by phenomena related to warming, and their means of subsistence are largely dependent on natural reserves and ecosystemic services such as agriculture, fishing and forestry. They have no other financial activities or resources which can enable them to adapt to climate change or to face natural disasters, and their access to social services and protection is very limited. For example, changes in climate, to which animals and plants cannot



Figure 14.9: Greta Thunberg had the privilege of meeting Pope Francis. Both are outstanding voices for climate action.

adapt, lead them to migrate; this in turn affects the livelihood of the poor, who are then forced to leave their homes, with great uncertainty for their future and that of their children. There has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation. They are not recognized by international conventions as refugees; they bear the loss of the lives they have left behind, without enjoying any legal protection whatsoever. Sadly, there is widespread indifference to such suffering, which is even now taking place throughout our world. Our lack of response to these tragedies involving our brothers and sisters points to the loss of that sense of responsibility for our fellow men and women upon which all civil society is founded.

At a London event arranged by The Guardian, Greta Thunberg was asked whether she believed that a general strike could alert politicians to the urgency of the climate emergency. She replied “yes”. Here are some of her other comments:

This is not just young people being sick of politicians. It’s an existential



Figure 14.10: Of the fossil fuels, all are bad, but coal is the worst.



Figure 14.11: Speaking to a crowd of many thousands at Marble Arch, London, on April 21, 2019, Greta Thunberg said: “For way too long the politicians and the people in power have gotten away with not doing anything ... But we will make sure that they will not get away with it any longer, We will never stop fighting, we will never stop fighting for this planet, for ourselves, our futures and for the futures of our children and grandchildren.”

crisis. It is something that will affect the future of our civilization. It's not just a movement. It's a crisis and we must take action accordingly.

At a later meeting with members of the U.K. Parliament, Greta Thunberg said:

The U.K.'s active current support of new exploitation of fossil fuels, like for example the U.K. shale gas fracking industry, the expansion of its North Sea oil and gas fields, the expansion of airports, as well as the planning permission for a brand new coalmine, is beyond absurd.

This ongoing irresponsible behavior will no doubt be remembered in history as one of the greatest failures of humankind. .

Leonardo DiCaprio

Leonardo DiCaprio has won many awards for his work as an actor, writer and producer in both television and films. These include 50 awards from 167 nominations. DiCaprio has been nominated for six Academy Awards, four British Academy Film Awards and nine Screen Actors Guild Awards, winning one award each from them and three Golden Globe Awards from eleven nominations.

In accepting his Best Actor award at the 2016 Oscars ceremony, DiCaprio said: "Climate change is real, it is happening right now. It is the most urgent threat facing our entire species, and we need to work collectively together and stop procrastinating. We need to support leaders around the world who do not speak for the big polluters, but who speak for all of humanity, for the indigenous people of the world, for the billions and billions of underprivileged people out there who would be most affected by this. For our children's children, and for those people out there whose voices have been drowned out by the politics of greed."

Leonardo DiCaprio has used his great success as an actor in the service of environmental causes. In 1997, following the box office success of *Titanic*, he set up the Leonardo DiCaprio Foundation, which is devoted to environmental causes. He chaired the national Earth Day celebrations in 2000 during which he interviewed US President Bill Clinton, with whom he discussed the actions needed to avoid catastrophic climate change. In 2007 he had a major role in *The 11th Hour*, a documentary about people's relationship to nature and global warming. He also co-produced and co-wrote the film.

DiCaprio's most influential film on climate change is *Before the Flood*¹⁰. This film, released in 2016, is a 1 hour and 36 minute documentary in which Leonardo DiCaprio travels to many countries to let viewers observe the already visible effects of global warming. He also talks with many of the world's leaders, including Pope Francis I, US Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama, and UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

¹⁰<http://www.get.filmovie.us/play.php?movie=tt5929776t>



Figure 14.12: Leonardo DiCaprio at a press conference in 2000 (Wikipedia).



Figure 14.13: Thom Hartmann speaks to the 2010 Chicago Green Festival (Wikipedia).

Thom Hartmann

Thom Hartmann was born in 1951 in Lansing Michigan. He worked as a disk jockey during his teens, and, after a highly successful business career, he sold his businesses and devoted his energies to writing, humanitarian projects and public education. His influential book, *Last Hours of Ancient Sunlight* was published by Three Rivers Press in 1997 and republished in a revised edition in 2004. In 2013, Hartmann published another extremely important book on the same theme: *The Last Hours of Humanity: Warming the World To Extinction*¹¹.

Hartmann has hosted a nationally syndicated radio show, The Thom Hartmann Program, since 2003 and a nightly television show, The Big Picture, since 2008.

Concerning Hartmann's radio show, Wikipedia states that "As of March 2016, the show was carried on 80 terrestrial radio stations in 37 states as well as on Sirius and XM satellite radio. A community radio station in Africa, Radio Builsa in Ghana, also broadcasts the show. Various local cable TV networks simulcast the program. In addition to Westwood One, the show is now also offered via Pacifica Audiopoint to non-profit stations in a non-profit compliant format and is simulcast on Dish Network channel 9415 and DirecTV channel 348 via Free Speech TV. The program is carried on Radio Sputnik in London, England."

"Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-VT) appears every Friday during the first hour of the show titled 'Brunch with Bernie'. Ellen Ratner of the Talk Radio News Service provides Washington commentary daily. Victoria Jones who is the White House correspondent for Talk Radio

¹¹<https://www.amazon.com/Last-Hours-Humanity-Warming-Extinction/dp/1629213640>

News Service appears occasionally as does Dr. Ravi Batra an economics professor at SMU.”

Together with Leonardo DiCaprio, Thom Hartman recently produced and narrated an extremely important short film entitled *Last Hours*¹². This film, draws a parallel between the Permian-Triassic mass extinction, and the danger of a human-induced 6th mass extinction. Various experts who appear in the film confirm that our release of CO₂ into the atmosphere is similar to the greenhouse gasses produced by volcanic eruptions prior to the Permian event. The methane hydrate feedback loop is also discussed. The film should be seen by everyone concerned with the future of human civilization and the biosphere. Concerned citizens should also urgently see Hartman and DiCaprio’s short films *Carbon*, *Green World Rising* and *Reforestation*, also available on YouTube .

James Hansen

James Hansen was born in 1941 in Denison, Iowa. He was educated in physics, mathematics and astronomy at the University of Iowa in the space sciences program initiated James Van Allen. He graduated with great distinction. The studies of the atmosphere and temperature of Venus which Hansen made under Van Allen’s supervision lead him to become extremely concerned about similar effects in the earth’s atmosphere.

From 1962 to 1966, James Hansen participated in the National Aeronautical and Space Administration graduate traineeship and, at the same time, between 1965 and 1966, he was a visiting student at the Institute of Astrophysics at the University of Kyoto and in the Department of Astronomy at the University of Tokyo. Hansen then began work at the Goddard Institute for Space Studies in 1967. He began to work for the Goddard Institute for Space Studies in 1967. Between 1981 and 2013, he was head of the Goddard Institute of Space Studies in New York, and since 2014, he has been the director of the Program on Climate Science, Awareness and Solutions at Columbia University’s Earth Institute.

Hansen continued his work with radiative transfer models, attempting to understand the Venusian atmosphere. Later he applied and refined these models to understand the Earth’s atmosphere, in particular, the effects that aerosols and trace gases have on Earth’s climate. Hansen’s development and use of global climate models has contributed to the further understanding of the Earth’s climate. In 2009 his first book, *Storms of My Grandchildren*, was published.

James Hansen has refined climate change models, focusing on the balance between aerosols and greenhouse gases. He believes that there is a danger that climate change will become much more rapid if the balance shifts towards the greenhouse gases.

Hansen’s Congressional testimony leads to broad public awareness of the dangers

In 1988, Prof. Hansen was asked to testify before the US Congress on the danger of uncontrolled climate change. The testimony marked the start of broad public awareness

¹²<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2bRrg96UtMc>



Figure 14.14: **Prof. James Hansen**

of the seriousness of the danger, and it was reported in a front page article by the New York Times. However, Hansen believes that governmental energy policies still favor fossil fuels. Therefore he has participated in public demonstrations and he was even arrested in 2011 together with more than a thousand other activists for protesting outside the White House.

James Hansen's TED talk and book

In 2012 he presented a TED Talk: *Why I Must Speak Out About Climate Change*. This talk is easily available on the Internet, and it should be required viewing for everyone who is concerned with the earth's future.

Hansen's book, *Storms of My Grandchildren: The Truth About The Coming Climate Catastrophe, and Our Last Chance To Save Humanity* was published in New York by Bloomsbury Publishing in 2009.

14.12 Benefits of equality

"If Trump is a symptom, what is the disease?" One often encounters this interesting question in alternative media articles. I think that at least part of the answer is "Excessive economic inequality".

Hobson's explanation of imperialism

The English economist and Fabian, John Atkinson Hobson (1858-1940), offered a famous explanation of the colonial era in his book *Imperialism: A Study* (1902). According to

Hobson, the basic problem that led to colonial expansion was an excessively unequal distribution of incomes in the industrialized countries. The result of this unequal distribution was that neither the rich nor the poor could buy back the total output of their society. The incomes of the poor were insufficient, and rich were too few in number. The rich had finite needs, and tended to reinvest their money. As Hobson pointed out, reinvestment in new factories only made the situation worse by increasing output.

Hobson had been sent as a reporter by the Manchester Guardian to cover the Second Boer War. His experiences had convinced him that colonial wars have an economic motive. Such wars are fought, he believed, to facilitate investment of the excess money of the rich in African or Asian plantations and mines, and to make possible the overseas sale of excess manufactured goods. Hobson believed imperialism to be immoral, since it entails suffering both among colonial peoples and among the poor of the industrial nations. The cure that he recommended was a more equal distribution of incomes in the manufacturing countries.

Interestingly, TED Talks (ideas worth spreading) was recently under fire from many progressive groups for censoring a short talk by the adventure capitalist, Nick Hanauer, entitled “Income Inequality”. In this talk, Hanauer said exactly the same thing as John Hobson, but he applied the ideas, not to colonialism, but to current unemployment in the United States. Hanauer said that the rich are unable to consume the products of society because they are too few in number. To make an economy work, demand must be increased, and for this to happen, the distribution of incomes must become much more equal than it is today in the United States.

TED has now posted Hanauer’s talk, and the interested reader can find another wonderful TED talk dealing with the same issues from the standpoint of health and social problems. In a splendid lecture entitled *How economic inequality harms societies*, Richard Wilkinson demonstrates that there is almost no correlation between gross national product and a number of indicators of the quality of life, such as physical health, mental health, drug abuse, education, imprisonment, obesity, social mobility, trust, violence, teenage pregnancies and child well-being. On the other hand he offers comprehensive statistical evidence that these indicators are strongly correlated with the degree of inequality within countries, the outcomes being uniformly much better in nations where income is more equally distributed.

Warren Buffet famously remarked, “There’s class warfare, all right. But it’s my class, the rich class, that’s making war, and we’re winning.” However, the evidence presented by Hobson, Hanauer and Wilkinson shows conclusively that no one wins in a society where inequality is too great, and everyone wins when incomes are more evenly distributed.

Extreme inequality today

Here are two quotations from a report by the Global Inequality organization:¹³

“Inequality has been on the rise across the globe for several decades. Some countries have reduced the numbers of people living in extreme poverty. But economic gaps have continued

¹³<https://inequality.org/facts/global-inequality/>

to grow as the very richest amass unprecedented levels of wealth. Among industrial nations, the United States is by far the most top-heavy, with much greater shares of national wealth and income going to the richest 1 percent than any other country.”

“The world’s 10 richest billionaires, according to Forbes, own \$745 billion in combined wealth, a sum greater than the total goods and services most nations produce on an annual basis. The globe is home to 2,208 billionaires, according to the 2018 Forbes ranking.”

Corporate oligarchs control governments and the mainstream media

Today, the world faces two existential threats, the threat of an all-destroying thermonuclear war, and the threat of uncontrollable catastrophic climate change. In the United States, and several other countries, immensely rich corporate oligarchies use money to control both the mass media and politics, and the result is that no action is taken to save the future of the earth for our children and grandchildren.

It is not surprising that the fossil fuel industry supports, on a vast scale, politicians and mass media that deny the reality of climate change. The amounts of money at stake are vast. If catastrophic climate change is to be avoided, coal, oil and natural gas “assets” worth trillions of dollars must be left in the ground. Giant fossil fuel corporations are desperately attempting to turn these “assets” into cash.

Our military-industrial complexes maintain the threat of thermonuclear war, as well as speeding vast amounts of government money that could alternatively be used for social programs or renewable energy infrastructure. A military-industrial complex involves a circular flow of money. The money flows like the electrical current in a dynamo, driving a diabolical machine. Money from immensely rich corporate oligarchs buys the votes of politicians and the propaganda of the mainstream media. Numbed by the propaganda, citizens allow the politicians to vote for obscenely bloated military budgets, which further enrich the corporate oligarchs, and the circular flow continues.

Excessive economic inequality is at the root of the decay of democracy and the drift towards neofascism in a number of countries. It is not a coincidence that the United States and Brazil, two of the countries where inequality is the greatest, now have governments characterized by racism, militarism, cruelty, mysogeny, decay of democracy and climate change denial.

Economic equality and climate action in Scandinavia

Senator Bernie Sanders, a popular reformist candidate for the US Presidency in 2016 and 2020, has said that he is a socialist. When asked to explain in detail what he meant by that, Sanders said that he believed that the US would benefit from having a social and economic system similar to those of Scandinavia.

The Green New Deal can simultaneously address the climate crisis and the problem of excessive economic inequality. In this context, it is interesting to look at the social and

economic systems of the Scandinavian countries, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland. In these countries the contrast between the rich and poor has been very much reduced. It is almost true to say that poverty has been eliminated in these countries. At the same time, the Scandinavians have strong policies to address the climate emergency. Thus Scandinavian successes are a counter-argument to those who say that the Green New Deal cannot be put into practice.

Renewable energy in Denmark

Here are some excerpts from a recent report by the Danish Ministry of Energy, Utilities and Climate:

“Denmark’s success in transforming into a sustainable, green society is widely recognized. Denmark is at the forefront of numerous international initiatives and collaborative endeavors. In 2017, for the second consecutive year in a row, Denmark won the World Energy Council award for the world’s best energy system.”

“In 2017, Denmark achieved a world record of 43.4% power produced solely by wind turbines. Denmark can cover the largest share of its electricity production with green power from wind turbines. Denmark is also a European leader in the export of energy technology, as exports of energy equipment account for a larger share of total exports than in any other EU country.”

“The government has set ambitious goals that few other countries can match: At least 50% of Denmark’s energy needs must be covered by renewable energy by 2030. Coal must be completely phased out of the power supply by 2030. Moratorium on all exploration and drilling activities for oil, gas and shale gas on land and inland waters of Denmark. Denmark must be a low-emission society independent of fossil fuels in 2050.”

Eliminating excessive economic inequality increases happiness

For many years, the Scandinavian countries have ranked as the best places to live, according to the World Happiness Report. Perhaps these countries can serve as models, if we wish the future of human society to be a happy one. A step towards both happiness and sustainability must be the elimination of excessive economic inequality.

14.13 How do elites keep their power and wealth?

Control of the mass media

The media are a battleground where reformers struggle for attention, but are defeated with great regularity by the wealth and power of the establishment. This is a tragedy because today there is an urgent need to make public opinion aware of the serious problems facing civilization, and the steps that are needed to solve these problems. The mass media could

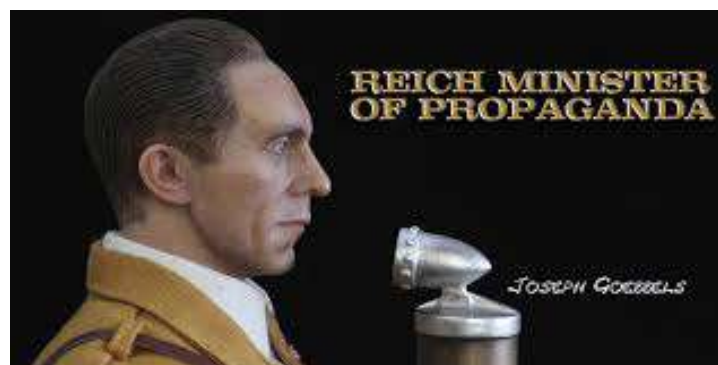


Figure 14.15: Goebbels said: “Propaganda works best when those who are being manipulated are confident that they are acting on their own free will”.

potentially be a great force for public education, but in general their role is not only unhelpful - it is often negative.

War and conflict are blatantly advertised by television and newspapers. Think, for example, of television programs like the National Geographic Channel’s “Battleground” series or the Discovery Channel and National Geographic Channel’s enthusiastic programs praising the deadliness and efficiency of various modern weapons systems. Such outright advertisements for the institution of war seem to have the wholehearted support of the networks. Meanwhile the peace movement has almost no access to the mainstream media.

It did not escape the notice of politicians that control of the media is the key to political power in the modern world. For example, Hitler was extremely conscious of the force of propaganda, and it became one of his favorite instruments for exerting power.

With the advent of radio and television, the influence of the mass media became still greater. Today, state-controlled or money-controlled newspapers, radio and television are widely used by the power elite to manipulate public opinion. This is true in most countries of the world, even in those that pride themselves on allowing freedom of speech. For example, during the US-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, the official version of events was broadcast by CNN, and criticism of the invasion was almost absent from their transmissions.

Today we are faced with the task of creating a new global ethic in which loyalty to family, religion and nation will be supplemented by a higher loyalty to humanity as a whole. In case of conflicts, loyalty to humanity as a whole must take precedence. In addition, our present culture of violence must be replaced by a culture of peace. To achieve these essential goals, we urgently need the cooperation of the mass media.

The predicament of humanity today has been called “a race between education and catastrophe”: Human emotions have not changed much during the last 40,000 years. As we saw in Chapter 8, human nature still contains an element of tribalism to which nationalistic politicians successfully appeal. The completely sovereign nation-state is still the basis of our global political system. The danger in this situation is due to the fact that modern science has given the human race incredibly destructive weapons. Because of these weapons, the tribal tendencies in human nature and the politically fragmented structure of our world

have both become dangerous anachronisms.

After the tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Albert Einstein said, “The unleashed power of the atom has changed everything except our way of thinking, and thus we drift towards unparalleled catastrophes.” We have to learn to think in a new way. Will we learn this in time to prevent disaster? When we consider the almost miraculous power of our modern electronic media, we can be optimistic. Cannot our marvelous global communication network be used to change anachronistic ways of thought and anachronistic social and political institutions in time, so that the system will not self-destruct as science and technology revolutionize our world? If they were properly used, our instantaneous global communications could give us hope.

The success of our species is built on cultural evolution, the central element of which is cooperation. Thus human nature has two sides, tribal emotions are present, but they are balanced by the human genius for cooperation. The case of Scandinavia - once war-torn, now cooperative - shows that education is able to bring out either the kind and cooperative side of human nature, or the xenophobic and violent side. Which of these shall it be? It is up to our educational systems to decide, and the mass media are an extremely important part of education. Hence the great responsibility that is now in the hands of the media.

The predicament of humanity today has been called “a race between education and catastrophe”: How do the media fulfil this life-or-death responsibility? Do they give us insight? No, they give us pop music. Do they give us an understanding of the sweep of evolution and history? No, they give us sport. Do they give us an understanding of the ecological catastrophes that threaten our planet because of unrestricted growth of population and industries? No, they give us sit-coms and soap operas. Do they give us unbiased news? No, they give us news that has been edited to conform with the interests of powerful lobbys. Do they present us with the urgent need to leave fossil fuels in the ground? No, they do not, because this would offend the powerholders. Do they tell of the danger of passing tipping points after which human efforts to prevent catastrophic climate change will be useless? No, they give us programs about gardening and making food.

A consumer who subscribes to the “package” of broadcasts sold by a cable company can often search through all 95 channels without finding a single program that offers insight into the various problems that are facing the world today. What the viewer finds instead is a mixture of pro-establishment propaganda and entertainment. Meanwhile the neglected global problems are becoming progressively more severe.

In general, the mass media behave as though their role is to prevent the peoples of the world from joining hands and working to change the world and to save it from thermonuclear war, environmental catastrophes and threatened global famine. The television viewer sits slumped in a chair, passive, isolated, disempowered and stupefied. The future of the world hangs in the balance, the fate of children and grandchildren hangs in the balance, but the television viewer feels no impulse to work actively to change the world or to save it. The Roman emperors gave their people bread and circuses to numb them into political inactivity. The modern mass media seem to be playing a similar role.

Here are some quotations from the Wikipedia article entitled “Propaganda model”:

“The propaganda model is a conceptual model in political economy advanced by Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky to explain how propaganda and systemic biases function in corporate mass media. The model seeks to explain how populations are manipulated and how consent for economic, social, and political policies is ‘manufactured’ in the public mind due to this propaganda. The theory posits that the way in which corporate media is structured (e.g. through advertising, concentration of media ownership, government sourcing) creates an inherent conflict of interest that acts as propaganda for undemocratic forces.

“First presented in their 1988 book *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, the propaganda model views private media as businesses interested in the sale of a product-readers and audiences - to other businesses (advertisers) rather than that of quality news to the public. Describing the media’s ‘societal purpose’, Chomsky writes, ‘... the study of institutions and how they function must be scrupulously ignored, apart from fringe elements or a relatively obscure scholarly literature’. The theory postulates five general classes of ‘filters’ that determine the type of news that is presented in news media. These five classes are: Ownership of the medium, Medium’s funding sources, Sourcing, Flak, and Anti-communism or ‘fear ideology’.

“The first three are generally regarded by the authors as being the most important. In versions published after the 9/11 attacks on the United States in 2001, Chomsky and Herman updated the fifth prong to instead refer to the ‘War on Terror’ and ‘counter-terrorism’, although they state that it operates in much the same manner.

“Although the model was based mainly on the characterization of United States media, Chomsky and Herman believe the theory is equally applicable to any country that shares the basic economic structure and organizing principles that the model postulates as the cause of media biases.”

Control of elections

In the United States, the November 2020 election is a crucial one because the Republican party’s climate change denial and support for fossil fuels threatens the future of human society and the biosphere, and because Donald Trump’s neo-fascism threatens America’s constitutional government and democratic institutions. The Republicans know that they will lose the election if it is fair, and they are doing everything they can to make it unfair. Here is a quotation from Senator Bernie Sanders:

“Donald Trump is a pathological liar. According to documented reports he has told more than 20,000 lies and distortions since he has been president. This is, obviously, deeply disturbing behavior for anyone who is president of the United States.

“But what is even more disturbing is that Trump is now using his lies and

misinformation to sow confusion and chaos in the election process and undermine American democracy. In other words, he does not intend to accept the results of the election if he loses and leave office voluntarily. This is not just a constitutional crisis. This is a threat to everything this country stands for.

“In order to be effective in combating Trump’s attempt to sabotage the November election, it is important that you, and everyone you know, recognize the warning signs as to what he and his Republican allies are doing...

“Over the course of the past few weeks, Trump has consistently sought to cast doubt on the legitimacy of the coming election. At a time when he is behind in almost every national poll and in most battleground state polls, Trump recently stated, ‘The only way they can take this election away from us is if this is a rigged election.’

“Think about what that means. What he is saying is that if he wins the election, that’s great. But if he loses, it’s rigged. And if it’s rigged, then he is not leaving office. Heads I win. Tails you lose...

“Trump is not only trying to create chaos and delegitimize the election process. He and the Republican Party are now spending tens of millions of dollars in the courts to make it harder for people to vote. They are attempting to defund and destroy the U.S. Postal Service so that people will not be able to cast mail-in ballots. And their allies in state legislatures like Pennsylvania’s are refusing to pass legislation to ensure all legitimate votes are counted in a timely manner.”

According to the divorce filings of Trump’s first wife, he kept a copy of translations of Hitler’s speeches beside his bedside and studied them thoroughly. His 2016 campaign was openly racist, and since taking office he has been a racist in word and deed. Trump’s use of unidentified troops in unmarked vehicles to tear-gas, beat and terrorize peaceful protesters is reminiscent of Hitler’s Brown Shirts. We can recall that Hitler came to power legally, but retained power through illegal methods. There is a worrying similarity between what is happening in the USA today and what happened in Germany in the 1930’s.

Here are some quotations from an article by Larry Cohen entitled *Vandalizing The Post Office*, published by Popular Resistance on October 6, 2020:

“Undermining democracy to win elections and protect investors and property interests in the United States is well documented and has been a consistent part of our history. However, Donald Trump’s attacks on our democracy, including his effort to privatize and disparage the public Post Office are unprecedented, and unpopular with most voters. Article 1 of the Constitution requires Congress to establish the post office, and the enabling legislation dates back to 1792.

“Donald Trump is constantly expanding his party’s decades-long reliance on holding down turnout to win, as white supremacist Democrats once did for nearly 100 years, beginning after the Civil War with poll taxes, literacy tests,

and other restrictions on voting rights. Currently, Republicans are counting on the pandemic to shrink turnout, while Democrats are using vote by mail to expand turnout. Democrats should view the public post office as an ongoing tool to expand voting rights, following the lead of five states where vote by mail is the norm...

“Currently there is a popular uprising to ‘Save the public post office’. This summer there have been demonstrations at hundreds of post offices around our nation, urban, suburban, and rural. The ‘Grand Alliance to Save Our Public Post Office’ not only includes the four postal unions representing over 400,000 union members, but a wide range of public service groups from every field. Recent polls have shown that 91 percent of the public supports the USPS and it ranks at the top of federal agencies in popularity.”

Control of the legal systems

Let us recall from Chapter 1, William Godwin’s opinion of the legal system in England at the time when he was writing *Political Justice*: “In its present state”, Godwin wrote, “society decrees that the majority of its citizens “should be kept in abject penury, rendered stupid with ignorance and disgustful with vice, perpetuated in nakedness and hunger, goaded to the commission of crimes, and made victims to the merciless laws which the rich have instituted to oppress them”. But human behavior is produced by environment and education, Godwin pointed out. If the conditions of upbringing were improved, behavior would also improve. In fact, Godwin believed that men and women are subject to natural laws no less than the planets of Newton’s solar system. “In the life of every human”, Godwin wrote, “there is a chain of causes, generated in that eternity which preceded his birth, and going on in regular procession through the whole period of his existence, in consequence of which it was impossible for him to act in any instance otherwise than he has acted.”

In one of his letters to Gandhi, Count Leo Tolstoy wrote: “This year in the spring, at a Scripture examination at a girls’ high school in Moscow, the teacher and the bishop present asked the girls questions on the Commandments, and especially on the sixth. After a correct answer, the bishop generally put another question, whether murder was always in all cases forbidden by God’s law: and the unhappy young ladies were forced by previous instruction to answer ‘Not always’ - that murder was permitted in war and in the execution of criminals. Still, when one of these unfortunate young ladies (what I am telling you is not an invention but a fact, told to me by an eye witness) after her first answer, was asked the usual question, if killing was always sinful, she, agitated and blushing, decisively answered ‘Always’, and to the usual sophisms of the bishop, she answered with decided conviction that killing was always forbidden by the Old Testament and forbidden by Christ, not only killing, but every wrong against a brother. Notwithstanding his grandeur and his arts of speech, the bishop became silent, and the girl remained victorious.”



Figure 14.16: US Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg in a commissioned portrait from 2000. She was known for her liberal opinions and her defense of women's rights. Her death at the age of 87 from pancreatic cancer on September 18, 2020, only a month and a half away from the November election, was followed immediately by Republican attempts to ram through the appointment of an ultra-conservative judge to replace her, Amy Cony Barrett. An emboldened 6-3 conservative majority on the Supreme Court could dramatically loosen gun laws, hurt immigrant communities, hurt women's rights, and play a possibly central role in deciding a close presidential election. Brett Kavanaugh, an earlier Republican choice for the Supreme Court, is both a multiple perjurer under oath before congress and a multiple attempted rapist. His tenure on the US supreme court will always be tainted by the highly partisan and morally bankrupt process that forced through his US senate confirmation on October 7, 2018.

Control of the police forces

Here is a quotation from Wikipedia's article on the Gestapo:

“The force was created by Hermann Göring in 1933 by combining the various security police agencies of Prussia into one organisation. On 20 April 1934, oversight of the Gestapo passed to the head of the SS, Heinrich Himmler, who was also appointed Chief of German Police by Hitler in 1936. Instead of being exclusively a Prussian state agency, the Gestapo became a national one as a sub-office of the Sicherheitspolizei (SiPo; Security Police). From 27 September 1939, it was administered by the Reich Main Security Office (RSHA). It became known as Amt (Dept) 4 of the RSHA and was considered a sister organisation to the Sicherheitsdienst (SD; Security Service). During World War II, the Gestapo played a key role in the Nazi plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe.”

A quotation from Wikipedia's article on police brutality in the United States:

“Police brutality is the use of excessive or unnecessary force by personnel affiliated with law enforcement duties when dealing with suspects and civilians. The term is also applied to abuses by corrections personnel in municipal, state, and federal penal facilities, including military prisons.

“The term police brutality is usually applied in the context of causing physical harm to a person. It may also involve psychological harm through the use of intimidation tactics beyond the scope of officially sanctioned police procedure. From the 18th-20th centuries, those who engaged in police brutality may have acted with the implicit approval of the local legal system, such as during the Civil Rights Movement era. In the contemporary era, individuals who engage in police brutality may do so with the tacit approval of their superiors or they may be rogue officers. In either case, they may perpetrate their actions under cover of law and, more often than not, engage in a subsequent cover-up of their unlawful activity.

“Since the 20th century, there have been many public, private, and community efforts to combat police corruption and brutality. These efforts have identified various core issues that contribute to police brutality, including the insular culture of police departments (including the Blue wall of silence), the aggressive defense of police officers and resistance to change in police unions,[6] the broad legal protections granted to police officers (such as qualified immunity), the historic racism of police departments, the militarization of the police, the adoption of tactics that escalate tension (such as zero tolerance policing and stop-and-frisk), the inadequacies of police training and/or police academies, and the psychology of possessing absolute power. The US legal doctrine of qualified immunity has been widely criticized as ‘[having] become a

nearly failsafe tool to let police brutality go unpunished and deny victims their constitutional rights,' as summarized in a 2020 Reuters report."

Control of military forces

Control of military forces is a traditional method by which leaders or elites seize power. For example, we can recall how Julius Caesar used his control of the army to seize power in Rome. Here is a list of current leaders who have assumed power via military coups d'état:

- President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo of Equatorial Guinea
- President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda
- President Idriss Déby of Chad
- President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan
- Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia
- President Denis Sassou Nguesso of the Republic of the Congo
- Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama of Fiji
- President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi of Egypt
- Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha of Thailand
- President of the Revolutionary Committee Mohammed Ali al-Houthi of Yemen
- President Emmerson Mnangagwa of Zimbabwe
- Chair of the National Committee for the Salvation of the People of Mali Assimi Goita of Mali

14.14 Resistance to tyranny

The tradition of nonviolent resistance

A number of the great historical figures whose lives are described in this book were pioneers of the tradition of nonviolent resistance to tyranny: Percy Busshe Shelley, Henry David Thoreau, Count Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King , Jr. all contributed importantly to this tradition.

We can especially remember Gandhi's answer to the insidious argument that "the end justifies the means": Gandhi answered firmly: "They say that 'means are after all means'. I would say that 'means are after all everything'. As the means, so the end. Indeed, the Creator has given us limited power over means, none over end... The means may be likened to a seed, and the end to a tree; and there is the same inviolable connection between the means and the end as there is between the seed and the tree. Means and end are convertible terms in my philosophy of life."

Gandhi believed that violent methods for achieving a desired social result would inevitably result in an escalation of violence. The end achieved would always be contaminated by the methods used. He was influenced by Leo Tolstoy with whom he exchanged many letters, and he in turn influenced Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

Because the independence of India was achieved through Gandhi's nonviolent methods, India's separation from Britain was achieved without excessive bitterness, and many of the good institutions that Britain had brought to India were retained. We can contrast this with many violent revolutions, for example the French Revolution, where the old tyranny was quickly replaced by a new repressive regime. The end achieved was contaminated by the end used to achieve it.

In our own time, Gene Sharp (1928-2018) contributed importantly to the tradition of nonviolent resistance to tyranny. His research confirmed the premise that authority is based on the obedience and goodwill of the subjects. When that obedience is withdrawn from presumed authorities, their authority is lost.

Gene Sharp was a professor of political science at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. He founded the Albert Einstein Institution, a nonprofit organization dedicated to the study of nonviolent action. Readers may find many useful suggestions for action on the Institution's website, <https://www.aeinstein.org/>.

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