

Let's Schmooze

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Capitalism ~ Time to Grow Up

Capitalism, formulated a handful of centuries ago, has had a wild ride so far, and is today's dominant global economic system. First conceptualized in England, it has spread quickly and widely due to its unmatched ability to mass-produce manufactured products and generate huge financial profits in the process.

Most of today's modern lifestyles owe their existence to the unabated practice of capitalism.

Yet, capitalism has a downside ~ that is, negative side-effects. In our preceding four series articles on *capitalism*, we looked at some of the problems.

In our first series article, *Capitalism ~ Replace or Fine-tune*, we noted that many people have called for humanity to turn its collective back on capitalism, due to its deleterious effects on human society and our planetary environment. We also noted that these complainers have failed to suggest an alternative economic system that would offer the upside benefits that capitalism offers. They have simply called for the demise of capitalism ~ obviously, a *non-constructive* criticism of capitalism.

In our second series article, *Capitalism ~ Corruption in the Public Sector*, we noted the terrible punishment that big banking has visited upon the American public. We noted that this was occasioned by the notorious "revolving door" between high government officials and the big banking executive suites. This so-called revolving-door is the linchpin of crony capitalism, and a fundamental curse to a true democracy.

In our third series article, *Capitalism ~ Corruption in the Private Sector*, we noted that capitalism contributes to major social problems by injecting highly questionable values

into human culture. These questionable values keep humanity, currently a technologically advanced species, in the state of a raw, jungle mentality ~ it's an apex predator in possession of nuclear bombs. In addition, these highly questionable values directly contribute to our ongoing planetary environmental destruction.

In our fourth series article, *Capitalism ~ Problematic Assumptions*, we noted that embracing capitalism involves accepting as true three distinct problematic assumptions. These problematic assumptions directly cause individuals to aggressively contribute to the ongoing environmental destruction. We also noted that one of these assumptions directly contradicts the successful behavior that originally allowed ancient humanity to leave the jungle and become civilized.

On the basis of the foregoing it would be easy to immediately turn our collective backs on capitalism and embrace its professed alternative ~ that is, communism. However, communism has floundered on the same Achilles's Heel that all self-professed utopias flounder on ~ the problem of the freeloaders.

Freeloaders have defeated the well-meaning intention of countless utopia founders. We don't want to go down that dead-end path.

So ~ what are we going to do with today's capitalism? Is it salvageable?

For help, let's turn to an analogy. Imagine a young, adolescent stallion. It is beautiful, healthy, and strong. Yet, it is wild and carelessly destroys everything in its path. It's like a lethal, killing machine. What should we do with it? Shoot it? Is there an alternative?

The answer is not to destroy that young stallion. The answer is to tame it, then train it to the harness so that it can become safe, useful and an integrated, productive part of human society ~ just like an adolescent human.

We don't shoot our teenagers when they go thru their young, crazy times. We patiently "tame" them, then train them with skills so that they can be a safe, useful and an integrated, productive part of human society.

Can we have our cake and eat it, too?

Yes, indeed, if we're really as smart as think we are.

If we fine-tune our assumptions and values, and handle capitalism's endless financial cornucopia in an evenhanded manner, we can keep an economic system that is unbeatable at mass-producing desirable goods, and yet is gentle and kind to human culture and our planetary environment.

~ 'til we meet again ~

For a general analysis of capitalism, look for *Expressions of Consciousness* at the Books tab at www.heirling.com.