



Cooperation Versus Competition



A Critique of the Digital Age



Cooperation Versus Competition: A Critique of the Digital Age

Audience: Hank Green, Crash course, Sci-Show, Economics Explained, How money Works, Jake Tran, Healthy Gamer GG, Andrewism, Sisyphus 55, Mr. Beast, Whatifalhist, Overly Sarcastic Productions, Trash Tase Podcast, Attic Philosophy, Exurb1a, Carneades.org, Elon Musk, PBS, NPR (National Public Radio), Big Tech and its associated audiences. I'd like the audiences of each of the aforementioned content creators and media conglomerates to be apart of the potential audience for this PSA.

Introductory Statement: Despite unprecedented advancements in technology, social-welfare, and medicine; reports of declining mental health over the past decade raise important questions about the true impact of modern innovations on human well-being. While technology offers unparalleled access to resources and opportunities, many argue it also fosters profound disparities and disconnection.

This Public Service Announcement explores how the inherent tension between technology's cooperative potential and society's deeply rooted competitive structures may be a key factor in understanding the paradoxical decline of mental health, and devising a strategy to help the disaffected find effective coping strategies and thrive in this brave new world.

To properly contextualize the issue, I'd like to begin by identifying a few datapoints that are regularly cited in related to an issue referred to as the male meaning crisis. These datapoints call to attention the legitimacy of the issue and highlight the significance of the fact that Workplace productivity has been decoupled from wages far too long ago, and the current socioeconomic climate was the only logical result. In other words, automation and hyper novelty have created new barriers to personal and economic fulfillment that results in a wider epistemic alienation with consequences we still have only begun to realize.

Problem Introduction: There is a mental health pandemic on the horizon that threatens social stability. The level of mental health instability globally is on the rise and the reason for that is the collective moral complacency and normalization of alienatory practices in corporate America, in government, and even in our personal lives. We have immense potential for cooperation, but we rely solely upon competition for the satisfaction of our needs which leaves many open to abuse and neglect.

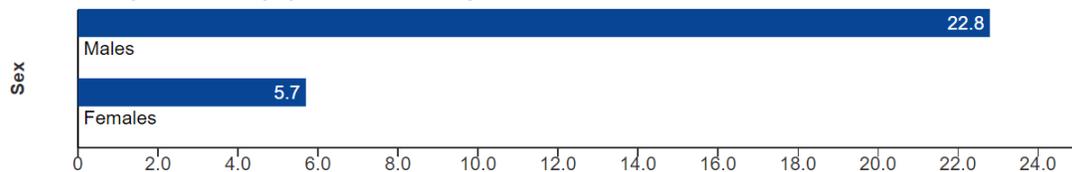
Solution Introduction: The solution isn't simple, I fear I may not have one, this is a complex ethical, legal socio-economic and political issue that requires an immense amount of study. The best conclusion I could come to, is asking for help by raising awareness of the issue, after that, then it might be possible to use the power of collective action to avert the pending crisis. This solution involves engaging in compassionate discussion with one another with resilience and humility and to educate ourselves and others of this social ill that we have encountered first, so that others may not remain ensnared.

I believe that a solution lies in reconnecting wage labor with productivity to ensure that profits benefit not only corporations but individuals as well. This solution requires action from lawmakers, CEOs and elected officials. As someone who lives in terror of the potential for big government to be abused, this solution does not sit well with me and I am sure many of my fellow Floridians feel the same way. The following are some statistics that help to establish the legitimacy of this pending crisis.

Legitimizing Statistics/Contextual Overview:

1. Male to Female Suicide Ratio

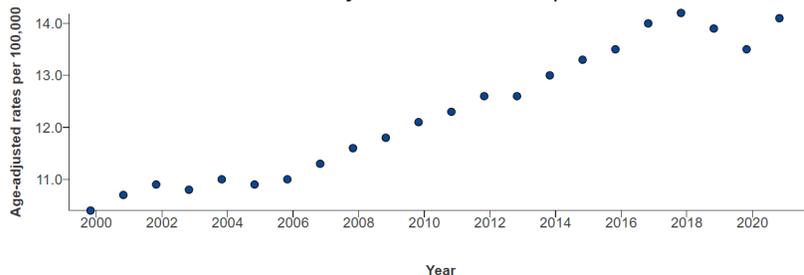
The suicide rate among males in 2021 was approximately four times higher than the rate among females. Males make up 50% of the population but nearly 80% of suicides.



Men in the U.S. are significantly more likely to die by suicide than women, with male suicide rates typically 3 to 4 times higher than female rates. It's important to note that Traditional gender roles play a significant role in determining self-worth, success and meaning in males. In the sociological sense, men are typically instrumental and competitive, and women are typically expressional, nurturing and cooperative. The competitive nature of the traditional male archetypes in conjunction with the lower educational attainment and the more recent disregard for the traditional male archetype plays a significant role in this statistic.

2. Suicide Rates

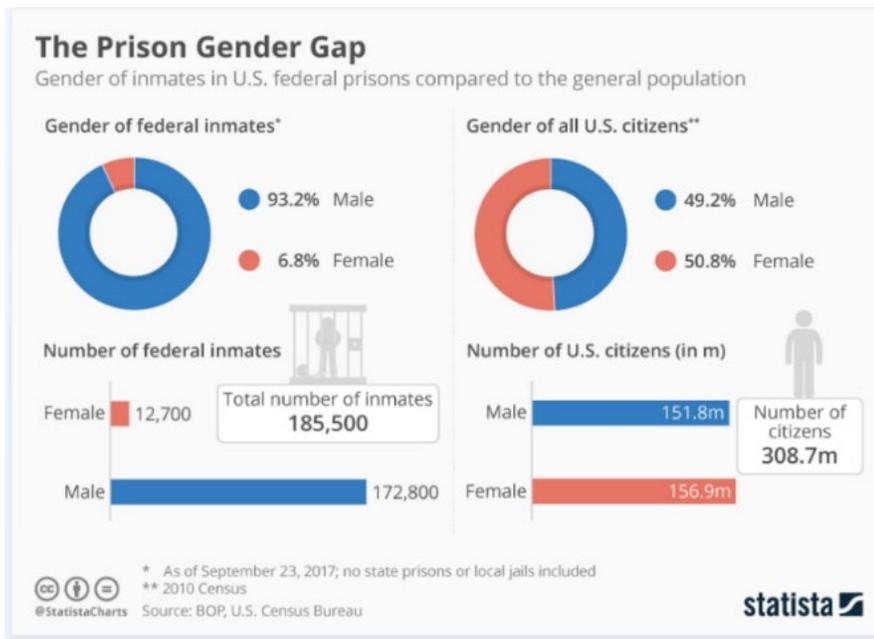
Suicide rates increased 37% between 2000-2018 and decreased 5% between 2018-2020. However, rates nearly returned to their peak in 2021.



Suicide Rates have risen steadily since 2006, Men often struggle with seeking help for mental health problems, such as depression and anxiety, which contributes to

feelings of isolation or purposelessness, that creates a downward spiral which, for many results in suicide.

3. Incarceration and Employment

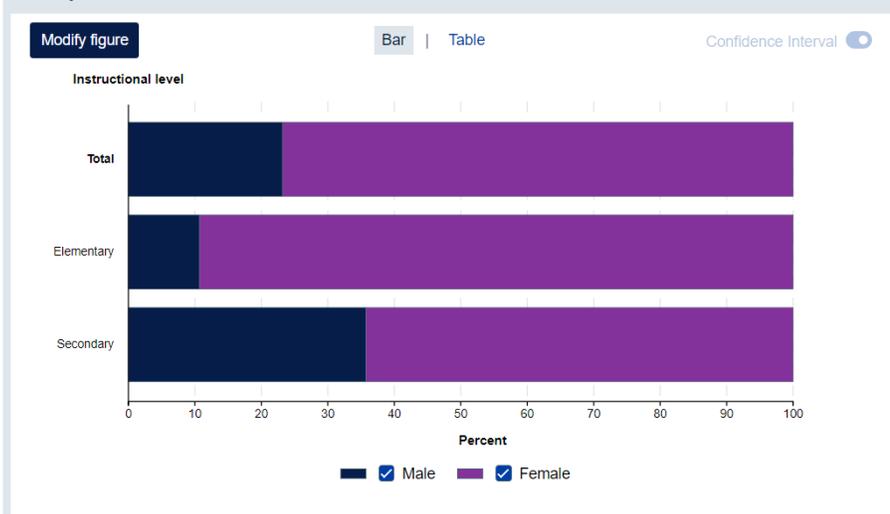


According to data from Statista, 93.2% of the prison population is male, I Hypothesize that the vast majority of these crimes are non-violent, and result from fraud, theft and undiagnosed mental health issues, this plays into the idea that men are still willing and capable of playing the role of provider in a society that rarely needs them. The next statistic is also a major contributing factor to this one.

4. Education

Teacher Demographics

Figure 1. Percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools, by instructional level and sex: School year 2020–21



The vast majority of the educational workforce at elementary level in America is female, this was not always the case, up to the 1800s, this was a male dominated profession. In the modern era, males face a certain stigma when opting to work with children in addition to the lower wages traditionally allocated to teachers in the labor marketplace. The

disproportionate levels of male influence in the formative years of childhood create measurable side effects.

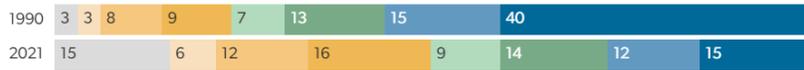
5. Family and Relationships

Friendship Decline More Pronounced Among Men

Percentage who report having the following number of close friends, not counting their relatives . . .

No Close Friends
 One Friend
 Two Friends
 Three Friends
 Four Friends
 Five Friends
 Six to Nine Friends
 Ten or More

Men



Women

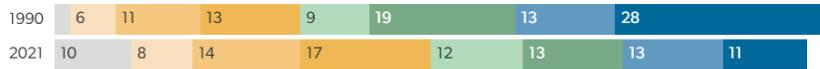


Figure may not add to 100 percent due to rounding. Survey of US adults [N=2,019].
Source: American Perspectives Survey, May 2021; Gallup, 1990

The survey center on American life conducted a survey which found that both men and women have less friendships in the year 2021 than in 1990, this points to an overall decline in friendship which is a bit more pronounced in men due to the nature of male gender roles and conduct. An important question to ask would be what is causing this trend?

6. Cultural Shifts and Masculinity



#musclemommy



#femboy

It's worth understanding that while the modern LGBTQ and feminist movements have successfully granted a level of epistemic freedom to its constituents, many men doubtlessly feel that these movements are epistemically immoral and unnecessary and have led to the alienation of those who hold onto such beliefs.

7. The labor force participation rate for men, especially those without a college degree, has been declining steadily for decades. Economist Nicholas Eberstadt’s book talks about the issue of prime-age men (ages 25-54) being out of work, suggesting that this demographic shift may contribute to a loss of identity and purpose, that has traditionally been tied to employment. This creates a collective epistemic alienation that has been interpreted by said men as willfully malevolent in nature.



8. Don't tread on me!

Men have emerged with the means to fight this ‘malevolence’. Donald Trump is only one man among many who have successfully adapted their approach to life to compete and defeat economic scarcity and become “winners”. These men have become icons of modern America for being “winners” and have proudly declared that every American can become a winner too.

Strength as an identity is one common factor all these men like Donald Trump share, the sort of bravado that demands a fist raised into the air in the face of death, to boldly proclaim “We must Fight”. The point of contention for me is what that word means. “Fight” automatically assumes two parties, a winner, and a loser, a hero and villain. These competitive spirits are ignorant of the cooperative potential we now collectively possess.

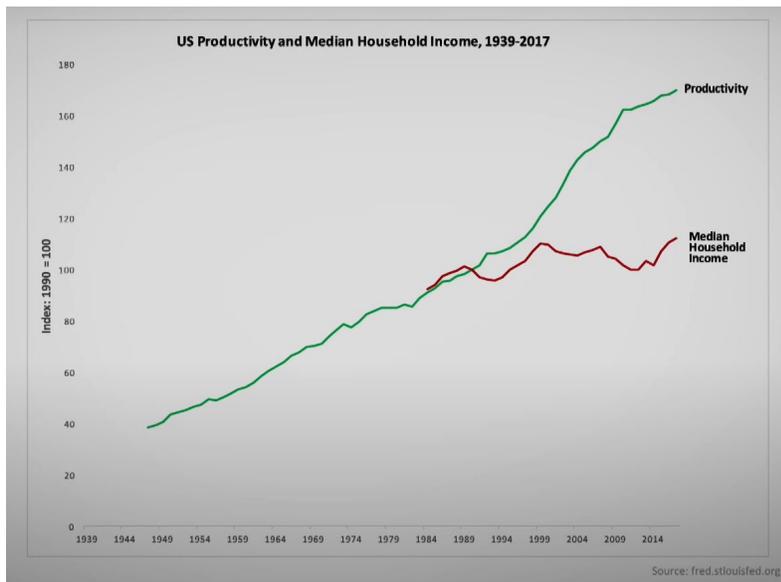
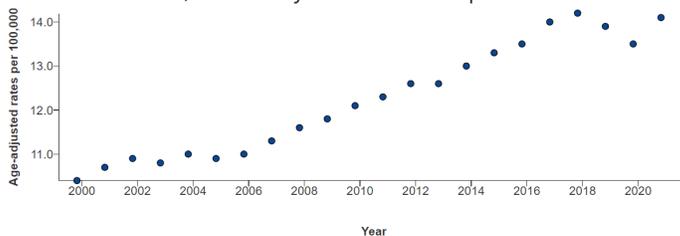
The dissatisfaction with the collectivist nature of government and politics combined with the dissatisfaction with what is now traditional labor, now have a voice.

9. Don't be a sucker, hard work doesn't mean better pay, so why bother?

Productivity can be thought of as the rate of return on the amount of time spent working. For example, if I typed 1000 words in a fixed amount of time like an hour then my productivity is 1000 words and hour.

Most people have accepted and internalized the concept that better productivity is equivalent to being a hard worker, which results in better job security or better wages. This simply isn't the case. As you can see in the chart below, according to multiple sources, worker productivity and income have been decoupled since the year 2000. Five years later, Suicide rates began to rise. The two datapoints are correlated, and I would argue that the relation is causal.

Suicide rates increased 37% between 2000-2018 and decreased 5% between 2018-2020. However, rates nearly returned to their peak in 2021.



This is a chilling data point because it hints at the fact that the disproportionate allocation of wealth to the winners of our economic game, has real, urgent implications on the general public. The idea that those with capital hold disproportionate power over those who don't. That the true winners of the game are and will always be, the holders of capital.

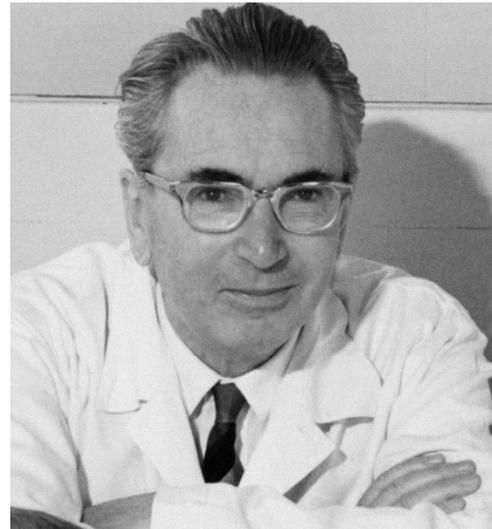
The Problem Definition: Alien Nation



Worldwide, One Billion people are suffering from mental health related illness. For context, the global population sits at 8 billion. This is a crisis, not just for men. Karl Marx, a German philosopher and economist spent his entire life trying to warn the world of the crisis that is now at our front door.

In his book, “Capital” he was the first to critique, the philosophy of capitalism. He posits that “capitalism makes the relations between people and things, and the relations among people, extremely unnatural and incompatible with human flourishing.”

Viktor Frankl, an Austrian Psychologist & Philosopher knew depression better than some of us ever will. Viktor Frankl both participated in the holocaust and later, became a victim of it. Viktor would go on to become the founder of the school of Logotherapy, a school of psychotherapy that describes a search for a life's meaning and purpose as the central human motivational force in a stable and resilient human being.



The problem is that “modern alienating practices such as artificiality, inauthenticity, depersonalization, reification, social isolation, rootlessness, dissociation, unfreedom, absurdity, deindividualization, and boredom become necessitated To live in modern society, whether through modern work, anonymous city living, or some other alienating activity.” (paraphrase, Galen Barry, 2024)

Modern alienating practices destroy meaning and purpose. The over one billion people suffering from mental health illness, the decoupling of productivity and wages and the current socio-political environment are symptoms of this.

The collective, pervasive moral complacency, that exists in this age have become normalized and will slowly kill us all.

Marx is a contentious figure in the history of Sociology, Philosophy and economics and is known for coining the term “Alienation”. Advocates of Karl Marx are frequently targets of epistemic alienation and violence, due to the failures of previous communist/socialist

economic systems. The failures of communism are the proof of concept most people need to immediately stop reading this paper. As a counter argument, I argue that just because his solution was wrong, doesn't mean the problem definition was also incorrect. I didn't need to do much research to find modern Philosophers that write about the kind of alienation that Marx, wrote about. One such philosopher is Barry Galen in his paper, "Epistemic Alienation".

What is Epistemic Alienation?

According to Barry Galen PhD Philosopher at Iona University, "Epistemic alienation arises due to a **conflict between the dynamics which allow groups to generate knowledge and the traditional requirements of the intellectual virtue** of individuals."

In other words, if the objective of a corporation is to generate profits, and the intellectual virtue of its constituent members differ from what would create said profit, Epistemic Alienation is born.

The actions taken after identifying said alienation is pivotal for deciding the fates of its workers because generally speaking, either the group changes objectives, or it does not.



This is where capitol becomes a coercive force in the workplace, either the laborers act and think in a way that conforms to the needs of the group (the corporation) or the group supplants them (the employees) with other, more willing (or desperate) members. The urgency of the need to conform in these situations is what makes it exploitative, because there is no "opt out safely" option. The justification for such unfeeling replacement is always the same, it is always as a response to economic scarcity. The inevitable outcome of competition and scarcity mostly manifests as epistemic violence.

Epistemic Violence is when you reject different ways of life, it is rooted in the belief that there is just one way to live based in one mode of knowledge acquisition which commonly results in the ridicule of other ways of life, the suppression of other ways of knowing and the dismissal of other ways of knowing. This is an important concept to grasp within the context of this paper. Epistemic Violence is the trivialization and devaluation of the inherent intellectual traits which can be thought of as cultural and even sacred in certain

contexts. Epistemic Alienation as I have described it earlier, occur together with Epistemic Violence which further exacerbates the difficulties associated with selection for employment, romantic selection and even academic selection.

In summary the jobs available in the marketplace at a certain level disinhibit authentic, meaningful conduct. Stable and resilient humans seek and maintain meaningful, authentic labor and relationships. Purpose and meaning don't always align with the purposes of capital acquisition and material wealth which is often seen as the common thing we should all strive for, or the thing that makes us all happy.

This homogenous, one size-fits-all approach to personal fulfillment isn't working for everyone, and for those people, normative value systems can be a hinderance. How do we influence the widest audience of people in a way that inhibits meaningful conduct in an environment that disinhibits these things? How do we influence society to be less epistemically alienating?

By definition, Epistemic freedom is a potential solution.

Epistemic Freedom is the ability to think and reason freely as oneself, it is the absence of any imposed, compelled or coerced intellectual trait, knowledge, language, or culture and can be thought of as the seat of cooperative social structures.

For Example, In America we have freedom of speech, protected speech, the right to bear arms and the right to a non-discriminatory environment, These are more broad examples of epistemic freedoms, and I don't know where I would go to get a greater sense of cooperation and freedom than in America. The problem lies in the workplace, there's nothing wrong with working for McDonald's or Walmart, but if all Walmart/McDonalds jobs require a degree of inauthenticity, depersonalization and unfreedom, and they require the vast majority of an individual's time, resulting in less time for meaningful activity, AND they don't compensate individuals well enough to do much else other than work, then the McDonalds/Walmart jobs become barriers to personal fulfillment masquerading as opportunity. I believe this is the reality of the working class in America and I believe this to



be the reason for the aforementioned statistics such as the decline in workforce participation etc. **As an Alternative solution to working at McDonalds** For Example, how many of you reading this paper have ever heard of homesteading? Homesteading traditionally refers to a lifestyle of self-sufficiency, where individuals or families grow their own food, raise livestock, and often build

their homes on their land. The term comes from the Homestead Acts in the U.S., which allowed settlers to claim and develop land, particularly in the 19th century. Homesteading was the answer to British imperialism, it was the natural response to a lack of freedom. Over time Homestead Acts nationwide have been rolled back and replaced with mandatory insurance policies and other forms of taxation that don't actually add value to the social welfare systems of this country.

The idea that hard work was the entry way to property ownership and capital accumulation is as old as capitol itself and yet, nowadays 35% of American households are renters.

Economic exploitation and the repeal of homestead acts play a huge role in the statistic in addition to the novelty of sedentary office life. If you've ever thought about living in an RV and starting a farm, and talked about it with your peers, family and friends, you know exactly what I mean when I say the administrative red tape associated with living a free-er life is a problem. The availability of land and capitol, become a problem, and the availability of meaningful labor outside of self-employment become a problem.

Potential Solutions to these problems can be separated into three categories, all of which seek to maximize epistemic freedom at the cost of labor:

1. Reduce the friction associated with finding meaningful labor
2. Reduce the friction associated with the self-creation of meaningful labor
3. Encourage Education & make available, education that encourages meaningful conduct

Reduce the friction associated with finding meaningful labor

1. Inauthentic Job Postings

The phenomenon of "ghost job postings" has become increasingly prevalent in recent years, exacerbating feelings of alienation among job seekers in the labor market. The term "Ghost job posting" itself is a euphemism used to obscure a phenomenon that at face value is simply the depersonalization of labor through inauthentic job postings and hiring practices.

Surveys show that 68% of employers maintain job listings active for over 30 days. These postings are often not intended to be filled in the short term, allegedly serving purposes like data collection, gauging the labor market, or keeping the company visible.

Ghost jobs add to the frustration and disillusionment among applicants by creating false hope and wasting time, contributing to a broader sense of alienation in a labor market that appears increasingly impersonal. This practice can lead job seekers to feel disconnected, as they continuously apply for roles that may never materialize, impacting morale and trust in the hiring process.

It is simply unnecessary for employer to have job postings they don't intend to fill. Employees follow employers they'd would ideally work for via sites like linked in and handshake, so there's no need for employers to even try to hoard applicant data as that data is given freely from job applicants in their spare time. Job postings are used in the tabulation of economic data which is in turn used in the determination of federal reserve rate determinations which impact the flow of capital through the economy as a whole. The inclusion of inauthentic job posting in this data places a thumb on the scale in favor of the centralization of power which perpetuates other alienating practices outlined earlier in this paper.

This practice is simply unjust and there is no governing body or legislature that the disaffected can look to for justice. If there are no jobs available, then an individual's decision tree will likely be swayed in a given direction (a, make my own job) versus the abundance of job availability would likely sway an individual's decision tree another way (b, work for someone cool) the inclusion of inauthentic data in anyone's decision tree is just deceptive and alienatory.

We must ask ourselves; Why would anyone create a situation that disinhibits someone else from making decisions that are grounded in reality? This practice strips job seekers of their epistemic freedoms and employers should face monetary penalties for providing inauthentic data to the labor market.

2. Addressing the depersonalization of labor by Re-correlating wages with productivity

The Re-correlation of wages with worker productivity would foster community involvement, personal fulfillment, and reduce the suicide rate.

When wages are directly linked to productivity, workers feel that their contributions are valued, which can create a sense of purpose and belonging. Studies show that economic security and a sense of agency in one's work can foster community engagement. Higher wages lead to increased spending power and financial stability, enabling individuals to invest more in their local economies and communities, whether through local businesses, volunteerism, or civic participation. When people feel valued in their work, they are more likely to engage in social and civic activities that strengthen communities.

When wages reflect the actual productivity of workers, it can lead to a greater sense of fairness and fulfillment. The psychological impact of fair compensation is substantial. Workers who are compensated fairly are more likely to experience job satisfaction, reduced stress, and a sense of purpose. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, economic security is a foundational requirement for achieving higher levels of personal fulfillment and self-actualization. This can lead to higher motivation and a more balanced work-life experience.

Financial stress and economic insecurity are major contributors to mental health issues, including depression and suicide. Studies have shown that financial distress is a significant factor in suicides, particularly among working-age individuals. Re-correlation wages with productivity would provide workers with more financial stability, reducing the stress that comes from economic precarity. A fair wage can alleviate some of the key risk factors for suicide, such as overwhelming debt, job insecurity, and the inability to meet basic needs. In fact, regions with higher wage floors and better worker protections often report lower suicide rates among working-class populations.

By linking wages to productivity, you're not only promoting economic fairness but also addressing key social and psychological needs, which can create a more inclusive and healthier society.

A perfect example of this was Uber. In the beginning uber drivers were all well compensated and happy. Uber was heralded as the next evolution of the labor market and even spawned new companies like Fiverr and Upwork.

Nowadays things are very different, You're lucky if anyone replies to you on either website (Fiverr or Upwork) Uber driving is nowhere near as lucrative as it once was, as uber takes a larger and larger share of the profits and the corporate strategy is based entirely on competitive pricing with other rideshare companies, rather than mutual cooperation with the drivers who make that business model possible, and the understanding that universal employment is now possible through technologies like uber.

I did the calculations, if one purchased a brand-new car for the purposes of doing uber in Florida, it is unlikely that car will amortize before that car hits the 300,000-mile mark which is usually when people declare obsolescence in car terms. Uber's profits are currently reliant on the depreciation of other people's assets, and they aren't even compensating them for that anymore. What makes things worse is there is no rule of thumb when defining what is and isn't exploitative so jobs like uber and other minimum wage jobs maintain their status as opportunities. Uber, thankfully has this scholarship program which while moderately impressive, misses the forest for the trees, it focuses on churning drivers of the platform and finding new drivers rather than simply making the current drivers happy.

The app had the potential to become ubiquitous with transportation as a whole, to be the "WeChat" of the west, but squandered its chance in pursuit of ever eroding profits. Idealism about uber being the private sector's universal employer aside, performance-based payment as it is implemented on the uber platform is near perfect, the only problem is the lack of industry wide cooperation which results in lower and lower wages for drivers.

The solution to implement: Peg uber driver wages to inflation or median income.

Incentivize entrepreneurs to create work platforms that offer work universally in the same way uber does. A shared universal job pool between companies would raise the

consistency of work but require cooperation between business entities which is, as always, in short supply.

Encourage Education & make available, education that encourages meaningful conduct

1. The Recognition of Epistemic Freedom as a Civil Right

This means that everyone has the right to think what they want, when they want, as long as they aren't hurting anyone. It is the absence of any imposed or coerced trait or culture, knowledge or insult. More specifically it can be thought of as an extension of free speech and should be thought of as a civil right.

An insult is a remark, action, or gesture intended to offend, demean, or show disrespect to someone. It can target a person's appearance, intelligence, behavior, or other aspects of their identity, with the goal of making them feel hurt, inferior, or angry. Insults often involve negative or harsh language, though some can be more subtle or disguised as jokes. Insults are the gateway to physical altercation and/or violence. A few examples of insults being a gateway to physical violence are:

- Before World War II, the German nazi regime published insulting Jewish content, before attempting to eradicate them all from the world and inciting said war.
- During apartheid, Africans were reminded of their inferior lot in life with slurs like [REDACTED] before being hanged and/or lynched.
- Women were sexually assaulted for most of history, the absence of a man that could defend a woman against accusations of being a [REDACTED] was detrimental to a woman's health as a result.
- Homosexuality can be thought of as anything from immoral to inferior, during my high school days being called a [REDACTED] could be thought of as a preparation to receive further abuse, as a result, straight males could be primed for physical violence with a mere utterance of the word, as early as age 9. Imagine a mob forming around your local CVS because two men were "bright" enough to kiss in public.

It makes logical sense then, that one would want an environment free of such language due to the history they have & connotative attachments they possess.

The African American, the LGBTQ and the women rights movements have fought for decades for the right to a work environment and public space where they can thrive and belong and usually that sort of environments requires epistemic freedom, that is, a place devoid of slurs and other insulting speech that would suggest violence". A place where one can be gay without worry of physical injury or degradation. It means shared bathrooms and

lack of bus seating hierarchy. It means the kind of genitalia you possess, desire or are attracted to should not preclude you from social inclusion. That is Epistemic Freedom, and it isn't only for the Disenfranchised.

This section about the link between verbal and physical abuse, introduces the role of ego as a source of conflict. In order to have meaningful discussions, it becomes important to never put yourself above or below the individual on the other side of the discussion. To treat each other as we treat ourselves. In essence this is what epistemic rights are, in practice I'm not so sure.

Epistemic rights are also the right to true information. Far too many corporations post job listings that half the time will never be filled. This can be described as the dissemination of inauthentic information which is, at its core, an alienatory act which disinhibits human thriving.

Wages have been decoupled from productivity since 2004 and the suicide rate has gone up ever since. Why? It's because moral complacency prevents our CEO's from acknowledging the simple fact that universally, a man should be entitled to the sweat of his brow, That hard work empirically brings good compensation and harder work breeds better compensation. Based on the data, this is not the case, the data shows that there is no longer any correlation between productivity and household income. While the right to well compensated labor sounds all well and good in theory, again, I'm not sure what that would look like in practice.

Epistemic rights are the final frontier of civil rights, they are the right to refuse the depersonalization that has become so commonplace in the labor market. Elon musk is a prime example of an individual who has fully adapted to a world without epistemic freedom as a right. This adaptation is rooted in the idea that "only the strong shall survive" and "adversity is the mother of all innovation" and has properly cemented his place in the world as a result. But what musk fails to acknowledge is the bigger picture. With great power comes great responsibility. When we alienate a portion of our workplace, we miss out on the contributions they could have made and in the end we ALL will pay the price for that. January 6th was only the beginning. While musk is right, that "stupid people deserve to know when they are being stupid, otherwise they undermine the whole group", I don't think Elon realizes that he has become his father whom, I know based on his book, he hates for this very same reason, his lack of tact and diplomacy. I don't think he has considered the fact that one day, the possession of capitol will be the only strength that matters, and the intelligence he and I are both so proud of will never matter the way it does today ever again, as it is supplanted by the kind of social control individuals like he and I breathe into capitol. That we are striving for a world opposite to that which enabled us to thrive.

Reduce the friction associated with the self-creation of meaningful labor

1. The entanglement of education and credit standards to promote entrepreneurship and economic re-balancing

Tying credit ratings to educational attainment could empower individuals by reducing the monopolistic influence that the centralization of capital exerts over the economy. When credit ratings reflect not only financial history but also the level of educational achievement, it recognizes education as a form of capital—similar to how venture capital/investment firms leverage their accrued securities and other assets to take out loans for other investment opportunities. This system would provide educated individuals with better credit opportunities, reducing the centralization of power and capital. By elevating access to credit for those who invest in their own intellectual development, it could democratize economic participation and minimize the coercive financial leverage that venture capital firms hold over startups and small businesses, ultimately creating a more balanced and engaged socio-economic & political landscape through more entrepreneurship, experimentation and research.

Assessment Notes –

At the core of this argument is the idea that the moral complacency of people, whether in power or not, gets worse the further back we go into history, apartheid, sexual assault in females, homosexual targeted aggression and native American exploitation are all examples of immoral conduct that was once ok, but isn't anymore because we are now more aware of what I'll call "the universality of the human condition", in Jamaica there exists a saying on their coat of arms that says "Out of many one people" It stems from the idea that different races typically help those from the same race, and that "here in Jamaica, there is one race, the Jamaican race". This implies that we should be serving one another. We should cooperate with one another instead of constantly competing with one another.

I hope you got something meaningful out of reading this PSA, I've been thinking about this problem for a long time. Back when I was trying to create a meaningful workplace, I didn't even realize it had to be meaningful. I was a dunce cheque, I just thought, I'd take less pay than everyone else, we'd get more and more profitable, and by the time the business could operate on its own, I'd be able to consistently claim my salary which, by then would still be smaller than everyone else's share, but it would be consistent, and aid in the next thing, as thought it was that simple.

The problem for me was capital, obviously we don't have a lot of it. Liquidity became an issue quickly. We were lucky we had a loyal crew at first, but we failed to be liquid enough to raise wages and prices quickly enough, as a result, we were constantly churning both customers and staff. This made me famous in the most egregiously mind bending of ways. This essay was my attempt at externalizing all of what I learned in that era of my life. I tried

to keep it all grounded in reality, and based on collective truths, but the cognitive dissonance of it all, difficult I suppose.

Again, I hope you got something meaningful out of it, I'm proud of this PSA but I don't think anything new and important came out of it aside from the understanding that I understand my own situation better now. The solutions seemed obvious and trite to me, maybe it won't seem that way to you, if you found value in this PSA, I'd love to hear what that was. I'd hope if someone on the original addressee list had seen it, it could have been enacted in some way. Unfortunately, I'll have no such luck. I liked the topic, and I'd like to continue to do more classes related to Ethics, Law and economics. I've already chosen my courses for next term based on that. Maybe next time I write a PSA based on a research paper; it'll be worth something to someone other than myself. Thanks for reading this far. The citations are

“Name of Article – Publishing Agency OR Author – URLs” hopefully in alphabetical order.

Citations

- **30 Years Old: I Wasted My 20s** - David Masson - <https://youtu.be/lFcOnXMG9co?si=gbUA9lqvlZOfpMX5>
- **A Brief Intro to Normative Ethics** – The Wandering Professor - <https://youtu.be/d6W81b-fXao?si=TpoK-F7PVhvn493l>
Introduction to Ethics, Objective vs Subjective ethics, the pitfalls of Ethical empiricism (similar to colonialism) and Ethical fluidity (all SA is wrong)
- **Autism is my Superpower** – Kyle Hill - <https://youtu.be/bgV26ol51UM?si=DpSlBYJWB21rHjKU>
Lucky, no loss of personal autonomy due to mental health diagnosis, like his videos
- **Associationism**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 59)
- **Buridan's Ass**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 107)
- **Bureau of labor statistics**, <had the data leftover from an unfinished project, I forget where specifically we got it, will update it later!>
- **Co-dependency**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 142)
- **Cognition**, Cognition - How Your Mind Can Amaze and Betray You: Crash Course Psychology #15 – Crash Course - <https://youtu.be/R-sVnmmw6WY?si=nGAP0zTVaki4y6TE>
- **Cognitive Consistency Theory**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 144)

- **Cognitive Dissonance**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 144)
- **Cognitive Dissonance** - Cognitive Dissonance Theory by Leon Festinger - The Ben Franklin Effect - Heider's Balance Theory - 5 Minute Learnings - https://youtu.be/huc_fY1oDz0?si=-a0mxraSnAGMn9un
- **Cognitive dissonance** - Cognitive Dissonance Theory: A Crash Course - Andy Luttrell - <https://youtu.be/9Y17YaZRRvY?si=VsGJuNwx7nY2qgbL>
- **Cognitive Economy**, Oxford Dictionary of Psychology, 3rd Edition, Andrew M. Coleman (p. 144)
- **Cognitive Economy**, Grant Leboff – Sticky Marketing Club <https://youtu.be/ddKnSzziLI0?si=9UnjPrqBRrKky72x>
- **Epistemic Innocence Beyond Beliefs** – University of Birmingham - https://youtu.be/ke2rLdRMx-o?si=S88o_f-nSOrmJ2PL
Beliefs that are irrational can be beneficial in some way, impossibility of Reason? Epistemic innocence can result in epistemic alienation and ultimately, epistemic violence.
- **Epistemic Freedom** – GCSMUS - <https://youtu.be/oZuroY00JUM?si=OcKOaRKZih47mngJ>
- **Ethical Dissonance** - Cognitive Dissonance | Concepts Unwrapped - McCombs School of Business - https://youtu.be/m_lCO2cBNts?si=Dx9n9Ycf4J7Msq_i
- **Existential Vacuum**, Viktor Frankl - The Existential Vacuum - <https://youtu.be/Fxg72exHRbE?si=BwnA-vqcQ4stSQLk>
- **Finding meaning** - Solving the meaning crisis | John Vervaeke - https://youtu.be/jWG1odu64Ms?si=RrLUaouvEM3lRu_A
- **First generation Gen Z'ers are moving abroad for a better life** - Stay Tuned - <https://youtu.be/pGqx6lsikyg?si=0dh7UmbbvbXf9PO4>
- **Galen Barry** (03 Jul 2024): **Epistemic alienation**, Inquiry, DOI: 10.1080/0020174X.2024.2373238 | To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/0020174X.2024.2373238>
- **Ghost Jobs Are on the Rise and They are hurting More Than Just Job Hunters** – Abigail Bassett - <https://observer.com/2024/06/ghost-job-rise-labor-data/>
- **Ghost Jobs are now more prevalent than Ever, Here's How to Spot them** – Deep Das Barman - <https://marketrealist.com/what-are-ghost-jobs-and-how-to-avoid-them/>
- **Human Sexual Behavior** – Stanford - https://youtu.be/LOY3QH_jOtE?si=AUB1fnNkRs8ZBg2C
- **How Society Makes You Feel Alienated** — Gabor Mate - Live Learn Evolve - <https://youtu.be/Hs39tNLQss8?si=dxk2RH1yp8PWvfbo>
- **In the Age of AI** - PBS - https://youtu.be/5dZ_lvDgevk?si=tgtcmWLqi9HFBQEA

- **Karl Marx, Weirder than ever** - New York Times – James Miller - <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/09/19/books/review/capital-volume-one-karl-marx.html>
- **Muscle Mommy** - <https://soundcloud.com/kriegbrah/musclerommy>
- **Neurobiology of trans-sexuality** : Prof. Robert Sapolsky – Ardra - <https://youtu.be/8QScpDGqwsQ?si=pcdqxmbXjup0DvFq>
- **PARENTAL ALIENATION: The 3 biggest signs** - Brainwashing Children - <https://youtu.be/Jm0lR5fOCVM?si=zMASYzPClqI0KRzO>
- **Psychological manipulation: An expert explains parental alienation to "48 Hours"** - CBS Evening News - <https://youtu.be/k0Yg4laqkt0?si=w6qn76dD9eichT4o>
 - Lack of empathy when dealing with the “enemy”, black and white thinking, fighting alienation with alienation, Modern alienation creating modern problem? Child rearing was once a duality, Feminism and toxic masculinity, Water and oil, intellectual vices don’t mix, virtues do.
- **Statista**, <had the data leftover an unfinished project, I forget where specifically we got it, will update it later!>
- **Social Philosophy: Epistemic Injustice** – Attic Philosophy - https://youtu.be/dFOxRomd_RQ?si=Ou845ja7M33GmRfQ

“Suppose you have knowledge you can share, but because of who you are or who you are perceived as, (black minority or uneducated) you won’t be treated with any kind of ethos and as a result and your contributions will be met with dismissal”
- **Taxi Driver and How Loneliness Destroys Your Mind** - Mansplaining Movies - <https://youtu.be/8nRraiYpr6M?si=BgKT9wQtIDxdegqT>

Need to watch this movie, de-realization, modern alienation and dissociation, modern alienation from an old movie?
- **Teleology** - Intelligent Design: Crash Course Philosophy #11 - Crash Course - https://youtu.be/7e9v_fsZB6A?si=LHLA0gPR0DnZQ7E
- **Teleology** - Teleology (Aquinas 101) - The Thomistic Institute - <https://youtu.be/uoPjFnqO7j4?si=4LvqBFZBJu3HE-rO>
- **This is why we can’t have nice things** – Veritasium - https://youtu.be/j5v8D-aIAKE?si=xE-E_EDvJoVGxK5v
- **TRUTH about the white slave trade** – Forgotten History - <https://youtu.be/GwEUyrtohuE?si=iq0aSQmS3RazDMJj>
- **The Reality of Slavery in America vs Everywhere Else** - John Stossel - <https://youtu.be/gXcufOpvvr4?si=LpKGWp4c9myuScuj>
- **Teaching was once a male dominated profession** – <https://www.facinghistory.org/ideas-week/teaching-light-womens-history#:~:text=As%20historian%20John%20Rury%20explains,expansion%20disrupted%20the%20status%20quo.>

- **Median household income versus productivity -**
<https://www.policymattersohio.org/press-room/2012/09/02/productivity-grows-family-income-does-not>
- **Median household income versus productivity -**
https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Productivity_and_Real_Median_Family_Income_Growth_in_the_United_States.png
- **Our Food System is killing people. Big Ag wants to keep it that way - More Perfect Union -** https://youtu.be/bmO6Nc8VT7s?si=Yz_mjKOu9FNX_BsI
Video essay about immigrant workers from Mexico, no heat related PIP, dehumanization or difficult choice?
- **What To Do About Parental Alienation Syndrome - Live On Purpose TV -**
<https://youtu.be/LKcFELuhWNo?si=4ZSVqEDU5GZWBsf9>
- **What Is Alienation? | Socialism 101 - Marxism Today -**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JnpNo3jA2jQ>
- **What your Teacher didn't tell you about Native Americans - John Stossel -**
https://youtu.be/fc5AY6RU5tY?si=ga-PwNN1E_yF8fBU

Inspiration

1. Man's Search for Meaning by Viktor Frankl
2. Thinking Fast and Slow by Daniel Kahneman
3. Outwitting the Devil by Napoleon Hill
4. Animal Sprits by Robert J Shiller & George A. Akerlof
5. Fahrenheit 451 by Ray Bradbury
6. 1984 by George Orwell