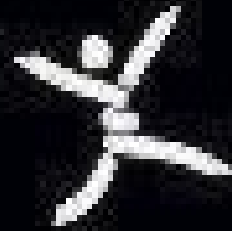


Manifesto of Subversion and Peace:

A Humble Handbook for Liberation



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Authors Note:

This work is the beginning portion of a much larger project that seeks to find alternative and effective pathways to a resilient, sustainable, and peaceful future. Out of consideration for the reader, the aim was to keep the content of this paper at a limit near 20 pages. Because of this constraint and the true desire to pursue this topic, it was determined that the purpose of this specific piece is to outline a framework, which will be expanded upon, in stages, into the future.

Please enjoy.

Part I: OVERVIEW

The Project

The intention of this project is to create an accessible tool, a handbook, a discussion, a guide, something that people can relate to. This project seeks to reach out to all people; young academics and professionals, laborers, parents, teachers, retirees, lawyers, healthcare workers, servers, every person who feels not only frustrated, but abandoned by the system in which they have the majority of their life working toward gaining some sort of notoriety and approval in. This manifesto is for those of us who are unable to identify just how we should leverage our privilege, or if we should at all. This manifesto is for those of us who have, for a lifetime, seen the abuses of authority and have learned to spite it. This project is speaking to those who are non-violent but constantly active, those that have been arrested while demonstrating, or criticized when speaking out. There have not been many options available to us. We can either accept that the system is insurmountable so we therefore should dive deep into the belly of the beast and see what sort of change we can affect as shadows dancing from within Dante's cave, or we can rebel against the system, rejecting all things organized and doom ourselves to a life of dissent, protest, criticism, government surveillance, and a general ostracization by the dominant society. A grim outlook indeed. To take one path we feel as though we've compromised our morals and beliefs, and to take the other path, the future appears fruitless and ineffective.

This project addresses that conundrum. This project speaks to a place that breeds creativity and empowerment. This project desires to breed resiliency, compassion, political action, and a sense of accountability for one's own actions both personally, locally, and globally.

Part II: THE ISSUE

What's the Problem?

In a world of uncertainty, this much is clear: the “system” has failed us. In America, in Europe, and increasingly across the globe, the system of free-market capitalism that was espoused to be our saving grace has led us all down a path of debt, overconsumption, imperialism, and isolation. Economists and politicians alike continue to find specific sectors of society or individual events upon

which to place the blame of a failing economic system, whether those be the housing crisis, terrorist threats, or any other number of isolated circumstances, which are not framed within the larger context of an exhausted capitalism.

The problem is that centralized power, at the massive scales we are seeing today, produces an imbalance of power and therefore an imbalance in control over resources and decision-making abilities.

In what has been accepted as the “mainstream” media should one openly criticize this system, one earn titles such as, “Communist,” “Socialist,” or “Anarchist.” All of these titles, though utilized as cannon fodder to insult and defame scholars in corporate American media, in truth have long histories behind them with complex narratives of effective social movements and political pursuits. Yet, these histories are ignored by the overwhelming majority of the modern American political discussion. Why would the state be compelled to deny and ignore this bountiful history? This question warrants a brief, yet in-depth examination of the paradigm from which modern politics operates.

Examining the State

In order to subvert a system, it is necessary to first understand what moves and sustains that system. This portion of the handbook will:

Provide the reader with a deeper understanding of the origins of “The State” in order to better comprehend how to work around it. The analysis will then illuminate the tendencies of the state towards violent means of authority, which are acted out on the personal body as well as through institutions. This portion will conclude with a discussion on the variables that are necessary in order to maintain “legitimacy” and “authority” and therefore, the continued existence of the state.

Questions:

Is it philosophically antithetical for an alternative society to emerge through the state system under which it is occupied?

Or is it necessary for the population to completely subvert the state apparatus in order to achieve sustainable self-determination and independence?

When discussing the state of nature it is imperative to employ Thomas Hobbes. As a philosopher, Hobbes is concerned with uncovering the driving forces underlying human nature. For Hobbes, the first priority in human nature is to preserve one's own human life. Politicized conflicts that arise thereafter are subsequently based in ego. Hobbes' argument intimates that motivations other than the preservation of one's life, such as those that are politically inclined, are irrational and out of touch with the genuine priorities of human nature.

“The right of nature...is the liberty each man hath to use his own power, as he will himself, for the preservation of his own nature; that is to say, of his own life.”

This state of nature is dangerous, destructive, unpredictable, random, and impulsive. Human nature is specifically categorized as uncontrollable and violent. The logic continues that by virtue of this uncontrollable nature, humans necessitate being controlled by a larger apparatus' that utilizes force and authority against those that embody this nature-ness.

Considering Hobbes is one of the original and most prominent philosophers of state theory, his work certainly lays the foundation for political science and the formation of states as they exist today. Hobbes speaks not of the *power* of the sovereign, but rather the *authority* of the sovereign to rule. He argues that the state is authorized to govern as opposed to holding the power to govern. The state achieves this authorization through the will of the citizenry.

In deliberation, the last appetite, or aversion, immediately adhering to the action, or to the omission thereof, is that we call the WILL; the act, (not the faculty) of willing. And beasts that have deliberation, must necessarily also have will. Part 1 Chapter V § 53 (Hobbes 2009, 40)

Summary:

The world according to Hobbes:

The state of nature is dangerous, destructive, unpredictable, random, and impulsive.

Therefore, humans necessitate being controlled by a centralized force and authority. This force being the state.

Power and Authority

Questions:

Societal ideas and impressions of who is able to rule and who is not able to rule have remained essentially unchanged since Ancient Greece. This section presents dominant society's opinion on, and subsequent actions regarding:

Who rules?

Who is ruled?

If humans are considered to be irrational and unpredictable by nature, what then gives the authority, other than the consent of others, to an individual or group of individuals, to govern?

Traditional state theory suggests that the concentration of power is generally beneficial for the common good. Yet it is clear that this is not the case. Through resistance, revolution, coup d'etat, and war, it is shown that the concentration of power does not contribute to the common good. Who then comprises those through which the power is concentrated?

Plato's Republic is an early, formal discussion on the selection of ruling class regarding who has the authority to have dominion over the citizenry:

“In the first place, and as we began by observing, the nature of the philosopher has to be ascertained. We must come to an understanding about him, and, when we have done so, then if I am not mistaken, we shall also acknowledge that such a union of qualities is possible, and that those in whom they are, and those only, should be the rulers in the State.” (Plato and Jowett 2008, 190)

The discussion moves on to justify the rule of aristocracy over the citizenry as the guardians, who possess “all great qualities”:

First, then, I said, let us inquire how timocracy (the government of honor) arises out of aristocracy (the government of the best) Republic, Book 8 §545c (Plato and Jowett 2008, 260).

Keeping with this discussion it is evident that from the earliest formal discussions on the matter,

the state system was framed to allow for the wealthy and influential to possess power and authority over the less economically endowed. This right to rule is premised on the argument that those in positions of great financial wealth are more capable and are therefore entitled to the responsibility of subjugating and controlling the general population. In short, Plato argues that the educated and wealthy are the most fit to rule due to their inherent greatness.

But if human nature is violent and unpredictable, how does intellectual and economic greatness operate to maintain order within the state? Hobbes would argue that it is not necessarily a specific characteristic of an individual that affords them the right to rule, but rather it is the decision, the will, of the majority to grant that individual authority to rule that affords them such a right.

Friedrich Nietzsche offers a different perspective on those who rule, one that is more closely aligned with that of Plato than that of Hobbes, but is far more egocentric than both.

On grand politics. However much utility and vanity, those of individuals as of peoples, may play a part in the grand politics: the strongest tide which carries them forward is the need for the feeling of power, which from time to time streams up out of inexhaustible wells not only in the souls of princes and the powerful but not least in the lower orders of the people. When man possesses the feeling of power he feels and calls himself good: and it is precisely then that the others upon whom he has to discharge his power feel and call him evil! Part Three, Will to Power §195 (Nietzsche 1978, 220)

Nietzsche's theory suggests that those who rule choose to rule, and that they are not chosen to rule. Max Weber maintains a similar argument when discussing the role of politicians in society:

There are two ways of making politics one's vocation: Either one lives 'for' politics or one lives 'off' politics. By no means is this contrast an exclusive one. He who lives 'for' politics makes politics his life, in an internal sense. Either he enjoys the naked possession of the power he exerts, or he nourishes his inner balance and self-feeling by the consciousness that his life has meaning in the service of a 'cause.' He who strives to make politics a permanent source of income lives 'off' politics as a vocation, whereas he who does not do this lives 'for' politics. Under normal conditions, the politician must be economically independent of the income politics can bring him. This means, quite simply, that the politician must be wealthy or must

have a personal position in life, which yields a sufficient income (Weber et al. 2004, 5).

Thomas Hobbes, Plato, Frederick Nietzsche, and Max Weber are highly influential minds in the study of political science and certainly inform the theory and practice of state formation today. Considering the views reviewed thus far, though somewhat different and perhaps slightly contradictory, a certain pattern is witnessed, money and power are inextricably linked.

Summary:

Hobbes: “Authority,” “Power,” and “Legitimacy”: The state is *authorized* to govern.

Plato: The educated and wealthy are the most fit to rule due to their inherent greatness.

Nietzsche: Those who rule choose to rule, they are not chosen to rule.

Weber: Either one lives 'for' politics or one lives 'off' politics.



According to these major political philosophers, the humans that are deemed worthy, wealthy, and credible enough to maintain the authority to rule through a concentration of power.

Contrast these political philosophies to that of Karl Marx, wherein the working class is authorized to become the ruling class.

State Violence

Question:

What happens when this purported authority is challenged, particularly by an individual or small group of individuals that do not wield much in the way of military might?

Max Weber argues that in order for a state to preserve authority over the citizenry it must maintain a monopoly of violence. This violence is typically carried out through the military or state police.

Organized domination, which calls for continuous administration, requires that human conduct be conditioned to obedience towards those masters who claim to be the bearers of legitimate power (Weber et al. 2004, 2).

Much violence occurs at the hand of the state that is not direct physical violence but rather, systematic and institutional violence. This would include phenomena such as incarceration inequities, institutional racism, disproportionate access to education, health care, the inherent inequalities present in contemporary free-market capitalism, and so on. Even so, this conspicuous state-sponsored violence cannot continue without providing some level of justification to the populous, for to do so would compromise the alleged legitimacy of the state. The alternative then, is to weave a state narrative. Narratives serve to work on that portion of the citizenry that can be reached every day, with complicity, willingly, often by the citizen's demand, and without having to employ direct physical violence. These narratives are delivered through various mediums, particularly media, but are also delivered through means of education, which shapes the psyche and psychology of the citizenry, functioning to foster a favorable sentiment from the citizen toward the state.

Conscious Manipulation

Contemporarily in the United States it is difficult to employ state violence against U.S. citizens as a means of control. This may be considered encouraging, as it demonstrates the power of the public in demanding rights and reinforcing boundaries of the body. But in lieu of violent means of control the government and the corporations that support many individuals within the government are driven to find other means of control. Since control over the body of the citizen through state violence is deemed largely unacceptable, control over the mind of the citizen becomes necessary. This happens through corporate propaganda, education, the production of narratives and histories, and acculturation through the various forms of media. These state narratives, through propaganda and history creation, grant the state continued authority to exist as the ruling body.

In an interview for the film "Manufacturing Consent", Noam Chomsky clearly lays out the role of the media in manipulating the consciousness of the public in order to serve a larger agenda, which is determined by corporations and government alike.

...there are two different groups...One is...the political class...which is relatively educated, more or less articulate, plays some kind of role in decision-making... Now their consent is crucial... [this] group that has to be deeply indoctrinated. Then there's maybe eighty percent of the population whose main function is to follow orders and not think...and they're the ones who usually pay the costs.

...the elite media are sort of the agenda-setting media...The New York Times plays an enormous role in shaping the perception of the current world on the part of the politically active, educated classes...Also, The New York Times creates history...the place where people will go to find out what happened is The New York Times [archives]. Therefore it's extremely important if history is going to be shaped in an appropriate way, that certain things appear, certain things not appear, certain questions be asked, other questions be ignored, and that issues be framed in a particular fashion (Chomsky 1992).

Consumerism and corporate capitalism are additional and necessary means of manipulating the population. The consumer culture, as facilitated and fed by free-market, oligarchic capitalism keeps the population in bondage to increasing debt, to feeling inadequate, and to an ever expanding desire to be someone other than one's self. This is accomplished by repeating unrealistic visions of body, lifestyle, economics, and expectation. The audience has internalized these messages, these narratives, and subsequently, rather than striving for a psychologically, physiologically, emotionally, and ecologically sustainable life, the goal has become to attain something removed and perverse to from a realistic homeostasis.

The functions of media, capitalism, and consumerism all dovetail to effectively paralyze the population through consumer bondage. For the state, this consumer bondage functions to distract the citizen from more pressing issues, such as the failing legitimacy of the state itself. For media, consumer bondage is what quite literally keeps them in business and furthermore assures that profits continue in an upward trend. For the capitalistic oligarchy this consumerism is what supports the growth imperative upon which the contemporary economy is founded.

It would seem that if a consistent project of conscious manipulation is necessary in order to maintain, within the general citizenry, a sentiment that the state is legitimized, then this would point to serious flaws within the foundation of the state. If the state were abiding by the terms of the contract, by providing sufficiently for the citizenry and contributing to the common good then a calculated agenda of propaganda would not be necessary.

The question then remains, how much of state legitimacy, and therefore authority, is determined through the manipulation of consciousnesses through constructed narratives and how much of this legitimacy is actually afforded through the state providing sufficiently what it is to provide based on the

terms of the contract between a governing body and the citizenry?

Power and violence are opposites; where the one rules absolutely, the other is absent. Violence appears where power is in jeopardy, but left to its own course it ends in power's disappearance. (Arendt 1969, 56).

Summary:

The population is kept from deeply criticizing the state by remaining bound to a trifecta of media, capitalism, and consumerism. The conscious manipulation by the media serves to sustain a capitalistic consumerism, thereby distracting the citizenry from addressing more the acute conditions of society.

Deconstructing the State

"The master's tools will never dismantle the master's house." – Audrey Lorde

The state is interested in self-preservation. It does not exist in order to be eventually replaced or dismantled. It is formed in order to remain, in perpetuity, as any living organism seeks to do. As Chomsky discusses:

...no institution is going to happily design a mechanism to self-destruct. It's not the way institutions function. So they'll work to exclude or marginalize or eliminate dissenting voices or alternative perspectives and so on because they're dysfunctional, they're dysfunctional to the institution itself (Chomsky 1992).

Because of this inherent desire of the state to assure its reproduction and survival, methods to usurp state power would most certainly not be created intentionally by the institution of the state. Should a group attempt to utilize the resources available through the state, primarily fiscal, in order to challenge state legitimacy, and become a formidable threat, the state would respond with force,

manipulation, and eventually violence. In order to maintain a sense of satisfaction amongst the citizenry, the state will, through propaganda and the construction of elaborate narratives, give the impression that marginalized groups are duly represented within the body of the state. Furthermore, these narratives will go to great lengths to demonstrate to said marginalized groups that they are more secure under the auspices of the foreign state, rather than being self-determined and independent.

Though intimidating upon first glance, this system we know as “The State” is not the infinite and omnipresent force that it presents itself to be. The Democratic and/or Republic states that hold the majority of the world’s power and influence are constructed just as any other alternative society would be. This realization exposes the fragility of the state apparatus, exposing its numerous Achilles heels.

It then becomes the task of those who are not satisfied with the state, as it exists in its current form, to find and strike at these Achilles heels, at the root.

It is imperative that the visualization and actualization of alternatives does not imitate that which is deplorable about the state, namely the excessive use of state violence.

Part III: SOLUTIONS

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.” - Buckminster Fuller

There is a movement afoot to find solutions to the failure that is the state. Many continue to try and find solutions in the system itself, the same system that has collapsed, packed its bags, and headed south for the winter; whereas many others are turning outside of the system, to other systems, and to non-systems.

A Blueprint for Action

Question:

So, how do we get to this new model?

In order to get to a model that renders the previous model obsolete, there must be a basic shift in our presumptions about the human paradigm. Every major shift, be it in building, business, or in politics requires a blueprint. The remainder of this paper is laying out the blueprint for what is needed in order to step outside of this broken and bloodied system in an effective, productive, and non-violent manner. The name of the game is subversion. Not subversion in a nefarious sense but rather subversion as a means of avoiding direct conflict, subversion as the natural byproduct of the transition towards resiliency, self sufficiency, and sustainability.

The current model is in decline. Rather than banging at the door of collapse, asking the plummeting system to create a preferable future while in the midst of the dive, it is going to be essential that the emerging society be prepared for the transition so that it may ascend into full actualization once the time is ripe and the empire has fallen. In order to be ready for the opportunity that crisis provides, there must be a plan. We must first identify the problem at hand, then envision what our new society will look like, and finally identify the strategy to get there.

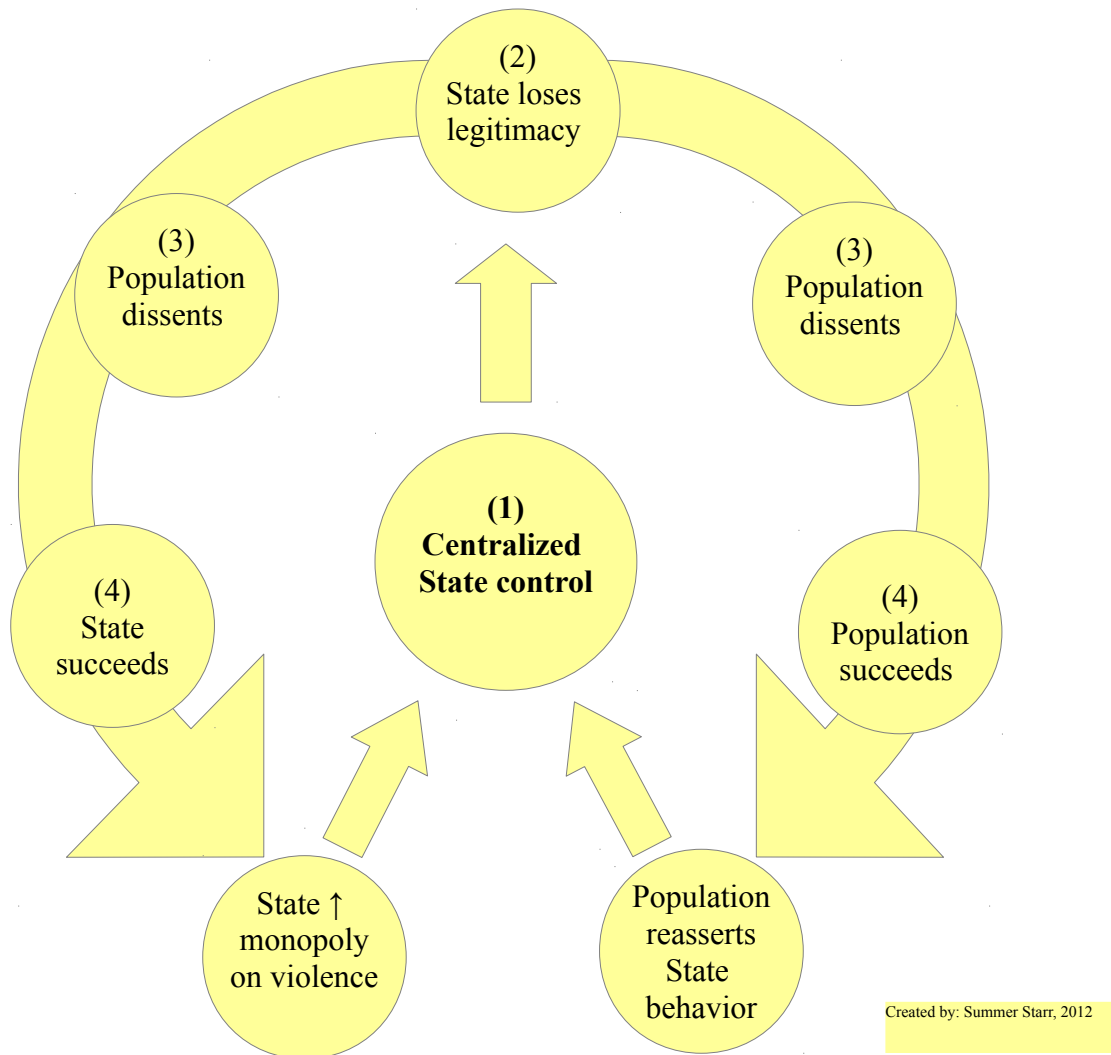
- 1) **Identify the problem;**
- 2) **Envision a new society; and**
- 3) **Identify the strategy.**

Within each of these steps are what could be a lifetime of work, yet with many minds and many hands working towards a more resilient future, none of the work will fall on one human individual, nor should it, for the sustained success of a participatory model is in collaboration.

Blueprint Step 1: Identifying the Problem

History does indeed repeat itself. This can be a terribly disempowering realization, in that it appears as though the results are infinitely inevitable. The story seems to go as follows: We have a society and this society works relatively harmoniously until there is a distortion and abuse of power. This abuse is accepted by the population to a certain extent. At some moment, or more so, buildup of moments, the people rise and stand against the oppressive force of the state. This dissent is tolerated by the State at first but ultimately results in a violent interaction. Concurrently, the state continues to lose legitimacy and thus begins its descent. Perhaps the population “wins” and a people's party takes over the existing governmental structure. Perhaps an individual leads the charge and changes the general

structure of government but continues to assert power and dominance over the population. Or perhaps the existing party simply remains in control while increasing its monopoly on violence to extinguish the dissenting population entirely.



In the words of Henry David Thoreau “There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root.” Much of the energy put towards creating alternative futures is directed at the branches. Yet, once armed with the knowledge of this historical cycle, it is clear that the appropriate step is to uncover what is at the root and strike. In doing so, the individual is completely empowered to effect change. In fact, facilitating people to discover this empowerment is the only way to create a sustained movement of political and social change. The most effective manner to uncover this empowerment is through encouraging personal and community resiliency. Once balance is re-

established in the personal body, then balance within the family body, the neighborhood body, and the community body are simply an organic progression, a dialectic, rather than a concerted and often forced effort.

Clearly, there are numerous problems of great import facing our globe today that are much larger than the individual or singular community. The difficult task is uncovering the common denominator in all these problems. What larger theme facilitates and allows for the myriad of concerns facing our global society today? What allows for the continued environmental degradation, countless wars, human rights abuses, and manipulation of global markets and economies without accountability?

Power. Specifically the concentration of power, and furthermore the massive centralization of power. For example, when those who benefit from drilling for oil off the Gulf Coast are of the same circle, if not precisely the same individuals who control large media conglomerates, who are of the same circle who create the policies and regulations for said oil and media industries, and who are of the same circle who purport to adjudicate such crimes, it becomes clear that justice is a muddled pathway at best. With a highly centralized power structure, the possibility of citizen intervention or holding perpetrators accountable becomes a task of the David and Goliath magnitude.

This centralization of power is not limited to political and governmental power. It extends to the electrical power grid and to the basic biological power we find in food. Most certainly, and oft-neglected, it extends to our sense of personal power, of our capabilities as individual, autonomous beings.

Yet, people are disenchanted with the system. For a lifetime, American citizens are fed the myth of the American dream. Americans are taught to believe that any one human can succeed in this society despite all adversity. Americans are taught to believe the myth of multiculturalism. Americans are taught to feel entitled to a lifestyle of living beyond ones means. The ramifications of perpetuating this myth are staring us square in the face.

There is no time to monkey around, swinging aimlessly from branch to branch. The time is now to monkey wrench and strike at the root.

Blueprint Step 2: Building a New Society

"We cannot solve the problems we have created with the same thinking that created them." - Albert Einstein

There are three vital steps that must be a part of the new and emerging society:

1. **Resiliency**
2. **Sustainability**
3. **Autonomy**

The scope and depth of each of these elements will not be discussed in this paper, as they are each volumes within themselves. Rather, what will be discussed for the purposes of this project is to point out how these elements fit with one another and their significance in the broader project.

Building Step 1: Resiliency

Resiliency is the first step in liberating oneself and society from the dominant paradigm in order to create space for the creation of a new reality and a new society.

It must be realized that the pathway towards this new society does not depend on the oppressor acting as your liberator. The question in many academic, activist, and policy circles has long been: “Can turning to methods outside of the system itself ever really work?” The more appropriate inquiry is: “Can using the methods of the system itself ever really work?” It is illogical to expect the gatekeeper to provide you the key. Arguably, the ultimate strategy is a combination of working from within the dominant framework while employing several methods outside of the dominant framework. These methods that are employed outside of the dominant framework must resist mimicking those which they seek to change. Individual and community resiliency helps to create a groundedness that reinforces the necessity to move away from the values and desires stressed by dominant society.

The general thrust behind building resiliency is to build your body, your home, and your community strong. It is to strive for self-sufficiency in terms of food, water, medicine, power, and other material goods. A most elemental step in attaining true resiliency is to begin with the self. The larger scale shift will occur only when enough individuals have consciously recognized that dependence upon the benevolence of the state is tenuous at best, and have therefore made the decision to learn how to provide for themselves, their families, and their communities.

Each individual who begins to remove herself from the “grid” not only becomes less stress on the ecosystems of the planet, but also contributes to less control that the state is able to assert over the citizenry. Without a needy population for which it may purport to provide, the state, as a self-serving entity, will become less and less influential and eventually obsolete.

This level of resiliency of course can be done and is being done, at the rural scale but it is also possible to achieve at an urban scale. The intent with working towards resiliency is not to instantaneously become a superhuman athlete/gardener/hunter/revolutionary all in one fell swoop. Rather it is to make the space to sit with yourself and connect inwards, to establish connections with those near to you both emotionally and geographically to find the creative solutions appropriate for your community. Working towards resiliency is to reclaim the humanity we are rapidly losing to dominant society.

Exercise:

5 simple things we can do TODAY to works towards RESILIENCY

1. Develop a simple workout regimen that is appropriate for your body.
 - Such as jogging, yoga, gardening, lifting weights, playing with kids, or tai chi.
2. Shake your neighbors hand.
 - Give them your number and create a relationship.
3. Learn where one of your most consumed items comes from.
 - Everyday things such as coffee, milk, oats, almonds, chicken, or lettuce.
4. With this knowledge, switch that one item to an item that is locally sourced.
 - The general rule of thumb is to source something within 100miles.
 - Or perhaps learn how to grow this item yourself!
 - Can't find it locally and can't grow it yourself? This is the time to ask yourself the question of just how necessary that item is to your health and well-being.
5. Take 5 minutes today to reflect, meditate, or journal.
 - Just 5 minutes to sit, lay, or stroll in the beginning or at the end of the day to reflect upon what you will do or what you have done in that day.
 - How have your actions served you and how has this served your community?

Building Step 2: Sustainability

Where resiliency works from the individual to homestead to community level, sustainability works on a much broader scale. Sustainability is more than simply replacing one form of consumerism for a “green” consumerism. This is reducing, sourcing locally, then re-using and at last resort, recycling. Sustainability is thinking creatively with what we've got. Sustainability is not creating more, more, more, always more with what we don't. A sustainable action considers the effects that action or decision on the environment and other human populations.

Resiliency, sustainability, self-sufficiency, autonomy and how these relate to state power may all be viewed through the analogy of a marriage or domestic partnership. In such a relationship, when one partner is entirely dependent upon the other for basic needs, material goods, and emotional affirmation, the relationship may become not only strained but highly manipulative. The partner who provides these things, the state, may feel the power, authority, and entitlement to control the other. Perhaps the partner who provides financially is not domineering by nature, nor is the financially dependent partner, weak by nature, but the inequity of the situation may easily lead to imbalance and abuse. As the financially dependent partner is able to provide for herself or himself, this balance of power may shift. The two parties are then able to operate from similar leverage points, thereby eliminating the previous abuse of power. That being said, the partner who had been dominant for so long may have grown accustomed to this position and may not relinquish it very willingly. We see this both in personal and societal relationships. It is in these situations that having developed a strong sense of self as well as having developed self-sufficiency is particularly imperative.

Examples of working towards this self-sufficient space and a sustainable community may involve a whole spectrum of elements. Perhaps it is the revitalizing of a watershed so as to stop the importation and waste of water. It may involve finding ways to finance small-scale renewable energy facilities using local labor and the most ecologically responsible materials. Making small towns sustainable is imperative. A sustainable community is one that builds its strong agricultural network strong. This can be done through local community supported agriculture (CSA) farms, creating space and helping to create a demand for farmer's markets and local, organic produce. It is finding creative ways to assist families with childcare. An example of such may be to combine services of elderly care with childcare so as to benefit both generations. Children are endowed with much wisdom and knowledge from elders, often absent in our contemporary nuclear families, while those elders are kept stimulated and sharp by the nubile and inquisitive minds of youth. These examples are just a small sampling of what communities can do and are doing to work towards a more sustainable future.

Exercise:**5 simple things we can do TODAY to works towards SUSTAINABILITY**

1. Support a local CSA Farm.
 - Don't live in a rural town? There are increasing CSA's across the nation that serve larger metropolitan areas.
 - Still can't find something nearby? Ask your local grocer to research it for you, create the market yourself.
2. Switch to a renewable source of energy.
 - Don't have the finances at the moment to fund your own project? Look to see if there are local cooperatives providing this service.
 - No luck there? That's okay, REDUCTION and CONSERVATION are two of the most important features of energy today! There are many websites to help you find dozens of ways to cut your energy consumption.
3. Set up a rain barrel for non-potable water uses.
 - This can be done on a home or even on the stoop of a city apartment.
 - Use this catchment to water your garden or potted plants, to wash the car, or when mopping the floor.
4. Connect. In person.
 - Somewhere, with someone, or group of people. Maybe a gardening club, or fitness group, or simply introduce yourself to the checkout person whom you see every two days at the grocery store. Be just a little more active in being a part of the community. Be a face and a spirit not simply an anonymous body.
- 5 Consume less.
 - That's just it. Stop buying so much. You don't need it.

Building Step 3: Autonomy

This isn't to suggest that as a whole, central locations of decision-making should be abolished. Rather it is to assert that government is not some distant abstract entity that collects taxes, makes decisions, and deems what is right and wrong by law. Government is, in fact, the manifestation of human cooperation. It is a body through which we accomplish certain things together, which cannot be done alone.

It is in this vein that we recognize our abilities as resilient and sustainable communities to govern much of our affairs on our own. The hypothetical offered in this section is one that is not unrealistic and offers a clear example as to the importance of asserting one's autonomy over such

affairs. Had the town been in the condition as many other American towns, beholden to large multi-national corporations and dependent upon the fleeting work and income they provide, the story may have taken a very different turn.

In reclaiming community identity we also reclaim our personal identities and abandon the necessity to be defined by a distant, esoteric, external authority.

As men's minds broaden and develop, as they advance to new ideas and lose faith in their former beliefs, institutions begin to change and are ultimately done away with...Thus the ideas of the divine right of kings, of slavery serfdom...there was a time when the world believed those institutions to be right, just, and unchangeable. In the measure that those superstitions and false beliefs were fought by advanced thinkers, they became discredited and lost their hold upon the people, and finally the institutions that incorporated those ideas were abolished. (Berkman, 225)

Let us imagine we are residents of a small town in rural Ohio. We had taken heed of the epic governmental failures over the past few years and had decided that it would be in our best interest to increase our self-sufficiency and resiliency. We managed to construct a small energy cooperative based off of wind and solar energy as well as increase the support for our local, organic agricultural network. The town had also collectively decided to invest their money in the local cooperative bank in order to bolster its strength after witnessing the 2008 bank bailouts.

It has recently been discovered that our town sits atop a large reserve of natural gas. The natural gas industry has sent representatives into our town to obtain permits for hydraulic fracturing (fracking). They offer jobs, natural gas resources, and residual income in exchange for allowing extraction.

When the people of the town were researching forms of energy, we did contemplate fracking but as a community decided firmly against it due to the risks entailed, such as contaminating our water supply. Since then, the town's micro renewable energy projects coupled with conservation measures have sufficed to meet the community demands. Furthermore with the growth in local agriculture, job security in that sector has increased.

With the basic needs of the town taken care of, we have become far less susceptible to the temptations of a quick buck. Also, in the process of building resiliency our personal connections have grown stronger. This proved useful when select community members were overcome with desperation and threatened to lease their land to the natural gas representatives. Because of our having worked together, we were able to have firm yet compassionate conversation with these individuals, assessing their financial situation, and finding other avenues to provide them with the support they needed, such as supplemental childcare at the local Senior Citizen Center.

Blueprint Step 3: Identifying the Strategy

If the identified problem is that power is far too centralized, then the logical step towards liberation from this cycle of control would be first to diversify it, decentralize it, and move away from the growth imperative of contemporary capitalism, which thrives in a centralized environment. Within each of the above steps; resiliency, sustainability, and autonomy the following three elements should be

considered. These elements, rather than being distinct and discrete steps, actually work concurrently to compliment and reinforce one another.

1. **Diversification**
2. **Decentralization**
3. **De-growth**

Strategy Element 1: Diversification

In diversity there is strength. As found in nature, diversity is the preferred method of evolution. For an example of the application of diversification; in terms of energy production, this translates into the diversification of a household or a town's energy portfolio by utilizing and making available different methods of renewable energy production, such as conservation measures, wind, and solar. In terms of food resources, this means moving away from systems of chemically inoculated mono-crop agriculture and moving towards diverse and resilient permaculture systems. In terms of water resources, this means harnessing water through catchment, swales, and other creative means other than pumping and diversion. In terms of the human element this means being compassionate in the face of different sets of opinions and beliefs. In terms of the human body, this means finding activities that encourage diverse movement, strengthening, flexibility, and mental stimulation. In terms of the body politic, this means abolishing the monopoly of hierarchical and centralized forms of power, to be replaced by systems of participatory democracy, localized, and distributed decision making authority.

Strategy Element 2: Decentralization

Decentralization is part and parcel with diversification. To stress centralized supply centers is to leave the entire system largely vulnerable to rapid collapse. When all of these systems, which support human life-- energy, nutrition, education, health, and ego --are all controlled and defined by a series of central authorities, the human becomes an object that is subsequently easy to control and manipulate. No sense of self exists without being defined by a larger, consumer context, no ability to feed oneself without suckling from the breast of the industrial food machine, no voice or control over where energy comes and what the consequences of its extraction may be. It is an entirely disempowering existence and will constantly provide an upper hand to those few individuals that are able to control where this

power is derived and preserved.

Once the sources of power have been diversified it is vital to keep these sources decentralized and at a scale small enough so that they are replicable and accountable.

Strategy Element 3: De-growth

The idea is that the solution to the ecological crisis can be the solution to the economic crisis...we [need to] stop seeing these as two problems to be pitted against each other by savvy politicians, but that we see them as a single crisis born of a single root, which is unrestrained corporate greed that can never have enough. This mentality that trashes people and that trashes the planet and would shatter the bedrock of the continent to get at the last drops of fuel of natural gas is the same mentality that would shatter the bedrock of society to maximize profits. (Klein)

The diversification and decentralization of society will inherently

assist in maintaining a healthy, steady state economy. This final element of de-growth is worth mentioning as it is often quickly forgotten. When economic models increase in efficiency and success for example, energy production, there may be a temptation to expand the model. The desire to expand should be carefully examined before any actions are taking as demonstrated in the side table.

The growth imperative has proven to be a pervasive theme in contemporary society, one that

Let's take a hypothetical example of the town, Bliss. Bliss has had great success with the implementation of household scale wind and solar power systems. The town's people are excited to share this discovery with other towns and expand the program to the wider state audience.

Bliss decides to find investors to expand their energy program. The intention is to empower the entire state to go "off the grid." They find an annual grant offered by an obscure subsidiary of a large energy corporation. Seeing as many of the municipalities of the larger state body, such as Bliss, had begun providing for themselves, the state was seeing less and less revenue so that any fiscal support was welcomed. After some years, and with much political posturing, the program has now been adopted by the State government and small scale renewable energy is emerging everywhere, all supported by one corporation and the state.

Because there was a profit to be had in the support of household renewable energy programs, other subsidiaries approached the state directly and began projects of their own. Soon enough, the program was streamlined and the state assumed control over all implementation aspects.

As a result, not only did the state and corporate energy subsidiaries subsume the original program, but campaigns of energy conservation, which are the key to a sustainable energy system, were largely abandoned in favor of for-profit renewables production.

Sharing and collaboration are integral pieces to the success of alternative societies and should not be discouraged as they are today through copyright, patenting where products are maintained as proprietary expertise rather than as collective knowledge.

What we learn from Bliss is the age-old adage: "give man a fish, he'll eat for a day. Teach a man to fish and he'll eat forever." Rather than finding foreign, out of town investment and approaching the state to increase the scale of their program, it is far more effective in the long-term for each one to teach one. This way, each household and community can find the system that works for them, at their scale, and learn how to re-prioritize their own lives through energy conservation, energy sharing, and energy production. Furthermore we learn the significance of maintaining local control over community affairs.

drives not only economics but multiple aspects of modern existence. Growth is what defines success. Growth purports to be the ultimate goal for any fiscal endeavor. This economic growth fails to take into account several factors such as the ecological impacts of an ever-expanding demand on the biota. It fails to take into consideration the human element, the human soul, spirit, and psyche that are often consumed in the frenzy of development and growth.

The significance of these subtle features of life have long been diminished and discredited in the name of progress, profit, and financial success. This ignorance has led to a society of peoples that are disconnected from their true needs such as: health, food, love, care, communication, and connection. There is a force driving people towards desires, which are falsely presented as needs, such as: exorbitant wealth, material accumulation, status, hierarchical power over others, and elaborate lifestyles. Admittedly, an indulgent lifestyle, which feeds the growth imperative, may be fun for a short time; but sooner than later, the vapid nature of this life takes its toll on the psyche, the soul, the body, the community, the environment, and the world.

Part IV: CONCLUSION

...conditions are not destroyed by breaking and smashing things. You can't destroy wage slavery by wrecking the machinery in the mills...You won't destroy government by setting fire to the White House. To think of revolution in terms of violence and destruction is to misinterpret and falsify the whole idea of it. (Berkman, 231)

When dominant paradigms and systems, such as the state, feel threatened the response is to attack and defame that which is seeking to supplant it. The true desire of resilient communities, of critical thinkers, of revolutionaries is find a multitude of pathways to a better and more just world. To the true revolutionary, the means must be the ends, for a true revolutionary dedicates far too much of her time to the community, to the movement, and to the vision in order to have it be destroyed by senseless, misdirected violence. The true revolutionary knows that there can be no other way to sustain the vision but to achieve that vision justly through supportive and peaceful means.

It is in this spirit that the title of this project arises: “Manifesto of Subversion and Peace: A Humble Handbook.”

“Subversion and Peace” because the shift must not rely on confronting and challenging

dominant society, for this will inevitably lead to an unnecessary display of state violence. In the place of a directly aggressive approach, a strategy of peaceful, productive subversion through building resiliency and self-sufficiency is a far more effective means of simply rendering the current model obsolete.

“A Humble Handbook,” because this shift must be driven by the humble desire to create a better society. It must be accessible, replicable, diverse, decentralized, and a unique passage for each human, each community, each ecosystem, each society.

When an entire society is driven by selfishness, short-sightedness and a centrally driven growth imperative, the inevitable result is a glamorous life for an elite few and a less than glamorous, if not impoverished life for the majority. When an entire society is built from empowered, centered, and supported individuals who live fulfilling lives in small, diversified body politics, then the wealth is shared. This wealth is not a measure of finances or G.D.P. Rather this wealth is measured by human and ecological health and spirit.

A crisis is a terrible thing to waste, and what we are faced with in this era is a crisis indeed. Where all the elements of this humble manifesto come together are within the human heart, within the heart of individuals and the collective heart of small communities that make the decision to manifest their own future, to refuse being another cog in the wheel, to live simply so that others may simply live.

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