

Self-published essays and blog posts. Written from February, 2020 to November, 2020. -Ethař Hamid



Nov. 6, 2020. 2:00 p.m.

If you seek uncorrupted, unadulterated **truth**, and then spread it, you'll be a sharp thorn in the side of a lot of people. If you spread truth coupled with humaneness, free from artifice, then you'll be blacklisted by a whole lot. Forget it—it's a done deal. A lot of people don't like truth, especially in regards to power structures and injustice and inhumaneness, in society. And they especially don't like truth coupled with compassion; that's like, their worst fear and obsessive nightmare. They know that if truthful and compassionate people are allowed to speak, and people simply listen—then the unfair power structures that sustain them as the elites of society will come crumbling down. And of course, the masses—the population, the common people—like truth; they don't care where it comes from. A black person, a white person, an immigrant, a person with schizophrenia, an outcast in society, someone generally marginalized, or whatever. People don't care about labels; they gravitate towards people who are actually truthful. They are genuinely interested in what truth-tellers have to say, regardless of that truth-teller's disposition or personal characteristics, or even personal flaws or shortcomings. And um, this is something that I actually like about people, and that I appreciate about humanity; we have a propensity for wanting to just get to the bottom of things, regardless of the source of truth, or the source of goodness. I.e., regardless of who it is, exactly, that's telling the truth—even if he's the most awkward or dispossessed or alienated person, ever. (For example: someone marginalized, or generally seen as *other*, or not strong or well-poised or well-positioned, in society.) In essence: people want to be liberated, in society; they want someone to freely give truth and to help them see reality as clearly as possible, and stuff. And to help them conceive of a way out of bad societal systems, and etc. I don't think they really care if the person is an outcast, or on the margins of society, or even *outright oppressed by the very systems that he may be speaking out against*. All they care about is truth, and compassion; they want to see things as unfiltered/untampered-with as possible, and to have a light opened up for them.

People are **genuinely interested** in what certain other people have to say, regardless of who those people are, where they come from, or what traits they happen to have.



https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/nov-6-2020-76d980788db3

my understanding of the dangers of government has recently solidified

November 5, 2020

From what I understand: even if capitalism is removed, we really can't be free unless the state is also abolished. I mean I hear about 'state socialism' and etc., all the time. *State* socialism. And they talk about it with enthusiasm, it lights up their faces and eyes, etc. So: I guess that many a time, there is the idea that **the state** is not necessarily a malevolent force. That you can simply have good* government; non-corrupt government. And as for the possibility of corrupt politicians and etc popping up in future; well, there'll be rules and etc to stop them from gaining office, doing corruption, and etc. I.e., we just have to reform the state really well, and all will be well. There won't be any present or future corruption, because there'll be really good rules//regulations in place, capitalism will be gone, and etc. 'We don't have to get rid of government,' in other words..

But from what I understand from libertarian socialism, anarcho-communism, and the different arguments that they offer, is that; there are lots of different and quite serious problems with the state, even if it follows a socialist economy//even if there's no capitalism, anymore. First of all, I've recently learned that capitalism and the state are inordinately linked, and that it's hard to separate them apart. Second of all, even if capitalism were to somehow be separated from the state, and pure socialism/economic equality were to come to fruition, the state itself is a harmful entity. The fact that power is concentrated in the hands of a few is in itself a corrupt system.

So basically; I've always sort of faced the question of 'can't there simply be state socialism? Can't we just have non-corrupt government? Why can't there just be government, but a highly regulated one; a fair one, a socialist one, and etc? What's so bad about that?'

But I guess I've recently discovered and learned a tiny bit about anti-statism/anarchism; that the very idea of government—of electoral government, concentrated power and authority, representative democracy, and etc.—is very bad. *So, my initial assumption was wrong...I had thought that government could just sort of be 'good government,' or a good system of conducting the affairs of society, and etc. So, I was sort of giving *government* the benefit of the doubt; I had thought that there could simply be non-corrupt government, or benevolent government, somehow. Or similarly; a socialist government, one that's divorced from and far removed from capitalism, and all its evils.

But I've recently learned two things; 1. It's supremely difficult to separate capitalism from government, since they feed off each other so intensely. And 2. Even if you somehow removed capitalism from government, and had a 'good, socialist government, one that creates economic justice, and etc.', you'd still have the insurmountable issue of 'power in the hands of a few,' along with all the problems that go along with that. And so both government/the state, and capitalism, have to be abolished...they're two sides of the same coin, in many ways. And they both have evils and problems attached to them. And so, from what I understand, even if you somehow manage to get rid of one, you'd still have the equally destructive evil of the other one, in front of you.

Also: from what I understand, even having a sort of separation between the economic system and the political system will be insufficient. So whether we have *state socialism*, or we have common ownership of the means of production and a simultaneous, intact government still existing (conducting other affairs of society, besides economic affairs...) - neither of those will be sufficient. Both capitalism and government will have to be abolished, by all means. So, not even common ownership of the means of production will solve all our problems; if the state still exists, there'll still be a host of unmovable issues still existing, in society. But I don't really know about how these institutions of society relate to each other; I don't know if common ownership (of the means of production) and a simultaneous, intact government is even feasible, or 'a thing.' Lol. As in, 'an idea that exists, out there. A reasonable or logical idea.' I don't much about these issues. At any rate: from what I understand, both of those unreformable elements (institutions) of society have to go: capitalism, and government. Otherwise, severe structural problems and webs—issues that are tied up together, *systemic* paradigms and problematic patterns—will never dissolve, or go away.

I used to think that capitalism was a much greater evil than government, or the state. Like most other people, I grew up seeing poverty in the world, I soon realized that capitalism, or profit, was behind those evils. I.e., that poverty is *highly manufactured*; it's not the result of nothing, or 'nobody's doing.' Rather, there are specific people—individuals—who are responsible. I.e., the capitalists themselves are responsible...and that there's no getting around that. On the other hand, I've only recently come to an elementary understanding of anti-statism/anarchism. So, the idea that government is an equally harmful force—and that it feeds capitalism/is actually intertwined with capitalism, in many ways—is fairly new to me. Again, I had thought that you can simply have 'good government,' and that it's simply who's in charge/what rules are in place, that's important. I've recently learned that *anybody in charge* will lead to many issues, though. And also: rules and regulations are often broken...But it's more often that people themselves are corrupt, and will make rules to suit themselves, and etc.

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/my-own-understanding-of-the-dangers-of-government-has-recently-solidified-ff97e188624a

for what it's worth...

November 4, 2020

I have a psychologically abusive family—domestic abuse. Severe torture, in fact; first-rate psychological abuse. Not just a mean word here or there, but pretty severe psychological abuse. I'd say that domestic abuse, schizoaffective disorder (mental illness), and lack of friends/ isolation are my three main issues or problems, in life. I mean lately I have a strong inkling that I'm being cyber-stalked and stuff, too...hacked and sort of anonymously abused, online. :(very sad. I mean I didn't think life was gonna be this* bad, lol. But then again, I don't really expect much from life, or think very highly of life. I mean you look throughout history at all the people who've suffered really quite atrociously...and you just think "it doesn't matter. Suffering, no suffering....it doesn't matter." It just all becomes blank, at that point; not feasible, anymore. It becomes like a whiteness, all around; a white blur or haze...mentally, at least. It becomes so bad that it almost becomes good.. Oh, I know what it's called, actually (I just remembered it): your brain's self-defense mechanism. Your perceived surroundings or your input from the outside world, or even just your emotional state, became so bad that your brain just doesn't work with those emotions, anymore...it switches to a happier mode, automatically, as a preservation tactic. It's trying to preserve your sanity. Which I guess I appreciate, but I still don't think life is fair, or good, or even worth living. I think it's an evil entity, for the most part...I don't think life should exist, as is. I don't think it should be this way—something's wrong. I mean I'm not a fan...I'm not an admirer of life. I think it's bad to say that life is good...because it's clearly not. For the vast majority of people, the vast majority of the time—it's not. So let's just 'take the red pill' or whatever and stop the whole 'chin up' thing. The whole 'life is beautiful' thing (**which was a great** movie...😢..but I mean I don't make amends for life, at all. I think it's the biggest criminal and psychopathic entity, ever.

—Nov. 4, 3:21 p.m.

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/for-what-its-worth-2f89773701bc

A few thoughts. They're broken out/separated by the “___” sign. These were all written within about a week of each other—each block of writing, or ‘entry’.

November 3, 2020.

Sometimes people get misrepresented or depicted the wrong way, or lied about, or shown in a very negative light, in society. And it's all manufactured highly systematically: it's not an error, on the conspirators' part. Anything that happens both repeatedly and intensely is not an error. Sometimes people get plotted against, in society; that's the bottom line.

So, my whole thing—what I myself have to offer/my message to them—is: don't worry. Just stay in center clarity. Don't despair, or anything. People—society at large—often picks on marginalized people, anyway. They've been* doing that, in fact—it's been going on for years. But they often single out certain individuals for specific persecution...especially individuals who are active in the anti-poverty/anti-capitalism movement, or the overall justice movement. So my message is: don't worry. You don't even have to do anything, other than keep your spirits up and keep going. You didn't ask to be here—no one who's suffering asked to be here. If people are plotting against you...well, I think any pain you endure or go through is only gonna come back to you in the form of positive karma. The worse it gets for you, the better, in a way. I actually think the *best* people often get the worst kinds of persecution.

Anyway I don't think people who plot against others are even human—I don't consider them human. In islam there's the whole thing of 'devils from the supernatural world, and (pure) devils from humankind.' I agree with that, 100%—there's no doubt there are people who look human, but they're actually devils. They work for the other side, and everything. If the whole thing of 'unseen world' and 'the supernatural' is true—or even 'religion' or 'a higher power/force', or a different world, etc., is true—then for sure the whole 'devils' thing is true, too. I already see evil in the world—I just don't know if god (or 'providence') is real. It might just be non-supernatural evil. I mean who knows, lol. I think evil is evil, whether it's worldly evil or supernatural evil. I mean, it's all bad. I don't know if there's a religion/if religion is true, or anything...I don't think anyone knows that, for sure...but I already see *evil* in the world. It's a done deal/it's for sure that there's inhumanity (and inhumaneness), and evil, in the world. Sad...

....I think that in terms of future elections, we should vote third party, even though third party votes will take away votes from the better candidate, and help the worse candidate of the two-party duopoly.

If it's a choice between bad and worse, maybe you should opt out and vote for an actual good candidate. *At the same time, voting for that good candidate will help 'worse' get into office, lol. That's the brilliance of our political system; you vote for someone actually good/not corrupt, and you get the worst candidate, as a result. -That's why i think maybe we should opt out of voting third party for a few years, and raise their popularity in non-electoral ways, and

then do a sort of mass vote once they're popular. Which will be measured through like, surveys, and stuff. You build the base, the mass-popular movement (thru every day awareness-raising and mobilizing and organizing, and stuff like that. Not* election-season campaigning for a specific third-party candidate of that moment. Because, that's not sufficient time to build a mass movement, i think... :/). After you have a mass movement behind you, you vote for them, for that third party.

So, from what I understand of present-day third-party voting: It'll help the worst candidate win, for now—the republican one, for example. But it'll also help ensure third party wins, in future. Hopefully near future. For example, I think they need 5% of the popular vote in order to qualify for public funding, or something? *This all sounds like a bad deal, honestly(!) Like; “vote for them now/for the next few election cycles...even though it might well help the worse candidate of the two party duopoly win, every time. (It's usually the republican one...). And then sometime in the future, if they reach the 5% popular-vote mark, they can qualify for public funding.” I mean, what the hell? Why can't they just get public funding, right now? Why 5% of the popular vote? Why is there a threshold, at all? And why are there always two highly corrupt candidates as the only viable options, such that if I vote third party, I'll be helping the worst* candidate win, of those two? Or at least, until third party becomes a viable option? This is called brokenness, a dirty system. Very unfair.

*I recently heard of ranked-choice voting—I heard that that's a system that can solve and break the tyranny of the two-party duopoly;

“Ranked-Choice Voting or "Instant Run-Off Voting," allows voters to rank up to three candidates, in order of preference, when marking their ballots. Ranked-choice voting eliminates the need for run-off elections.”

<https://www.acgov.org/rov/rcv/faq.htm>

“Ranked choice voting (RCV) makes democracy more fair and functional. It works in a variety of contexts. It is a simple change that can have a big impact. With ranked choice voting, voters rank candidates in order of preference. Candidates running in RCV elections do best when they attract a strong core of first-choice support while also reaching out for second, third, and later choices. When used as an “instant runoff” to elect a single candidate like a mayor or governor, RCV helps elect a candidate that better reflects the support of most voters. When used as a form of fair representation, voting to fill multiple seats for a city council, state legislature, or even Congress, RCV helps to more fairly represent the full spectrum of voters.”

<https://www.rankedchoicevoting.org/what-is-rcv>

I think many people agree that **voting in elections**—electoral politics—simply perpetuates the corrupt system of politics and government/the state, rather than working to abolish government, itself.

At the same time, I think there's the argument of “we can work to abolish government while simultaneously ensuring that we don't all die, or get screwed over, as a result of bad politicians.

We can elect good politicians while working to abolish government, in the long run.”

(Also; maybe there's no 'working to' abolish government? Through every-day means? Maybe it can only come about through revolution; mass revolution? Lol, my knowledge is so scarce...).

At any rate, I'm actually of the opinion that we should elect non-corrupt politicians, until the state gets abolished. Otherwise, the political system will get worse, and life will therefor get worse. Bad leaders and severe corruption in politics will intensify with corrupt politicians in office, and life might well become a series of unjust decision-making, monopolies, manipulations, and corruption. Kind of like it already is: but it'll just get worse with the worst of corrupt leaders, in office. I have a distaste for politics, at any rate. And I know that the very idea itself - the idea of 'power concentrated in the hands of a few' - can never produce a fair society. Power is a corruptive entity. 'When the power of love overcomes the love of power, the world will know peace.' -Jimi Hendrix.

If we don't get rid of capitalism, and money, and the state, and private property, then suffering and torment and human misery and dejection will just go on forever. Unless you put out a fire, it'll just keep going on, won't it(?) Oftentimes, evil doesn't stop unless it's actively stopped. You can't expect it to not cause harm or be destructive. And you definitely can't work around it, either, through trying to lessen it, and etc. You have to uproot it and destroy, it altogether.

I don't think that getting rid of the aforementioned will solve *all* our problems—we'll still have personal problems, and etc. Familial problems, mental illness, perhaps. Broken relationships, people will still get picked on/bullied by others, etc. But societal problems—structural, systemic societal problems—will be gone. In a way, that's all anyone can ask for.

-Nov. 3, 5:50 p.m.

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/a-few-thoughts-a-portfolio-of-thoughts-b48f6766e4c8

term limits... (?)

October 30, 2020

I completely* agree with the idea that there should be term limits for people in office. I personally think four or five years is way enough...I mean i don't know the exact, optimal time limit...but of course shorter limits often mitigate the damage that can be done. Corruption, etc...

*The only issue or potential problem I have with this — this quite common and popular idea of term limits — is that; what if you have several politicians who are actually quite good? For example; they are pro-people, pro-workers, non-corrupt....maybe even anti-capitalism.. or as much as the overall system will allow(?) What then? If you have term limits, you'd push out politicians who are actually quite good, and who are working hard on behalf of people..

So, instead of having absolute term limits, I was thinking that there could be a sort of efficiency or proficiency test for elected officials.. Like, at the end of every term, there would be an assessment of what s/he did to combat poverty, for example. I'm thinking like; proposals or initiatives to raise taxes, initiatives for a jobs guarantee program, initiatives for going beyond the welfare state to actions that actually solve poverty, and etc.. So, tangible stuff. Not simply skirting around the issue, or ineffective measures (not strong or effective stuff), as i sense has been going on. So that could be like, one way to gauge or measure the efficiency of elected officials. Or, perhaps; what they truly did (if anything) to get money out of politics. -There must be some sort of political will to get lobbyists and special interests and money* out of politics, completely. I honestly don't know if there are many legislative proposals to do this. Maybe this has already been going on for years, with no real results. At any rate, this can be one good barometer to measure politicians' virtue and aptitude; whether or not they worked to get money out of politics, while in office.

Or, it can utilize any issue, honestly; bettering education, reducing crime, etc. I was just thinking that fighting poverty directly, and working to get corporate money out of politics, could be two great barometers we can use on a number politicians, to see if they are worth our time— to see whether or not they should stay in office. I think that if a large mass of politicians do not effectively and genuinely try to alleviate poverty, or try their level best to end corporate corruption in politics, and other related issues—and especially if those elected officials are very obviously bought by corporations/they exist to maintain the status quo, and etc. — then it should be curtains for them, and etc. They have to go, and etc. That's where the term limits would come in; i.e., they can't keep doing that stuff, forever. It would be a situation of; "we gave you a chance/a fair opportunity...you wanted* this, this office, and we gave it to you — but you're just not that good, man." -And I think that's a very fair* and good way to do it. In essence; by evaluating them using very objective and fair standards and analyses, certain politicians would resoundingly fail* their proficiency tests (after their terms are over), and then they would have to leave. Their contractual terms would be over anyway, but they wouldn't be able to extend or renew them, at all. meaning, not ever. Their time in office would be over. And I think that that would actually be a good incentive for them to fight poverty and etc, while in office. Knowing that they actually wouldn't be returning to office at all, if their record

didn't show real tangible initiatives and measures, proposals and genuine efforts to alleviate poverty. Or to make politics less corrupt, overall. Or anything else equally substantial and meaningful*. Politics that's meaningless — meaningless political maneuvers, endeavors, efforts, and etc.—is really quite bad, i think. It's second only to bad political decisions. The next-worse thing to bad/corrupt/evil political decisions are meaningless political moves, decisions, etc..

So basically; their future terms would be conditional on whether or not they had actually fought poverty and etc., in the past. I.e., in their recently lapsed term. And so, there would be accountability, and everything.. oversight. And I guess that makes perfect and complete sense, actually. Other professions have oversight, all the time. Professors (for one example) have evaluations and lots of oversight and stuff.. and if they're good, they get tenured. If*. So it's not like it's automatic tenure, as soon as they become professors—as soon as they're hired. So, why then do politicians get automatic 'tenure,' once they're in office? I mean of course there's the whole counter-argument of "if they're so bad, their constituents can just vote them out, once their terms are over." But from what I understand, there's actually a phenomenon going on of "bad politicians keep staying/keep getting re-elected?" Seriously* bad politicians — corrupt* ones, ones that are in the pockets of corporations and special interest groups...politicians who won't fight poverty, in other words. Ones who are all lip service, no delivery — keep getting re-elected. So, it must be a corrupt game in itself — the whole election/re-election game. Something's got to give — it can't be that populations keep willfully* voting for the same dirty politicians, every time. So, from what I understand, it's a combination of name recognition, lots of corporate money going into their re-election campaigns....perhaps the two-party duopoly — the democrat and the republican in the race being the only two ones with any real chance to win....etc, etc. That's* what's causing corrupt politicians to win, every time. It's not that their constituents are willfully voting them in, every time. The very elections are corrupt, just like the candidates. And so yeah, there have to be term limits...or conditional renewals of contracts, as i'm suggetsing....

And I bet that's exactly why politicians have this thing of untrustworthiness about them — people know that they're oftentimes corrupt, liars, etc. I mean, how is it that you have a bunch* (a bunch*) of exponentially rich politicians, and yet a staggering amount of poor people in their jurisdictions? Their own areas/the places they represent are struggling, and poor? And so; that shows that many politicians aren't really in it for us.. And so, it should be curtains, for them; game over :P Time to go back to your private mansion, and leave us the f*** alone. stop ruining our lives.. — by the way, inaction or not doing anything, is bad, too ... that ruins lives, too. :(not doing things that you have the power to do..... :(#sad. :(

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/term-limits-47d58976c06

persecuted people...

October 22, 2020

Persecuted people are the sun; the people who try to free them/end their persecution are the stars. (Sun, and stars...).

So, what's more significant, and what's the genesis and point of it all—the people who are chained and tortured and oppressed, or the people who try to end their oppression? There would be no heroes—no freedom-fighters or revolutionaries or radicals, or whatever (whatever trendy trait or characteristic anyone wants to use) if it wasn't for persecuted people. Let's not forget that they're the actual figures in the whole thing—the very point of the freedom struggle or justice movement, or whatever.

People want to be freedom-fighters—no one wants to be tortured or persecuted. I.e., No one wants to be the object of freedom fighters' mission. No one would ever wish that, in their lives! Even the bravest people, the fiercest freedom fighters and heroes*—would never wish oppression upon themselves, not in their whole lives. That's like, the promise of psychology, or human nature, or even of the universe, or whatever you wanna call it. No one would ever want severe torture upon themselves—I think we can all agree on that..

In other words, people want to be a heroes, but nobody wants to be the actual oppressed person. "Me—no way! I'd rather die than be viciously oppressed..." I mean, that's perfectly logical and understandable. But then, I personally wouldn't be so eager to be seen as a revolutionary if I could never imagine for one moment trading places with the most severely tortured or mistreated person in the world. I mean it just doesn't work like that; if you could never know how it feels, or you would never even want to know how it feels (more precisely), then don't jump to 'be a revolutionary.' Don't take on that persona, whatsoever! First of all, you're deceiving everyone, aren't you(?) Cuz, you're not actually a hero..You just admitted as much, a moment ago... :(

Second of all, I'm just so sick of the whole activism arena (of watching it/being cognizant of it). I don't know if that's improper to say, or something(?) maybe that comes off as being unsupportive of activists(?) It's good to do activism/be an activist. I'm not trying to bash activists. *I'm trying to bash *what the activism scene has become*, in my view. I think something is wrong when a lot of people in society are rushing to do a certain type of thing, or even to take on a certain quality or persona(?) I mean, I smell a rat, here.. Something fishy is going on, I think.. And it makes me sad for everybody, honestly. :(I feel bad for society. The whole activism scene has become a glamorous scene/a flashy type of thing—even an ego-feeding mechanism—rather than just a humble, trying-to-help-one-another-other type of thing. *It's even become *mean*—the activism scene has become mean (like, a slighting-one-another, or filled-with-ostracism-and-disrespect type of thing), rather than a humanitarian-outreach thing. Just a bread-and-butter, sit-down-and-be-in-solidarity, or help, type of thing. I mean, I don't know what's happening, or going on, or anything like that. It's very scary. I feel scared*, I feel like I'm watching a true horror movie. Why does everything have to be a horror show, these

days? What happened to normalcy? lol, it's frustrating, isn't it :(
*to be continued.

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/persecuted-people-23aac21171fd

hierarchies, social strata

October 15, 2020

I think change-makers, freedom-fighters, and heroes are equally as important as **their supporters**. They're all on the same page, on the same trajectory, and on the same path, really. (The heroes and their supporters, that is.) They're all the same, actually—the same kind of people, basically...kindred souls, almost replicas of each other, we could say. It just so happens that some are in the front line of things—are heading things and leading things—and others are supporting, following. Who knows why, exactly? Why some ppl are heads of movements and r/evolutions, and others are supporters and followers(?) Maybe it's the whole introvert/extrovert thing, on a peculiar, monumental level? Who knows. But something I do* know is that both subsets or groups (or 'types') of people are exponentially important. Both! And that's actually why I'm not a big fan of politics, and even of 'the activism arena.' The whole political and activism scene often makes it seem like certain people are more important than others in life, lol. It often renders certain ppl invisible—it overlooks them in sidestep to others we consider as being shining lights or gems, in the activism movement..

On another note: actually, once someone does become part of the political/government arena, it's really quite easy to (unintentionally) become part of the oppressive elite, the establishment, the out-of-touch echelon of society. I've heard many times that government often protects the upper classes of society...and that government and businesses are often in cahoots. There'r all sorts of things (incentives, even) that make it difficult to simply be a fighter for the poor and working class, once you're in government. I think that's why libertarian socialism and anarcho-communism say "just get rid of the state; it's an insulator for corporate corruption and general corruption in society, rather than an institution that exists for the good of society. There'r other ways to do it, to take care of society. Government does more harm than good..." I mean, I think that's one* reason why anarchist thought says "get rid of the state"—there'r likely many other points too, of course...

But yeah—I actually do not like politics; I don't like government. Not only is it often corrupt*, but I don't like putting people on pedestals. I would love for this post to be the ultimate 'everyone is the same' message: no one is better than anyone else. We're all eternally the same. Nothing you do (even running for office, or even changing the world) makes you any better than anyone else. I don't really believe in hierarchies, in life; I think they're illegitimate. Even *moral hierarchies* are illegitimate. I for one don't really think anything you do in life can make you superior to anyone else. I mean that may sound funny, because "isn't working for the good of other people, being a fighter for justice—doesn't that make you superior to everyone else?" No, it really doesn't...Nothing can make you superior to anyone else. I really don't think Malcolm X, MLK, Gandhi, Frida Kahlo, were any superior—even one iota better—to the janitor down the block. I mean, how do you know the janitor wasn't better than them? But then again, no—everyone is exactly the same.. There's no difference between anybody. I hope it's clear what I mean. :(

I think there's a hadith in Islam that says "the best person in the sight of God is a custodian (for

one example; modest worker in the sight of people...) who lives and dies really humbly; unknown, to the point where few people attend his funeral, or anything.” The best* person (in the sight of god)! :o That Hadith is, I think, the best writing I’ve ever read, in terms of putting things in their proper perspective, in life. At least, in relation to hierarchies and assigning value to people, in life. It’s a stupid* idea, both of those! (Hierarchies, and assigning value...). Dumbest idea, hands down! I mean, how can there be hierarchies and values assigned, when everyone’s value is exactly the same, regardless of anything? I really don’t think someone who fed a million people or freed a million people, or saved a million people, is inherently better in the slightest, than someone who didn’t. I mean it’s good to do that—to feed, free, and save as many ppl as possible. But please keep your hierarchies to yourself! I don’t think anyone is better than me, thank you very much. I think it’s offensive to say that (to me). *And I don’t think I’m better than anyone else, either. I think we’re all of the exact same value, regardless of what we do, or don’t do. We’re not any better than anyone else, regardless of anything we do.

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/hierarchies-social-stratums-d419cbb8cf6d

poverty research institutes?

July 15, 2020

I feel like the whole thing of ‘poverty research institutes’—of research organizations that study and investigate the subject of poverty, where it comes from, how to fix it, etc. etc.—I really do feel that that’s all a bunch of craziness, and nonsense. We all know what causes poverty; capitalism. And we know that the only solution to poverty is uprooting and dismantling capitalism—nothing else will ever work. (I feel that that should be fairly obvious, at this point...).

I would have really preferred it if such ‘poverty research institutes’ had as their focus ‘how to finally get rid of capitalism. How to move on from that economic system. How to finally implement a completely contrary/different economic system: socialism, communism. Etc.’ To be completely honest, I have no idea/not much knowledge about poverty research institutes...I’ve only heard about such institutes not too long ago/a few months ago. I mean, I suppose I knew that there are organizations and centers that study the problem of poverty....I had a vague idea. But I had only started to really pick up on and learn about poverty research institutes a few months back—the concept of poverty research institutes.

If there are already many such institutes that do indeed study and work on the subject of abolishing capitalism..then that’s great. That’s what they all should be doing/should have been doing, all along. Because; it’s clear that the reason is capitalism—that’s the system that’s sustaining the phenomenon of poverty in America, and around the world. I mean I think poverty research institutes focus on welfare reform/welfare policy, and other important issues..But I don’t get the impression that they work on uprooting capitalism*, as a whole. As long as there is capitalism, poverty will always exist, I think. That’s what I personally understood..:/ So basically, I get the feeling that poverty research institutes work mainly on treating the symptoms of the problem, rather than definitively solving the problem completely. But I guess we probably do need symptom control, until capitalism is completely erased. So they (the poverty research institutes) probably are necessary, in that way..

But at the core of it, I was thinking that an institute whose aim is to study the causes of poverty, how to definitively solve it, etc. etc., but that doesn’t recognize or treat capitalism as the cause of it, is going to be fruitless..is only gonna be treating the symptoms of the problem, as aforementioned. So I feel that, in a very real way, we as a society are still in a phase of confusion or un-clearness (uncertainty) about capitalism—we’re not deeply and consciously aware that it is the cause of inequality and poverty. It’s not a cause of it—it’s the cause. We’re not at that level yet where we all as a society and culture are rebelling against capitalism. Proof of which; there’re numerous ‘poverty research institutes’ in America, that try to eliminate poverty without treating capitalism as the* cause of it. But that’s fruitlessness, as i said before; it’s gonna end in fruitlessness—not gonna solve the problem by any means, i think..

And of course; I see that there are also lots of writers, sociologists, and even economists, etc. etc. (people) who also believe in eliminating poverty without uprooting/dismantling capitalism. Or

conversely, they adhere to a sort of compromised capitalism. They say that 'the way capitalism is practiced today is faulty—that that's* what's causing poverty, and inequality. We just need to reform it really well/really effectively.' What I understood though (from reading certain books and etc) is that; no, it's the idea of capitalism that's what's wrong and faulty. The economic system itself, the very concept of it, is what's wrong and messed up. It's never gonna produce a fair society, or eliminate poverty, etc.

What is needed is an institute specifically for the goal of dismantling capitalism...an institute or research center that brings together the leading minds ~in the socialism/communism movement~ (like socialist economists, etc. etc.) who will work together to advance the cause of communism, or socialism. Who will all work towards that goal—teamwork, solidarity, etc, etc.. In fact, it really seems that that is necessary, considering the fact that the U.S. government doesn't seem to be budging or moving (advancing) on this issue of poverty. Homelessness/poverty/severe economic difficulty is still here—it's as bad as ever, i think.. So yeah, they're not actually gonna solve poverty/implement any kind of revolutionary anti-poverty measures. I don't think so.. So but, yeah; that shows you the need for socialist/communist research institutes— institutes specifically for the cause of bringing about socialism, in america. No one else will ever take huge steps forward in eliminating poverty, homelessness, and capitalism*, as a whole. I think it's up to the socialists themselves to form really* strong bonds of solidarity with each other, and to think up ways to get socialism going, in America.

Of course, I suppose that some people say that socialism can only be achieved through government measures/means...and that that is what socialists have already been doing for years—trying to attain a socialist/socialistic government, in America. I suppose that might be true...But then again; there's another faction that thinks that the government is completely incapable of implementing socialism...that 'state socialism' is an oxymoron, because the state is by its very nature an oppressive force, which safeguards or keeps power and authority with the upper classes of society, and etc..And so no, true socialism can't be attained through the state, itself. It has to be a stateless form of socialism...where the society/the people own the means of production, and etc. etc...

So yeah, maybe that's what socialists/socialist organizations and institutes should focus on....obtaining stateless socialism.....or 'libertarian socialism,' as is the proper term, i think. Yeah, I actually think that that's a good assertion/proposal; that they should definitely formulate an institute for implementing libertarian socialism, in society. If libertarian socialism is indeed the only true way to obtain socialism in America, then yeah, they should get together and form real unity and solidarity, to achieve their ends. And of course; if 'state socialism,' or 'government socialism' is actually the correct way, then there still needs to be a unifying organization of all the socialists in America, in order to achieve state socialism. So whatever the ultimate goal is—whatever the correct type of socialist system is—there needs to be solidarity between all the socialists in america. Because; you can only do so much when you're by yourself, or when you aren't in communication or collaboration with other like-minded people. But teamwork* and group thinking/group solidarity can really achieve magic.

I feel that of course there already are socialist organizations in the U.S...like the DSA/democratic socialists of America, and etc...But I feel that those are more like political groups?/political-oriented groups? What i had in mind was something like a really strong academic*,

research-based, 100% socialist institute or research center that can take steps to solve poverty, once and for all. Of course, there could be a lot of orgs already like this...please excuse my utter ignorance on this. Lol.

And of course it'll be hard to do it, to solve poverty. Especially if the only way to solve poverty is through the government/through political means....as I'm guessing might be the case. I mean, libertarian socialism, stateless socialism, sounds nice/like a dream...but yeah—it's just a dream, i think. A really whimsical type of pipe dream.. But I don't know, of course; I don't know anything about socialism or how to achieve socialism, in any of its manifestations or forms, etc.. :3

But yeah.. all I'm truly saying is that there needs to be major solidarity between all of the socialist academics/professors, politicians....activists/writers, etc. All the serious ones, anyway — they need to form strong bonds. Unity can produce great steps forward/great results, oftentimes. Ideas and thoughts bouncing off of each other, and even just sincere dialogue, can open up/lead to good things. And I mean, why shouldn't they be unified, anyway? It's awkward to have great minds who agree on an issue like poverty/socialism to all be off on their own islands/by themselves, to a great degree. Not unified, not strongly together. I mean, that's weird/awkward. Rather, everyone should be together on this. As in 'one strong team'—one force.

p.s. here is a blog post from July 2016, lol. It talks about islamic socialism, the Islamic conception of socialism. Mentions things like 'the caliphate can be considered the world's first major welfare state,' and 'Umar's innovative welfare reforms during the Rashidun Caliphate included the introduction of social security. This included unemployment insurance, which did not appear in the Western world until the 19th century.' And, "The first Muslim Caliph Abu Bakr introduced a guaranteed minimum standard of income, granting each man, woman, and child ten dirhams annually; this was later increased to twenty dirhams.[30] Some, but not all Islamic socialists advocate the renewal and expansion of this policy."

-idk, I just thought that all this info and stuff is actually quite interesting and intriguing...islamic socialism. I actually wrote this back when I was hard core muslim, lol. (*which I think is quite obvious, from the blog post..you can easily tell 😞.) But I was also attracted to the idea of socialism back then, lol.. So to marry the two and believe in *Islamic socialism* was pretty cool. Nowadays I don't know if islamic socialism is actually the best fitted format of socialism for the world. I'm just for the best form, whatever it is. I guess libertarian socialism (as aforementioned) might be it. Whichever one does the best job of eliminating poverty and inequality in the world, and cutting the whole oppressive economic system at its roots, is I suppose the 'best' form of it. :3 I mean I rly don't know much about the different types of socialism :3. But I understand that the overall idea of it is what we should go for, as society/as a human family :4

Here's the link to the islamic socialism essay/blog post, from July 2016: <https://findingapeacefulplace.wordpress.com/2016/07/03/376/>

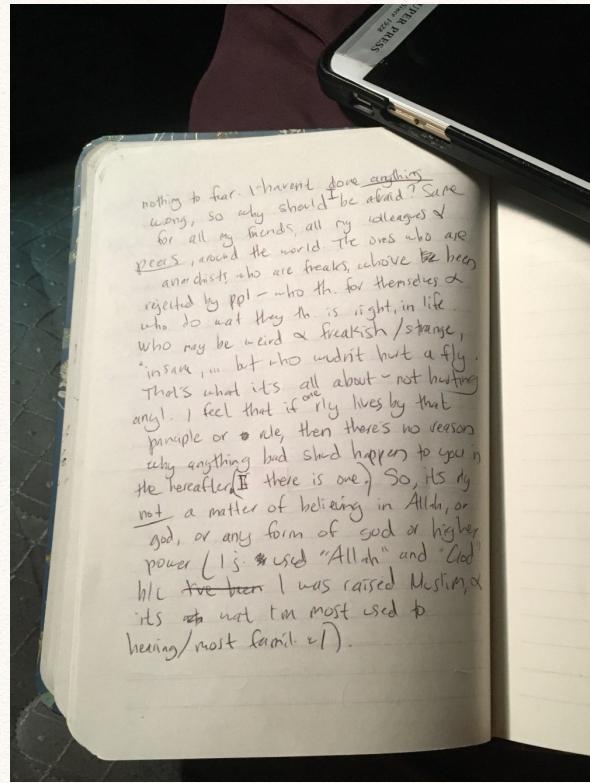
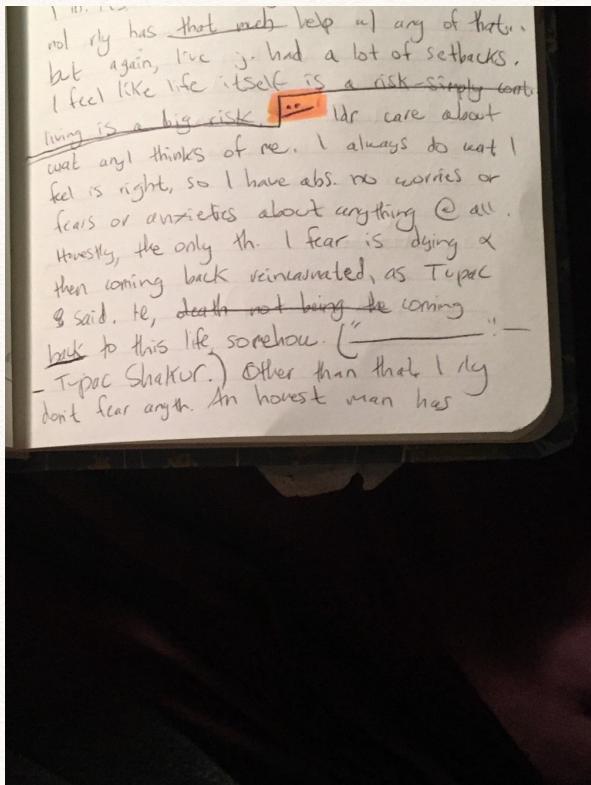
ty :3 😊

bye

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/poverty-research-institutes-ce479bd06d87

journal entry

July 14, 2020



This is a journal entry i wrote out today c: lol

My overall comments on the journal entry/my thoughts on what I wrote down (meta-analysis):

I think this was a very honest* entry. Because; I feel that I truly have been singled out a lot, in my life. I mean, that's just been my lot, as the saying goes. I feel like i haven't been treated fairly by a lot of people I've run into, and etc. But I mean whatever, right? That's their f***** problem, not mine. I don't have to do anything, I don't have to fix anything, I'm not responsible for anything, in terms of what other ppl do. :(They're the ones who have a lot of explaining to do, etc., etc.

Ok, that's it—that's my thoughts on it.

Here's the actual journal entry, typed out. I also added some thoughts to the end—thoughts that weren't originally there in the original entry:

entry:

"I don't really care about what anyone thinks of me. I always do what I feel is right; so I have absolutely no worries or anxieties about anything, at all. Honestly, the only thing I fear is dying and then coming back reincarnated, as Tupac said. I.e., coming back to this life, somehow—returning to this world. ("I don't have no fear of death. My only fear is coming back reincarnated." -Tupac Shakur.) Other than that, I really don't fear anything. An honest man has nothing to fear. I haven't done anything* wrong, so why should I be afraid? Same for all my friends, all my colleagues and peers*, around the world. The ones who are anarchists, who are freaks, who've been rejected by people—who think for themselves, and who do what they think is right, in life. Who may be weird and freakish/strange, and insane*....but who wouldn't hurt a fly. That's what it's all about—not hurting anyone. I feel that if one really lives by that principle or rule, then there's no reason why anything bad should happen to you, in the hereafter. (*If there is one...). So; it's really not a matter of believing in Allah, or god, or any form of god or higher power. (I just used "Allah" and "God" because i was raised muslim, and it's what I'm most used to/most familiar with.). So yeah; it's not a matter of believing in any god/higher power, or in any specific type of doctrine or ideology. The only ideology or idea that you could ever be held accountable to is not hurting anyone (sometimes referred to as 'being a good person.' But the term 'being a good person' sometimes connotes the idea of going out and doing good among people...which is unachievable for many people, because of physical, mental, psychological, emotional hindrances, etc. They aren't able to 'do good,' because they are physically or mentally hindered or constrained in what they are able to do... Or; they have had so much trauma in their own lives that they aren't able to help others/be of service to others, and etc. So instead of 'be a good person,' I use the term 'do no harm,' because that is the real ~way to be~ that is common among everyone—and that everyone can do, etc. I suppose the easiest or simplest thing to do is to not do anything...and so that's what makes the 'do no harm' principle so universal in its application. 'Do good/be good' can imply a doing,* or active participation in something...which not everyone can afford, even by a long shot. (Due to mental or physical or emotional barriers//conditions, etc....). So yeah I think that saying 'the only thing that matters to god//that matters in life is to do no harm' is way better than the axiom 'be a good person...' Just b/c of the whole 'ability, and ableness' thing. The 'doing' thing; the effort you often have to make to 'be a good person//to actively do good,' which not everyone has the means to do, because of personal reasons, barriers, etc. etc. But anyway; the only principle that matters in life is 'do no harm' (aka 'be good person'). That's it; it doesn't matter what specific religious or spiritual philosophy that you follow, as long as it doesn't conflict with that principle..

People will often treat you badly for no real reason.. And that'll give you the idea that you're a bad person, or that you're doing something wrong, in life..or that you're deviant in some way, or misbehaving in life, in some way..(not doing what you're supposed to do.,,or 'not normal,' or 'freakish,' or wrong*, in some way..that you're not on the right course in life, or are doing something very wrong.

But that's not always completely justified. In that; people will sometimes pick on you and abuse and oppress you...when you've done nothing wrong! It's strange*, but it's true. People often abuse others for no real reason, sometimes. No real reason..(Or: no good* reason, I should

say... >.<

Another important thing: people who leave their religion often feel guilty—they feel that they're going to hell, and etc. For leaving/for not believing, anymore :(and that's a damn shame. A person could be the most harmless* individual in the world, who is literally just floating through life, not even knowing which way's up, most of the time... Basically i mean; not bothering* anyone, just living his life and trying to *get through* life—literally not even thinking* about doing anything bad to anyone; not even thinking about anyone that much, at all (just worried about his own life, his own personal problems, etc.)....and yet, he could be really* worried that he's going to hell. That he's gonna end up there. :(like; wtf—that's so messed up. It's messed up how religion does that to people; when a person wakes up and leaves the religion (or whatever drove him to leave, I should probably say), he gets terrified of going to hell. For what?—I have no idea. He could be the most innocent person in the world, like i said before. But it's just that his religion (the one he recently left) is so freaking hell-obsessed, and states that people who don't follow the faith will for sure end up there....that he feels frightened of ending up there. And maybe people in his life are also saying to him (or giving him the impression) that he's weird or bad* in some way..(when in fact he hasn't done anything wrong, actually)...and so that further* puts the idea in his head that he's going to hell. :(very unfortunate situation. I mean i can't think of anything more messed-up, and just sad. (?? Soo messed-up).

But I actually think i had a good point with that journal entry, though—the concept of ‘an innocent man has absolutely nothing to fear...’ Meaning; if you haven’t done anything wrong, then there’s no* reason why anything bad should happen to you, either in this life, or ‘the next’ (if there is a next life...) :(but anyway, yeah.. :(

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/hi-3-dc8dc8f94f0

Thoughts on a certain book, and its relation to current social struggles, ideas, current social moods, reignited hopes.

Huey P. Newton—The Radical Theorist, and current struggles for socialism and poverty reduction as taken on by the bernie sanders movement, and by earlier socialists and anti-capitalism leaders, scholars, activists....

June 28, 2020

Hi there :3

I'm reading the book *Huey P. Newton—The Radical Theorist*, by Judson L. Jeffries.

I've only read about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the book, so far—I've kind of skipped around and read sections that most interested me, and have finished about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the book, through this strategy of finishing it. It's quite* a great book—I highly, highly suggest it to anyone who's interested in racial justice, in the concept of justice as a whole, or simply in the ideas and theories of Huey P. Newton, the co-founder of the Black Panther Party. The author of this book—Judson L. Jeffries—mentions in the introduction that he intended this book to be more of a look at Newton's ideas and the theories that he espoused/worked towards in his life, like racial justice and all the components that go into achieving that aim—more so than a full biography of his life. More so than an account of the events that occurred in his life, and etc. I have to say that I like this approach better than reading through 'traditional bios,' so to speak. I like quickly getting to the heart of the subject's ideas and convictions—what s/he believed and perhaps what s/he worked towards in her life—more so than a chronological narrative of his/her life. *Although; sometimes a good account of the person's entire life is the best way to arrive at and get an optimal understanding of his/her beliefs and work, later in life. So I suppose it depends on the subject of the book in question, and on which routes the author can possibly take in writing about him/her. I'm glad Jeffries leaned more towards an investigation/examination of Huey P. Newton's ideas and work, more so than a biographical account of him.

I think one theme throughout this book that has really caught my attention is the theme or idea of socialism/economic transformation—of transforming the economic system that prevails in America, and in many parts of the world. Getting rid of capitalism entirely, and replacing it with socialism. Some lines of the book that mention this concept can be found on pages 49, 84, 90, 92, and 136. As for the mention of socialism on page 49, it states there that "A close reading of Newton's ideas shows that his notion of the state are somewhat similar to Marx's in that the state is not an impartial policing unit, but rather an agent whose primary goal is to protect the lives, rights, and property of the ruling class from the less affluent...Also like Marx, Newton predicts a revolution will bring an end to the stratification of classes and the death of the state. When this happens, a new society will emerge and begin anew. Newton's view of the state is not muddled with pessimistic realities, but rather it emphasizes a utopia of sorts."

The mention of socialism that is on page 84 states that "One fundamental tenet of democracy is the right to adequate and proportional representation in all spheres of political, economic, and social life. However, because of racism and capitalism, oppressed groups have failed to receive substantial representation. Newton argued that in order for these groups to receive adequate representation, it is imperative to 'eliminate the office of the presidency and wipe out

the small ruling circle that is uninterested in the people, but is only concerned with profit.’ Newton believed that, over the years, U.S. presidents have neglected to represent the popular interests and instead have become a captive of special interests. “Hence, what is needed is a radical restructuring of the government, that reasserts and makes manifest the power of the people consistent with the intent of the Preamble to the U.S. constitution and its Bill of Rights; that is the only path to the realization of the American Dream.” The “small ruling class” that Newton referred to was composed of the presidents and CEOs of the seventy-six companies that ran the American economy. According to president Lyndon B. Johnson’s Commission on Civil Disorders, seventy-six monopolies or oligopolies controlled the country’s economy. This type of dominance is somewhat similar to that found in Benito Mussolini’s Italy, where the corporate state was the primary means by which the masses of people were controlled. Under the corporate state, almost every aspect of daily existence was controlled; employment, wages, fringe benefits, housing, retail goods, recreation, entertainment, and education were all part of this elaborate organization. Newton surmised that once General Motors, Standard Oil, and other corporations are wiped out, transformation would occur in which minority groups would be in a position to demand representation.”

As for the mention of socialism/points related to socialism on page 90, it states there that “... Newton’s prediction that the majority of blacks would not receive a significantly greater share of goods and services [through the Civil Rights movement] was correct. Instead of improving the livelihood of black America as a whole, the Civil Rights movement produced a sizeable Black middle class. While Newton’s argument that the Civil Rights movement was ineffective was overstated, his ultimate conclusion that the movement failed to alter the distribution of power and resources in America was on point.”

A concise mention of socialism-related ideas on page 92 is as follows: “While the Civil Rights movement did win blacks a number of benefits, Newton’s position that the movement did not shift the balance of power or redistribute wealth in a radical way is not unfounded.”

And finally, on page 136, there is quite a succinct and to-the-point line that says “Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s...Newton continued to hope for socialism in the United States.”

It’s really quite interesting to read about how Huey P. Newton wanted socialism for the U.S. It’s interesting reading about that piece of information, especially given the fight for socialist policies that was recently taken on in the U.S. Taken on by Bernie Sanders, AOC, others in congress, other politicians, etc...they’ve really put forth the case for socialism and have made it a main objective. I know that a few people—a few socialist academics and activists, etc.—are of the opinion that such U.S. politicians aren’t going nearly far enough, and that true socialist policies/true socialism isn’t being advocated for. But I mean you have to start somewhere, I think. Many on the left (not the entire left, I suppose) have been wanting socialism—and now they have gotten the ball rolling. That’s a cause for celebration... hopefully we can achieve true economic justice—an end to poverty, and disadvantaged living—someday soon.

It’s funny (in a sad way) knowing that Newton advocated for socialism way back in the 70’s, and 80’s. And that many others in American history were also attracted to that social/economic system—intently advocating for it, publishing books about it...even trying to affect

the political system to incorporate it—but had never seen their dream realized in any sort of meaningful way. Homelessness and poverty still prevailed throughout their lifetimes. And is still very much present in 2020, obviously. So, those anti-capitalists/socialists/revolutionaries never saw anything close to a replacement of capitalism with socialism.

So, but my point is: it's actually really quite funny/poignant to read about how those revolutionaries had wanted socialism, but never saw it in their lifetimes...and that all the way up to today, capitalism is still the prevailing system. But yeah it's really poignant and almost surreal to 'go back to history' (so to speak) and read/learn about the freedom fighters who had fought for socialism/an end to poverty...and at the same time see how capitalism is still the prevailing system, today. It's really surreal to open a book (or whatever—see a documentary, read an article/essay/etc...even just sit in class and listen to/hear about) how certain revolutionaries had wanted socialism—really wanted it as the economic//social system—and yet capitalism still prevailing, today. So, what they wanted never came true.

But they were 100% hopeful for socialism as the economic system—if not in their lifetimes, then at least in the future, for the future generations. (For us..). I mean I guess we always hear about the sacrifices that older generations have made, in order for us (and our children, etc.) to be free and to live as prosperously and peacefully as possible, etc. etc. But to see how older generations (some among them—the ones who fought for socialism/economic reform, a complete end to poverty) had worked really hard to make sure that we—the future generations of humanity—wouldn't have to suffer poverty, homelessness, or severe economic difficulty, and yet never saw their dream actualized (poverty still being the #1 issue in the world, today)—all of that is rly* surreal. Looking back at all those freedom fighters who had spoken out/warned people about capitalism, how bad it is, how it can never produce a fair society, etc.—and yet knowing that nothing changed. It got much worse, even. It just seems like an out-of-body experience, almost; reading about our antecedents' hopes for economic reform, for socialism—and yet capitalism still being the prevailing system. It hasn't gone *anywhere*.

*But at the same time, it's also extremely wonderful and somewhat pacifying/soothing to know that socialist policies, even full-on socialism, is becoming more and more mainstream, these days. That the idea of socialism, I should say, is probably more in the public eye/a concept that people are looking at, embracing, fighting for—more so than in many periods in the past. I mean, I think I heard somewhere that Bernie Sanders' run for president as a dem. socialist really made the topic pick up steam/become a serious topic of discussion in the main arena of public/political/life, in America. Of course, it's always been a topic in the U.S...but I think it was always sort of behind the scenes. It wasn't a mainstream topic of discussion—one that you would see very often in the media, etc. The topic was largely confined to academics and activists, writers, thinkers, and others, who were themselves socialists. But now the topic is becoming more out in the open, and mainstream, which is good. We need to hear about all ideas with equal rigor. All we've been hearing about (and feeling/suffering under...) is capitalism. It's time to hear about a new order, a new way. We can thank Bernie and all the fresh faces in Congress, as well as all the academics/professors/researchers and activists, etc. who had been pushing for this cause for many many years—for bringing this issue to the forefront, for making this a real cause/issue in everyone's minds..

One thing that has been somewhat bothering me is that: I don't feel that I myself have any capacity to help the movement for socialism/for economic justice, in any way :P Lol, I don't think I do...

Also: I sometimes feel that people who are in 'the back line' of the movement—who perhaps are working behind the scenes, or who are in the movement through their support and upliftment (encouragement, backing) of politicians, activists, etc.—I feel that they aren't as appreciated as they should be. I mean, I feel that as long as you're a supporter of the social justice cause—of leaders, of politicians, activists, etc. who are fighting for social justice—then you're 100% in the movement, yourself. In other words, you don't have to be 'in the advance guard,' so to speak (a front line fighter) for social justice causes, in order to be a valuable part of the movement. Everyone is valuable.. And it could well be argued that everyone is equally valuable—there's no hierarchy of importance. For example, if there was no one there to help fundraise for important causes/for politicians/for organizations, no one to do marketing or graphic design for organizations/potential politicians or political campaigns (flyers, social media work, website development/design, etc etc.)...no one to do any of the communications work, like press releases and etc.—then the movement would not move forward. If there was no one to do any of the work that perhaps isn't 'the actual work,' the work that many people associate with fighting for social justice (like introducing legislation in a political arena, etc.)—if there was no one to do the 'behind the scenes' work,' then the movement would not move forward/things would not get done, that need to. Important preliminary measures/steps/actions/tasks—important ones, ones that can't be skipped or not done—wouldn't get done, if there was no one there to do them. In other words, the reality is; everyone is important. Everyone is equally* important, in fact. That's the beautiful thing about the movement for social justice, and any movement, in fact: if you take a line of work that needs to get done for it, out—if you remove a task (any task) that needs to get done for it, out—the movement will not succeed. It won't work that way. You need everyone; you need to make sure that all the components that go into making the movement progress/move forward/achieve its aims, that they succeed—that they get done. You can't skip any of the elements that go into making a movement succeed.

To put it in more practical terms (away from the theoretical); if you do away with, for example, outreach for politicians—do away with people who market the politician, get press coverage, get traction and buzz...then the campaign itself will simply go nowhere. So you see; the supporters of a politician—the constituents, perhaps...or the supporters in general—are just as important as the politicians themselves. They're a unit—you can't have one without the other. Even though it may sometimes seem like the politicians are sort of the only ones on the playing field—that they are independent workers, or self-sufficient actors. That they're the only ones who count, or who count the most. But that's the mistake of assuming that the advance guard—the front line workers—are everything. That they matter much more than other people. Nothing could be further from the truth, though; All of the people are important. And the ones who work with or carry out tasks for, or support/encourage/advocate for, the politician, are equally important as the politicians.. The whole thing simply could not function without them—without those workers/volunteers/supporters, etc. Nothing would move forward, or move

forward very successfully, without them. That's the bottom line..

And something I've once heard an activist say (she was an environmental activist) is that: "It sometimes seems like everybody wants to be in the front of the movement, because that's what they consider to be the most important place. No one wants to work elsewhere—like behind the scenes, for example. But sometimes the work behind the scenes is even more important than the front-line work. Some people are meant to be 'in the front line' (of efforts towards equality, economic/racial/environmental justice, etc.). Some people are meant to be in the middle line. Some people are meant to be in the back line/behind the scenes. And everyone is important. And everyone is doing a wonderful job. Let's not pretend anything different—let's not pretend that some people aren't as important as others, or aren't as valuable. We're all in this together..." I mean, hearing that assertion was really touching to me..partly because I really consider myself to be a behind-the-scenes worker. Someone who perhaps doesn't have the ability or even temperament or personality type to be in the front line of things. To head* things, or perhaps be in the midst of areas like political/social activism, and etc...

I also think it's true that not everyone has the ability or the passion to be 'in the movement,' so to speak, at all. I really do think that people possess different types of talents, skills, abilities, and etc...some of which don't lend themselves immediately to 'advocacy/activism' work. What I mean is; some people's strengths (and even simply their interests and passions) lie in areas that happen to be outside of politics/government/social or political activism. Or academia, research, scholarship, etc., which can then be used for activism or advocacy, and etc. For example, many people find themselves most 'in the zone' when they're in creative pursuits. That's where they find the magic in their own lives—that's where they find happiness. And it's what they choose to do, in life. Graphic design, painting, creative writing, music, performing arts, etc. I mean, I think it's somewhat agreed upon that such interests don't immediately fall in line with or progress social justice issues—they're not immediately/directly tied with social justice efforts, or progressing the cause. But do they have to be? They don't have to be, in my opinion. I mean, I mentioned above about how not everyone needs to be 'in the front line' of social justice work, or efforts. But another issue/question is 'does everyone need to be directly involved in social justice efforts, at all?' Is it really true in the least—and I really mean in the least—that most people need to be in the direct movement for social justice? I mean, no—that isn't true. The most obvious reason why that isn't true is because people have different skills and passions, in life. Not everyone has the ability or even desire to be in public service, in the immediate* efforts for racial, economic, social justice, etc. Not that they don't want racial, economic, social justice, etc. Not that they don't want that for the world, or for society. It's simply that their passions lie in a different realm, in a different aspect of life. One that is outside the immediate movement for social justice—the steps and tasks that need to be done, for social justice. (Like working for politicians, or working for social justice groups/orgs, etc. Or being a sociologist or researcher who focuses on things like poverty or race and gender, in their work.) And that is fine! Since when does everyone* need to be in that type of work, or in that overall field? Especially if they have creative pursuits that they are pursuing in their lives, or perhaps things like teaching, or working in publishing (editing, and etc.), web development/design etc. So, what they need to do is follow their passions—point, blank. In other words, they 100% should not join political work, nonprofit orgs, etc. solely "to contribute to the cause." Fu** that!

No, seriously. People who do work that is not immediately linked to social justice—and that isn't 'useful' to people in the movement—are still contributing exponentially, to life. They contribute monumentally to causes and areas of life that are outside of social justice progression. I mean, the movement for social justice is noble and everything, but there are other important areas of life to contribute to/work in/be in. And, as aforementioned, as long as you're a supporter of the social justice cause—of leaders, politicians, activists, etc. who are in the fight for social justice—then you're 100% in the movement, yourself. In other words, I don't think you have to choose a career/line of work that is in the direct effort towards social justice and its many manifestations—like being in politics, or working for social issues-orgs, or being a sociologist/researcher who focuses on things like poverty or race or gender, in their work—in order to do be doing valuable things, in life. I think I summed up this idea best when I said that 'the movement for social justice is noble and everything, but there are other important areas of life to contribute to/work in/be in.'

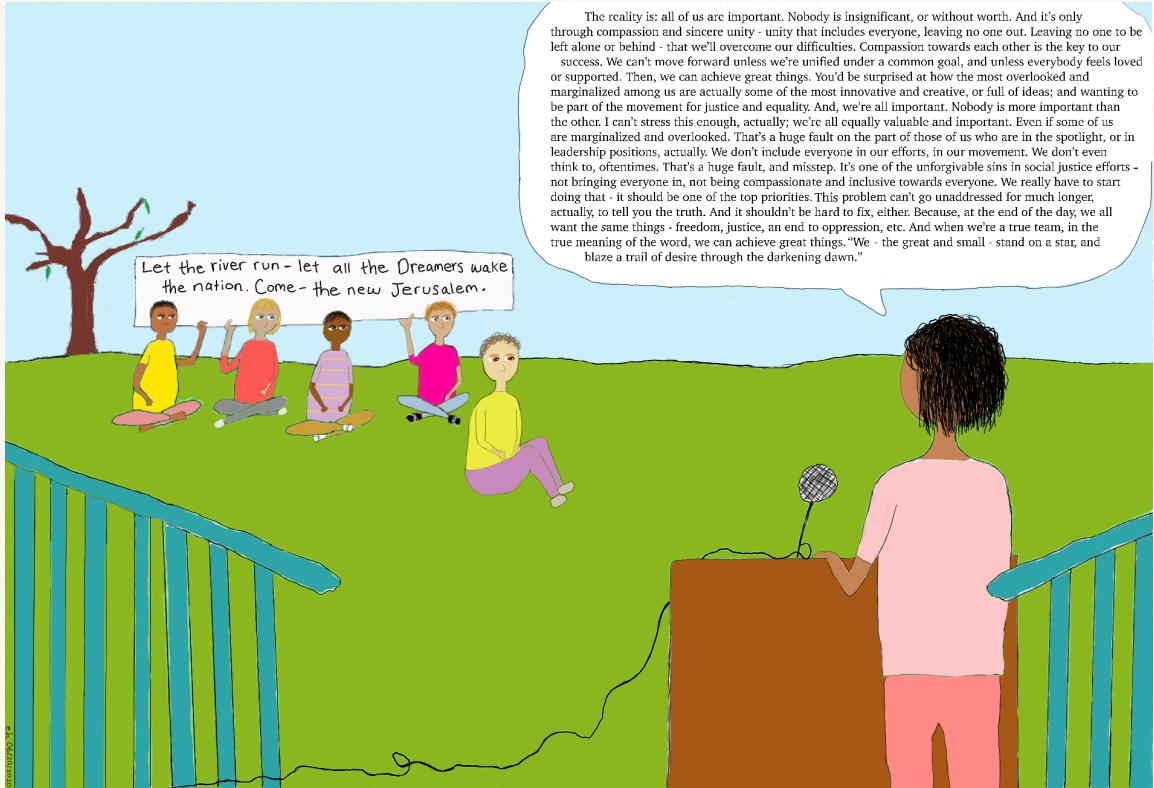
I actually sometimes get the feeling that some who are in the social justice movement sometimes believe that people who are not in the same field are somewhat wasting their time and efforts. It's almost as if they're thinking "How can you not* be in the movement for social justice?" Or 'You're not doing anything important. You're doing frivolous/insignificant stuff.' Or "you're not working towards anything valuable, in life." Especially towards people in the arts, in the creative sector. That's not true, though...I mean, art isn't important, all of a sudden? Books, documentaries/films, visual art pieces, music,—all of which very often advocate for social justice issues themselves, for social justice causes, themselves—all of that isn't important? We only need academic work/research? Or political organizing/efforts? What I'm saying is that art and creative work actually does fill an important space, in life. Especially, I suppose, art that challenges us to think, that pushes the boundaries of what we perceive as normal...that proposes creative solutions to social problems and evils. I mean without artists, I really think at least 1/4 of the world's problems (in the past) would not have been addressed as creatively or as empathetically, as they had been. Artists offer creativity and a unique kind of empathy...traits that we need in solving the world's problems. Especially social problems, societal/community problems, etc.

A few days ago, I drew a picture communicating that people in this movement for social justice—economic, racial, etc.—are all highly valuable. And that it's a matter of bringing everyone in to the actual movement. That that is the thing people really have to do in terms of organizing, and getting people to join the movement. In other words, the visual piece is trying to say that 1. Everyone is important, and 2. That the people who are already well-established in the social justice movement—the ones who are already in there*, and who are in a good spot/prominent in the movement—really really need to reach out to people and bring as many people in*, as humanly possible. And that of course—since they can't reach everybody*/ can't get in contact with everybody*—they should tell their peers/colleagues/cohorts to reach out to people, themselves. Basically; everyone who's in this movement—whether they work for a prominent organization, or are known journalists/activists/writers/organizers, etc. Or who simply have some type of influence or ties to a larger organization—should reach out to as many other people as possible. I mean, the people who are sort of on an island by themselves—they can't really reach out to people and ask them to join in, in the broader movement. I mean that

would be difficult, because they themselves aren't in positions of power.. or conversely, they don't have ties to a bigger organization that can then facilitate other people's involvement with them. Or with the broader movement. That's actually a serious negative to being on an island by yourself. Not only are you on an island by yourself/alone, without any kind of support or encouragement or help, in life—not only that, but another things is that; when you want to get others to join in on the social justice movement (you wanna send those emails, you wanna contact certain people/send out general messages to everyone about getting involved with the movement)—you can't, because you yourself aren't tied to an organization of any sort. You're only one person—one person, without an established group behind you who can act as representatives, or as a home base/central authority, who can help the new recruits get situated/involved in the struggle for social justice. Another way to put it is; when you're not a member of a team, it's hard to reach out and get others involved in the movement. Partly because you don't have a backing/supporting organization behind you.. So you see, being part of a larger organization is among the abc's of political or social organizing, I think..or even in many forms of activism/advocacy. You can only do so much when you're by yourself. But being part of a group gives you a kind of authority. In terms of talking to others/recruiting people to be part of the movement.

So yeah; people have to be brought in to different organizations and groups, oftentimes. I suppose you could argue that it's on them* to join and be part of different movements and groups. But I think it really helps/is better when those who are already established in a group reach out and genuinely include others in the group. It's the difference between asking to be part of a group/making a space for yourself in that group, through your own efforts—and being brought in and accommodated, with genuine concern and compassion. And having true friends/comrades in that group/circle/organization. And perhaps more importantly than that; once a person does join, whether through asking to join/making a space for himself, or being invited in—it's really really imperative that he be made to feel welcome. That true comraderie ensues. People often get sort of ignored or overlooked, even when they are in the movement. Or even mistreated, at times. I mean, the whole thing sort of turns into a high school clique-type of group, at times. Unfortunately. I say that's not right. We're all adults, we should know that compassion and respect—treating one another with the knowledge and awareness that we're all equal, and all valuable human beings—is abc, is fundamental to building a strong movement. It's one of the main building blocks. I mean, I don't know why things are often unfair (or disrespectful) to certain people in the movement...the overall energy is sort of against them, or adversarial towards them. That's not good though—everyone should be treated well, and equally; with respect and compassion, etc. Sometimes it's unclear why some people get sort of ostracized or ignored or disrespected..

Here is the aforementioned drawing I did. For its full description, pls visit this instagram post;
<https://www.instagram.com/p/CBuf8AAh-MD/>



some thoughts on the inefficiency and corruption of government; drawing from the text *The Other America: Poverty In The United States*, by Michael Harrington

May 14, 2020

-note: at the time of writing this post, I had heard of anarcho-communism, but didn't know very much about it. Now, after reading a little bit, I understand that it advocates communism without government, or the state. This concept is I suppose the solution to the 'conundrum' I mention in this Medium post; the conundrum of 'if the federal government is the only institution that has the ability to end poverty, it'll be difficult to end it/it might take years to do so,' etc. To be honest, I had sort of understood from *The Other America* that the federal government is the only institution that can end poverty. But perhaps Michael Harrington wasn't an advocate of anarcho-communism.. which is why he espoused a state-sponsored socialism, instead. He writes on page 188 that 'There is only one institution in the society capable of acting to abolish poverty. That is the federal government. In saying this, I do not rejoice, for centralization can lead to an impersonal and bureaucratic program, one that will be lacking in the very human quality so essential in an approach to the poor. In saying this, I am only recording the facts of political and social life in the United States. The cities are not now capable of dealing with poverty, and each day they become even less capable...So, by process of elimination, there is no place to look except toward the federal government. And indeed, even if there were alternate choices, Washington would have to play an important role, if only because of the need for a comprehensive program and for national planning. But in any case there is no argument, for there is only one realistic possibility: only the federal government has the power to abolish poverty.' (end quote.)

But maybe Michael Harrington meant that initially*, the government is the only institution that can end poverty. As in: we may be able to do without any government, in future—but that, at the same time, the federal government is the only way to instigate or bring about an end to poverty. After poverty is eradicated/abolished, then a stateless society may be possible.

*Or: perhaps Michael Harrington just wasn't an advocate of libertarian socialism/anarcho communism, at all—statelessness, etc. He more aligned himself with government socialism, or state socialism..

But at any rate, I actually think I had a rly good point, with my position that the federal government that Michael Harrington is talking about—the federal government which is the only institution that has the ability to end poverty, as he puts it—is a really slow, bureaucratic-mess type of thing. It's "overly concerned with procedure at the expense of efficiency or common sense," as the definition goes (Oxford English Dictionary, I think). And also: a lot of federal government officials are unfeeling, and kinda crazy, in terms of their ways of thinking. They're rly bad*- they're not good, at all. They don't really care about people, at all. Very sad.

*Also: isn't it unwise and crazy to have a small percentage of people make the decisions for how the rest of society lives? To have that system in the first place is not good, from what I understand of anarcho communism. A small percentage basically decide on the welfare of all the citizens of the country.. A decision like that shouldn't be left to a small group of people...let alone a small group that is actually business partners with CEOs, and etc. From what I understand, many from the federal government class are rly corrupt! I'm becoming slightly

more aware of this fact >.< wtf..

And Harrington (from *The Other America*) actually states this same thing—he states that ‘[There is only one institution in the society capable of acting to abolish poverty. That is the federal government.] In saying this, I do not rejoice, for centralization can lead to an impersonal and bureaucratic program, one that will be lacking in the very human quality so essential in an approach to the poor. In saying this, I am only recording the facts of political and social life in the United States.’

So Harrington is of course actually well aware of the unmoving-ness, in many ways, of the government. *Federal, or otherwise; it's not like state governments are easily getting rid of poverty, either. So even at the state level, fighting poverty is ‘really difficult,’ as we often hear. But: Michael Harrington and all the other socialists are correct when they say that it doesn't have to be hard—we can get rid of poverty if we all really want to. But it's just that there are systems (and people*, more precisely) that get in the way of that. That government itself* gets in the way of simply eliminating poverty. (*But of course; that's the last thing that should be subject to the cruelty of bureaucracy! Or to the cruelty of the vast majority of politicians' corruption—unwillingness to do the *very do-able* (very possible) thing of eliminating poverty. In fact, poverty should have been eradicated way a long time ago. is weird that people still don't have enough to eat, enough money for essentials, etc. People look to politics to solve the problem. Politics and government often is the problem, actually—from what I understand of libertarian socialism and anarcho-communism, etc. :(

Government obviously doesn't have to be corrupt and bureaucratic—it's a choice they make. So from what I understand of libertarian socialism and anarchist philosophy and etc is that; there could be the possibility of non-corrupt government. But 1. what will guarantee that in future, it will remain non-corrupt? Future Corruption is always possible...even if all governments (federal, state, city) are non-corrupt, now. 2. I've also learned that anarchist thought states that: regardless of whether good or corrupt people are in government—now, in future, or ever—the idea of government is harmful and unnecessary. I've sensed that anarchist thought states it's inherently unfair for a small minority to govern and make the rules for the rest of society. The power is always in the hands of elected officials...it's never in the hands of actual citizens—people. And so they have no say in how things will be, other than through voting for politicians who will represent them. But what's the guarantee that the politicians will be good once they are in office? And even if some* elected officials turn out good, what about the other several thousand of them? Zero chance that no one will be corrupt, in the city/state/nation that they govern. (Now, or in the future.) And besides, why do I need someone to represent my interests? Why can't I and my neighbors (and all communities, and etc.) direct the flow of our lives, ourselves? Instead of having others do it for us. It's bound to be unfair—an imbalance in power is never conducive to a fair society.

But I need to learn more about anarcho-communism/libertarian socialism, and ‘state socialism,’ and etc., in order to truly understand them. I don't know much about them other than what I've heard and read—snippets from essays I've seen online, etc. But I don't have any substantial knowledge on any of the subjects. Sometimes I wish I could have studied economics or political science, in college. But I'm actually in the process of creating a list of books to read;

books about these issues, written by anarcho-communists, socialists, etc. :3 Doing so will definitely give me substantial knowledge on the topics, at hand. I won't have anyone there to guide me along or anything, but at least I can read at my own pace, and read up on the specific topics that interest me from those areas. Like, the intersection between anarcho-communism and pan-Africanism. (Being sudanese, and also simply being someone who's interested in pan-Africanism, the political union of all people of African descent, learning about pan Africanism as intertwined with anarcho-communism seems like a good way to gain knowledge about both themes, or ideas. And it's an important topic within the broader field, I'm pretty sure—the intersection between those two movements. But yeah I really don't know anything.. this note; written on May 31, 2020.

Original essay, written on May 14 

hi...

I've recently read about $\frac{2}{3}$ of *The Other America: Poverty In The United States*, by Michael Harrington.

The section that stood out to me the most was: the section of it—a page or two—that identified the organization/institution that has the power to eliminate poverty. The institution that can completely end it. This section is on page 188. It states there that the federal government is the only institution that has the power to end poverty, in America. I agree with that—that makes sense. Socialism, etc. (an end to poverty) must be enacted by the federal government—it can't work any other way. But this assertion and theory—this fact*, rather—is rather a huge blow and a serious point of frustration, I think. It's somewhat of a statement of defeat, almost. In my eyes. Because, if the federal government alone has the ability to eliminate poverty—if it's in their hands alone—I don't think it'll get solved easily. I don't have a lot of faith that it will.

What I got from these final pages of *The Other America* is that there's nothing we can do to eliminate poverty, other than persuading—trying to persuade—lawmakers and etc. (and others within the federal government) to end it. I mean, there are lots of nonprofits and think tanks, and etc.—comprised of professionals, PhD holders, sociologists, experts, etc.—that have as their main focus ~working with the government in order to alleviate and end poverty. They suggest policies, present research, etc., all in the hopes of affecting policy change, and ultimately eliminating poverty. And there are of course some politicians and departments who focus on eliminating poverty in America, I guess. That's all true. But, my argument is that that has been going on for years*. Think tanks and nonprofits and etc. working with the government to end poverty, has been going on for years. And certain departments and politicians working to end poverty has been going on for years. Yet, poverty is still here—homelessness is as bad as ever, from what I gather. Millions still struggle to meet basic needs; food, housing, etc. This tells me something, actually. This tells me that unless people at the federal government enact a system (a socialist system) that ends poverty, it'll go on. Like Michael Harrington identified. So, his assertion is right: it's clear that anything else other than socialism won't end poverty. Because: we've been doing other things—trying other means—for years, I suppose. Decades, etc. But it hasn't eliminated poverty. I think that in a way, the

main obstacle—or one of the main obstacles—is that most of the federal government doesn't really want to end poverty, in that they don't really want socialism, etc. Socialism being the only way out, from what I understand.

Also, it sometimes seems to me that people in government spend a lot of time working to solve problems like education, crime, etc. But I think a general consensus (among people like sociologists, etc.) is that a lot of these issues stem from poverty. Being poor creates or at least exacerbates all these other issues. So, eliminating poverty—ensuring everyone has a decent standard of living—will also eliminate the other issues. So I guess it seems to me like there are too many politicians and too many resources—too much time, effort—spent on eliminating crime, incarceration, bad education, and things like that—when they could be eliminating the root of these problems; poverty. If crime and bad education, etc., is reduced or solved, but poverty still prevails, then crime and substandard education and etc. will simply continue/crop up again, in the next generation, or sooner. :3 So, as long as there is poverty, the other problems will always follow. I'm quite sure this is true—i read this from somewhere reputable..i can't remember where, exactly :3

.....

I hope the federal government eliminates poverty soon, lol. It's crazy* how the fate of millions of people—hundreds of millions (~300 million) rests on the decisions of a few hundred people, or a few thousand. However many elected officials are in congress, or the senate, and etc. Crazy! I haven't ever seen a crazier thing in my life, actually. No wonder* churches, synagogues, mosques, etc. and all their congregations are praying for an end to poverty, in America. Prayer/supernatural intervention is the only thing that will do it, it seems. It's almost as if there is nothing else that will move ~the federal government~ into meaningful action. That's why they're called the federal government, i guess. lol. (Federal government has a negative connotation...to me, at least.)

I wish i myself had some power or influence in eliminating poverty. But i am nobody. Nobody, with no power. In fact, I will never have any power or influence, in my life. I'm 100% certain. I'm probably gonna go into book editing, after I finally finish college. That doesn't do anything to end poverty in america, or anything like that :(it's a random/unrelated vocation. Although: I do have dreams to work at a political press, or else a publishing house that puts out political/social books. Books about poverty in America (not unlike The Other America, by Michael Harrington. Lol. I likely won't be assigned such an important book to edit, though. It's beyond my scope/ability to edit/revise, I'm pretty sure); and other books about poverty-related issues (like housing and employment, I guess...). I mean, editing/working with such books doesn't directly contribute to ending poverty, but it's on the margins, at least. I feel it's marginally/ slightly impactful; it informs the public on how to end poverty, how the author sees the issue of poverty, the solutions to it, etc. And that might make the people who are in the fight to end poverty more informed and aware, and so will in turn help them in their fight to end poverty. (If they read such books, of course :3). So, books help in an indirect way, I think. They make people more informed and knowledgeable. And actually, i'm convinced they even lift people's morale and their inclination to fight poverty. I mean, that's what The Other America did for me; it kinda made me feel more conscious, and definitely more concerned about it. It even made me feel like I was in the fight to end poverty, myself—simply reading through it kind of

made me feel like i was part of the movement for a complete end to poverty.. :3 made me feel good, in other words. hehe.

Another small point on my plans to edit books: even if I don't end up doing much work with poverty-related books, I will certainly end up editing manuscripts about environmental issues, race, women's issues/feminism, minorities/marginalized peoples, etc. If I end up working for a political press, that is. Or a political and socially-inclined press—one that focuses on producing books on social, political, and cultural issues, and so on.

If the editing doesn't work out though, I might work for a local nonprofit that deals with homelessness or poverty, in their community. One that works to end poverty in their specific locality, i guess c: I don't know if i will end up doing that, though :3 i don't know if i will bring much to a nonprofit, in terms of skill, etc. I don't even know if any of the departments will be a good fit for me :3 i could work in the communications team, I guess. :3 Or fundraising, etc. :3 i probably won't be a stellar worker there, tho :3 I'll be sub-par, probably :3

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/hi-3-52afl340fc35

the lgbtq+ cause, around the world

March 25, 2020

We as humanity have certainly made progress in regards to ensuring the rights and dignity, and prosperity and happiness, of marginalized peoples. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, religious minorities, people with disabilities, people with mental illnesses, neurodivergent people, the poor, LGBTQ+ people, etc. But if you ask me which two groups of people have had the short end of the stick in regards to help, support, and advancement in society, I would say poor people, and lgbt+ people. The latter has at least had it as bad as anyone else, I think.

We all want to help the poor, and we are all concerned about ‘the least of us,’ etc. Even if we don’t move at all in this issue of helping the poor (meaning: we don’t act on our so-called worry and distress over the plight of those in poverty), we at least pretend to. It’s seen as bizarre if you express disinterest in helping the poor..

The difference between the issues of helping those in poverty and helping lgbt+ people, though, is that many people aren’t interested in uplifting and advancing the cause of LGBT people. They’re kind of far removed from that cause. I mean, I think most countries in the world haven’t legalized same-sex marriage...and they don’t really recognize transgender rights. So, much of the world – many countries – lag behind regarding these issues. I mean, I think Taiwan recently legalized same-sex marriage, and Angola and India decriminalized same-sex relationships.. But many countries in the world are not progressing, in this issue. I don’t think that can be disputed.

I think one element of the solution to this problem is for leaders of communities in all countries to address this issue forthrightly and plainly. Earnestly. If certain leaders of societies – elected officials, leaders of cultural institutions/centers, professors, etc. – would talk openly about lgbt matters, then communities would move forward regarding this issue. If community leaders in societies where LGBT rights are cast aside would publicly express how the LGBT cause is an important issue – that their struggles as citizens of the country are not far off from LGBT struggles, and that everyone should be in solidarity with each other – then communities would begin to accept or at least seriously think about this matter.

But I don’t know if many leaders do that – if community leaders in societies around the world currently do that. Would many even think to do that, in say, Uganda, or Malaysia, or Argentina? Or almost anywhere actually?

Some people are fundamentalists in their faith – they’re extremely conservative, and I guess that’s that. Some are simply prejudiced, in themselves. But for the liberal factions among societies in the world (there are liberal professors, cultural leaders, government officials, etc. in all countries, of course) – in regards to the liberal factions and their social/political orientation, the onus is completely and totally on them to take this issue and run with it. To lift up the cause of lgbt rights in their communities/countries. If the more liberal figures in these countries (and the very liberal/far left, among them) don’t lead on this issue, we’re never going to move forward with lgbt rights, worldwide. I truly think it starts with the more liberal leaders of society

to strike the conversations in their communities about this issue. 'It starts from the bottom up,' as we always hear. Changing hearts and minds and building future leaders of causes – like the lgbt rights cause – starts from the bottom, up. We can't blame the heads of government of these countries for not embracing lgbt rights. And we can't truly change societies by trying to get the heads of state and their administrations to embrace lgbt rights, and etc. We have to get the masses of people to be on the side of lgbt rights. And then maybe they themselves can pressure their governments to embrace it, too. They can take the position of 'this is what we want; this is what we want in a leader. We won't even vote you in, unless you're explicitly for this issue,' and etc. That's how we get countries and the world to change, I think. (And all this has been said and re-said, of course – I have a feeling my words aren't new, in terms of this dialogue :p

I really hope the LGBT cause can be a foundational bedrock of all societies around the world – along with women's rights, racial and ethnic minorities' rights, fighting poverty, etc. All of these issues are important – some more dire than others, perhaps. But it's safe to say that no society is healthy with one segment of it is hurting – societies are only as strong as their weakest members. It's sort of like having one part of your body being sick – can you really say you're healthy when you have a part of your body that is ailing? It's only one part, but that part determines the outcome of your health. No one says 'I'm healthy, but I have a problem with my liver,' or 'kidney,' or 'stomach.' You say 'I'm sick, because of my kidney, or liver, or stomach.' You say 'I have this problem with my kidneys,' or 'liver,' etc. That one part actually determines your overall health, in a way. Society is the exact same way – it can't be healthy or successful – good – when one part of it is hurting. It's only when everyone is healthy and well, that society is healthy and well.

- Angola decriminalized same-sex relationships: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/01/1031292>
- India decriminalized same-sex relationships: <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/topic/same-sex-marriage>
- Taiwan legalized same-sex marriage: <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-48305708>

https://medium.com/@etharhamid_9457/we-as-humanity-have-certainly-made-progress-in-regards-to-ensuring-the-rights-and-dignity-and-519e75725168

Thoughts on an article about *Joker*

February 24, 2020

<https://off-guardian.org/2020/02/10/why-did-so-much-of-the-media-turn-against-joker/>
I didn't see this film yet. I've heard about the different remakes of it throughout the years, like the one with Heath Ledger (R.I.P.) and the one with Jack Nicholson. Actually, those films weren't highlighting the Joker, exclusively, I think.. they were more about the whole story/narrative ('Batman,' and 'The Dark Knight.')

This new movie ('Joker')..which is different from 'Batman' and 'The Dark Knight' in that it's all about the Joker) looks good. This article about it, and about why much of the media turned against it, is really, really good! I loved it: <https://off-guardian.org/2020/02/10/why-did-so-much-of-the-media-turn-against-joker/>

From what I understand, this article is arguing that a lot of the media didn't really come to terms with certain themes that the new *Joker* film went into. Themes like 'a depressed life, a bad life (all-in-all bad, with no real light at the end of the tunnel), despondency, and etc. -American film often doesn't really hold up or glorify (or exalt) those kinds of films. I think the writer of the article mentioned that American film (from film critics to broader film culture—awards given, what the public thought of it, and etc..) often give preference to films that aren't completely depressing.. even though 'completely depressing' is quite an accurate term to describe many lives—and many aspects of life. So, those types of films should definitely be held up more, in film life in America.

So, according to this article, that's one reason why elements of the critical media didn't appreciate this film, to a large degree.

This article also states that there's another arena that the new *Joker* movie went into, which might not have sat well with film critics and the broader media, which is why they largely gave negative reviews of it. This arena includes the issues of classism, social isolation, mental illness, and severe neglect by society—one's society. So, not only did parts of the media have an aversion to *Joker* because it dealt with a character who had an entirely tragic, dark life (with no positive vibes in his narrative); another point of contest was that the specific themes and problems that the character (Joker) faces throughout the movie are 'gray area issues,' in a way. They sort of muddy the waters, in that they're really hard issues to deal with in any way...and they're actually dealt with badly, in our world. (Classism, social isolation, mental illness, and severe neglect by society, as aforementioned.). And so critics and the media (subconsciously) didn't know what to make of this movie, overall—it caught them sort of unprepared to dissect it and review it, fairly.

The author of this article gives some examples of the not-entirely-fair and also kind of illogical critiques of this film..

...

In conclusion, I liked this article..I thought it was smart and well-written.
I think the Joker has always been fascinating to me. Of course 'how can a character so sinister and maniacal—twisted and bad*, be of interest?' is a valid question, I guess. I think we all like

the Joker, though! hehe something about the twisted-up nature of him sort of strikes a chord, strikes a note, with us. Maybe we find his intensity and eagerness refreshing, in a way.. or we find his maniacalness sort of fascinating.. it's hard to explain :3 :3

:3 ok thank u

Here's a link to the Writing page of my blog. You can find all my published writings (essays and poetry), here;
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