



New Visions

Society Reimagined

By Melissa A. Padilla

Society is but a mere embodiment of human ideas constructed to shape our everyday realities. There is nothing inherent in the construct itself that makes the unequal power structures that dominate today's world inevitable. The moment we realize that humanity possesses the power to change society's course, we will long to develop new systems that will form the foundation for social justice. This essay explores a myriad of ethical, political, and economic philosophies to create a vision of society premised on the values of fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy, and the hope for a better future. With social justice at the heart of a new societal project, a new society will best achieve this dream by laying out a moral foundation predicated on a mixed deontological (or obligation-based) theory of rights and duties, followed by the



creation and maintenance of a *basically just* state as the basis for political obligation. To ensure the new society's *raison d'être*, it will be a nonpartisan hybrid of direct and representative parliamentary democracy with a democratic market socialist economy. Its political and economic institutions, described and analyzed below, will help recreate a new world order that values community, justice, and peace above all.

In a world where our history books comprise little more than never ending, dualistic stories of power and oppression, riches and slavery, these dichotomies appear inherent in our society. It's all too easy to see war and poverty as inevitable characteristics of civilization and, if we think that "this is as good as it gets," to excuse ourselves from any dialogue aimed at creating change. In David Schweickart's words, we have come to believe that "There is No Alternative (TINA)."¹ But there *are* alternatives to this bleak outlook of society and its structure. There are ways to revolutionize society's values and priorities, changing the institutions that govern our daily existence by drawing from multiple ethical, political, and economic philosophies. Doing that here, I try to paint a picture of a new state and world order.

As a starting point for the project and this essay, it's important to remember our human history and strive to create a new society, state, and world order premised on the primary values of fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy. For only when systems are fair are they just, while empathy allows us to work beyond our own interests and take action that can benefit many, if not all. Embracing these values leads us naturally to the best applicable moral theory and the basis for political obligation. Similarly, reconstructed political and economic institutions will be more inclusive and aimed at maintaining society's primary values. And—tracing the path of this essay to its end—new political and economic institutions can help create a new world order.

I. Instituting a Moral Theory

The *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* describes moral theory as a normative theory of ethics that determines an action's rightness or wrongness.² Moral theory is thus society's backbone. People's demands and new institutions aren't real



without a foundation on which to stand on. It is easy to say that society must aim to create and maintain social justice, but how is that possible if the moral theory is predicated on egoism or consequentialism? To guarantee that social justice values will be upheld, a new society must be based on what is right, with consideration of what is good. To understand moral theory's importance, let's review various views of this theory and their implications for society, and consider why what philosophers call a mixed deontological theory of duties and rights will serve us best.

One important consequentialist moral theory is utilitarianism, originally articulated by Jeremy Bentham, who believed that the best moral action is one that maximizes utility. Bentham argued that whatever makes the greatest number of people happy has the most utility—the Greatest Happiness Principle. He was clearly influenced by Hobbes' account of human appetites and aversions, “The endeavor, when it is toward something which causes it is called appetite, or desire....And when the endeavor is from ward something, it is generally called aversion.”³ Bentham, an ethical hedonist, claims that the rightness or wrongness of an action depends on the pleasure or pain it produces and that humans naturally seek pleasure and avoid pain. Thus, the greatest good is defined by what is most pleasurable. To apply his moral theory, Bentham created the “felicific calculus” to quantify the amount of pain or pleasure produced by an act.

Prima facie, this moral theory may seem attractive. But applying it in a society based on social justice entails many problems. In “Distributive Justice and Utilitarianism,” J. J. C. Smart claims that, “A utilitarian will hold that a redistribution of the means to happiness is right if it maximizes the general happiness, even though some persons, even the least advantaged ones, are made worse off.”⁴ In other words, utilitarianism often evokes a tyranny of the majority. If a majority in a society believe that people of color do not deserve the right to vote or have access to public education, segregation would result. As but one example, the trouble with majority rule came into play in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* “separate but equal” decision in the United States in the early twentieth century, whereby white legal institutions upheld that black Americans were equal, but not equal enough to use the same facilities. Strict utilitarianism affords no middle ground, and only



the voices of the majority dictate or influence institutions. A new system based on fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy at least initially might have to combat prejudice and discrimination instead of succumbing to it, ruling out strict utilitarianism as the basis for creating a new societal system.

Strict deontological moral theories, on the other hand, are premised on doing what is right regardless of what is good (pleasure or happiness). There are two types of deontological theories—one based on duties, the other on rights. A strong proponent of a strict deontological theory of duties, Immanuel Kant argued that the good must be a good in itself and not by virtue of its relationship to other values. What is morally good, or the “good will,” depends on moral law. The concept of duty is most straightforwardly tested when it is difficult for individuals to forgo their self-interested inclinations for the sake of good will. Kant nevertheless believes that individuals will always forfeit their desires to pursue good will and feel obligated to act accordingly. Moreover, Kant’s categorical imperative implies that some level of human rationality determines what is right. In the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant posits a question that he believed we all should ask ourselves when determining the rightness of our actions—“Would I be content with it if my maxim should be valid as a universal law...?”⁵ If our answer is yes, then we may act as planned, but if we answer the contrary then we must not act so. Altogether, the categorical imperative serves as a framework for learning to act in relation to the good will, which in turn depends on the universal application of our actions.

Although Kant’s theory is fairly comprehensive, it borders on unrealistic. People do indeed act on the behalf of good will at moments, but not always. Kant proclaims that “a conflict of duties is inconceivable”,⁶ but that is falsifiable. In a society oriented toward social justice, people may indeed be less selfish compared to how they are in our current system—though even then, social justice values cannot trump all self-interested actions.

Besides being too idealistic, the theory of duties maintains a paradox of relative stringency. Can we really claim that all deontological duties are categorical while arguing that some duties are more rigid than others? Lastly, acquiescence in



deontological practices may lead to terrible outcomes. For example, subscribing to the categorical imperative would mean not lying no matter what, even though under some circumstances it may be best to lie instead of telling the truth. Kant's ideology unfortunately relies upon a black-and-white dichotomy of pure rationality that dictates the "wrong" in contrast with the "right." What if a kidnapper snuck into someone's house in the middle of the night and the owners got up in time to see the kidnapper near the entrance of the home? If the parents were asked to disclose where their child sleeps, it might be best for one of the parents to lie while the other calls the police. Nevertheless, the Kantian theory of duties would dictate that one should tell the truth, even if that increased the chances that one's child would get kidnapped.

On the other side of the spectrum, in his early work, Robert Nozick was a strong proponent of a strict deontological theory of rights. The deontological theory of rights is premised on a lack of government involvement, the value of negative freedoms, and the primacy of individuals and their property (ranging from their body to their possessions). Nozick extrapolates from this to invoke the right to not be exploited by another for the individual's benefit. For Nozick, the aim of preserving individual's rights disallows the distribution of resources unless individuals voluntarily distribute some of their belongings to others. Nozick claims that "The total result is the product of many individual's decisions which the different individuals involved are entitled to make..."⁷ This system is created by people's free choices, albeit unequal. Although Robert Nozick leaves room for empathy and compassion by permitting those who are well-off to donate to those who are disadvantaged, insofar as there is no taxation involved, this option does not guarantee that the least well-off will be helped. Nozick never mentions incentivizing donations. Nor does he specify ways to ensure that marginalized individuals will be provided with aid.

In making such stipulations, Nozick insinuates a politics of choice. In theory, all people may have a choice, but in practice some people's choices are limited by their circumstances. In "Liberal Equality," Will Kymlicka describes this phenomenon: "Our circumstances affect our ability to pursue our ambitions."⁸ By failing to



recognize the circumstances in which people make decisions, therefore, the affluent may be more reluctant to aid the disadvantaged, believing their choices have landed them in their circumstances. In “Liberal Theory and Feminist Politics,” Kathy Rudy critiques this liberal view by stating “the system works and when it does not, it is seen as the free choice of the individual who opts out.”⁹ This self-perpetuating system then fosters structural inequality, which works against fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy.

Nozick is not the only one who runs into this problem. In fact, when analyzing Kant’s categorical imperative, even he makes the same mistake but with slightly different consequences. For Kant, there is no room for exceptions, so individual circumstances don’t matter. But the reality is not black-and-white. No two situations are ever completely alike so law can’t be applied exactly the same way every time. Laws should be universal, as Kant suggests, but there must be room for exceptions under certain circumstances—if not in the law itself, then in the way the courts interpret it.

Rigid dictums may work for some, but may also remove us from the real situation in any given case. For instance, consider a lower-class elderly woman who is very ill and has almost no chance of recovery. Besides having to deal with excruciating pain every day, she knows that her family can barely make ends meet as it is and lacks the funds to maintain palliative treatment. Not only does she want to be free of pain, she also doesn’t want to be a financial burden. A dying person from a high socioeconomic status may feel differently, of course, but any such differences are no excuse for failing to recognize the multifaceted, even tragic, circumstances many people have to experience.

For these reasons, a new vision of the world is best posited on a mixed deontological theory of duties and rights. In the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle speaks of living within the “Golden Mean” between two excessive vices.¹⁰ Although he speaks in relation to the idea of virtue, this principle can also be applied to a deontological moral theory. Not only is a mixed deontological theory of duties and rights based on the perfect balance between duties and rights; it also avoids the problems in the other moral theories discussed here by allowing individuals



to be autonomous beings, while invoking the role of duties to help others and maintain the good will in society through one's actions.

Turning to Rawls's *A Theory of Justice* framework, a mixed deontological theory of duties and rights can be achieved by applying Rawls's two normative principles: justice as fairness and freedom as a source of autonomy.¹¹ Neither Kant's nor Nozick's theories acknowledge people's different lived experiences, and taken alone Rawls's principle of freedom as a source of autonomy doesn't either. But, when mitigated by the principle of justice as fairness, it does. In a completely fair society, all people will have the same resources for making their own decisions. Thus, the normative principle of freedom as a source of autonomy relies on the principle of justice as fairness within society to discourage a systemic disparity.

Rawls's justifications for this theory of social justice are the method of reflective equilibrium and the strategy of the original position. On one hand, the first is the most fundamental method for analyzing principles, rules, or laws before society implements them. In this method, either real or hypothetical situations are used to determine whether the principle under consideration is justified. To implement a just principle according to reflective equilibrium, it is crucial to challenge the principle in question. If there are no reasons to suspect a principle is unjust, then it may be implemented. If there are problems, the principle can be modified to make it more just or else rejected in its entirety.

The strategy of the original position, on the other hand, is purely hypothetical, but works in conjunction with the method of reflective equilibrium. In Rawls's "original position," people are rational, reasonable, and mutually disinterested. They have only a basic understanding of the world and know nothing of themselves, living under a "veil of ignorance." The individual perpetually fails to comprehend "his place in society, his class position or social status; nor does he know his fortune in the distribution of natural assets, his intelligence, and strength, and the like."¹² To create a socially just society, people must make decisions that benefit most (if not all) members of society, not just those who are similarly situated to the individual making the decisions. Because humans make choices based



on their own preconceived biases, the veil of ignorance may be implemented to achieve justice since it removes individuals from their present circumstances.

Considering the goal is to establish a socially just society, we do not only need Rawls's normative principles and his justifications for these principles. We must also set up basic guidelines (or substantive principles) for society. In *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls provides three. First, the principle of equal liberty is premised on the idea of every member of society being entitled an equal right to obtain equal basic liberties. Rawls' second principle is really two principles. The first half of the second principle, "The Difference Principle," states that "social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are to be reasonably expected to be to everyone's advantage."¹³ The other half, the "Fair Equal Opportunity Principle," states that all people must have an equal opportunity to attain a position or be a part of any office. Although it is very likely that all these principles be agreed upon by parties in the original position, these three principles do not encompass other basic matters that need to be dealt with if we are to lay out a guideline of rights and duties.

In *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*, R. G. Peffer enhances Rawls's substantive principles by suggesting the lexical priority of what he calls the basic rights principle.¹⁴ This principle declares that security and subsistence rights are the most fundamental rights that any person can have, for if one is starving or in constant danger, other rights have no value. However, in a globalized world and in a new world order, the definition of security needs to be reconsidered. To what extent we are willing to protect a certain group of people, and which groups are more valuable (if any) to protect over others in a just, global society? Very rapidly, interconnectedness among us all has grown, and with greater connectivity has come the duty to protect all.

Other modifications of Rawls's original principles are suggested in Peffer's *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*. These include the "approximate equality in the worth of liberty,"¹⁵ the maximization of the self-respect and material wealth of the least advantaged, and the implementation of democracy in social and economic institutions (see below). Furthermore, appealing to the concerns of



feminists and civil rights activists, Peffer enhances Rawls's basic liberties principle into the maximum equal basic liberties principle. In this 2015 enhancement, Peffer asserts the importance of civil liberties, family rights, and civil rights, and also recognizes the importance of equal political representation by including a fair political representation principle (see below) and the fair equality of opportunity principle (a modified Rawlsian principle).

Both the fair political representation principle and the fair equality of opportunity principle may play significant roles in achieving social justice, though these elements may not be universally inherent. For example, in the United States, the average person likely may well believe that all citizens have the opportunity to achieve their dreams regardless of where they came from. Though the American dream has been a reality for a handful of Americans, the opportunity to achieve it does not necessarily extend equally to all. With this in mind, the fair equality of opportunity principle should be of higher priority than the fair political representation principle in our moral theory.

Under fair equality of opportunity, people would have “universal access to equal high-quality education made available to all.”¹⁶ If citizens were more educated, government officials would have more faith in their constituents and they, in turn, would demand increased government accountability, thereby establishing a more democratic system. Equal opportunities for all would also allow for a diverse body of legislators to accurately reflect state demographics.

Together, these substantive principles provide a mixed deontological theory of duties and rights on which to base a new society. Kant might have objected since this system of laws isn't universal. However, laws can be written in ways that keep people's actions in check and leave to courts interpretation of the circumstance in which the law has been broken. Conversely, a strict deontological theory of rights critique may be aimed against subsistence rights and the difference principle insofar as the individual's liberties are characterized exclusively by the control of one's possessions. Despite these concerns, social justice cannot be achieved in a system predicated mainly on individual choice since such a system inherently preserves structural inequality.



II. Political Obligation

Whereas moral theory lays out the foundation for society in terms of the extent to which one's actions are good or bad, political obligation discusses the terms by which members of society have *prima facie* moral obligation to obey the state's laws. Philosophically, the terms of political obligation have been laid out in relation to the concept of human nature, so that systems of governance can respond to human tendencies.

Like Jean Jacques Rousseau, I believe that all people have goodness and compassion deep down in their hearts, but I further believe that our current capitalist system has incentivized selfishness over selflessness. By changing the values and moral theory of a new society, this suggests to me, people will benefit from being moral and doing good deeds. This is not to say that people will never act in their self-interest. Rather, it means that there will be more reasons for people to be good instead of the reverse, thereby creating a cycle of goodness. In such a world, members of a state will be obliged to comply by the laws of a new system insofar as the state itself is *basically just*.

Predicated on Locke's and Rousseau's social contract theories, *basically just* states are those that value and protect people's basic rights and liberties.¹⁷ Best embodied by Abraham Lincoln's famous Gettysburg Address, *basically just* states are a "government of the people, for the people, and by the people."¹⁸ These governments are justified insofar as they protect the interests of the people and none other. Tacit consent is presumed in such states as long as people do not attempt to revolt against the system. John Locke describes what happens when this consent is violated: "Whosoever therefore the legislative shall transgress this fundamental rule of society...by this breach of trust they forfeit the power the people had put into their hands, and it devolves to the people to resume their original liberty, by the establishment of a new legislative."¹⁹ In other words, if the new governmental institutions don't protect people's rights and liberties—and don't preserve fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy—then members of society may implement a new governmental system that will.



Prioritizing the well-being of the people above all, in accordance with Locke and Rousseau, means that government and other institutions will work to serve the people. Given world history, many thinkers, such as John Stuart Mill and the founders of the United States, have been skeptical about the abilities of the people to make sound government decisions. However, in a new system with new values, people will have more incentives to make good decisions that positively impact society. In a Rousseau-based system, the pursuit of social justice will become the general will, which will become the will of the majority, if not the will of all members of society. In *The Social Contract*, Rousseau states, "... what makes the general will is less the number of votes than the common interest uniting them; for, under this system, each necessarily submits to the condition he imposes to others..."²⁰ In some cases then, Rousseau can be interpreted to mean: the general will would be the will of the majority. This is evident in two ways: social justice is the overall good that society will aim to achieve, and the majority of people will want social justice because they stand to benefit a lot from a socially just system. Since revolution toward a socially just state will take time, ideally the ministers of parliament will guide their constituents toward the general will in the revolution's early stages by enacting legislation that sets precedents for social justice.

By emphasizing the importance of social justice, I am not arguing for a *natural* duty to support and promote just institutions. Arguing that people have a duty to support and promote just institutions in accord with new societal values is completely different from upholding a *natural* obligation to promote just institutions. The reasoning behind this subtle difference is that there is nothing natural about the value of justice. Indeed, it is a socially constructed value arising in reaction to a lack of justice, fairness, and empathy. The very lack of justice and fairness defies any form or categorization of naturalness. If social justice were seen as a natural part of society, we could ignore the historical processes of oppression that have led us to where we are today.

Recognizing the history of humankind and the exposure to never-ending war, Hobbesian scholars may critique my theory merely by contending that humans are



inherently selfish. Hobbes argues that government's sole purpose is to protect people from their doom. Famously known for stating that life is "solitary, nasty, poor, brutish, and short,"²¹ Hobbes contends that people join civil society and transfer all of their rights to a sovereign in return for protection and, in that transfer, they are agreeing to obey the sovereign's commands. Hobbes justifies the rights of the sovereign, arguing that "from this institution of a commonwealth are derived all rights, and faculties of him, or them, on whom the sovereign power is conferred by consent of the people assembled."²² Consequently, protection is derived from the laws of the sovereign (monarch) in the name of stability and peace.

What Hobbes grossly underestimates is the people's power to overthrow a self-interested leader who abuses sovereign power. Hobbes also contradicts himself by failing to recognize that self-interested members of the commonwealth may easily declare null and void the dictates of the sovereign, if what is being ordered runs counter to their self-interest. Philosophically, it is difficult to uphold this form of government if all people in society are self-interested. Most important here, Hobbes' authoritarian ruler would not be able to lead empathetically and guarantee the well-being of the people as is his or her role. Thus, having faith in humanity and upholding political obligation works so long as a state is *basically just* and espouses the values of a new society.

III. Political and Socioeconomic Institutions

Even with our moral theory and the basis for political obligation in hand, it remains to reconstruct the political and socioeconomic structures needed to also uphold society's new values. Although the foundation for change lies in moral theory, a revolution would fail if these new values weren't supported and recapitulated in governmental and economic institutions. Empathy would not be a popular concern of people if we maintain a competitive capitalist economy; nor would laws be fair in a homogenous political system (like ours) that favors the views of some over others.

There is no one way to look at the world, and some theories better promote social justice than others do, making them a better guide in our new system. On



the one hand, anarcho-capitalism (extreme libertarianism) would have us abolish the state and rely on free markets in voluntary trade. With no governments to interfere in the economy, there may be more trade, but it would doubtless take place at the expense of others, especially in the international arena. With a goal of social justice for a new society, allowing the assets of only a few individuals to increase could be detrimental since many others are struggling to get by. For that reason, libertarian or limited-government and capitalist-based theories will not sufficiently ensure the well-being of all.

On the other side of the spectrum, conservative communitarianism would argue against using Rawls's liberal doctrine as expressed in *A Theory of Justice* as the foundation for a societal moral theory. Communitarianism values the community more than the individual, and to some extent, in a sense, communities do help shape who people are and provide the foundation for solidarity among peoples. Nevertheless, communitarian philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre's claim that patriotism is a central moral virtue does not coincide with a new system, let alone a new world order that recognizes the humanity of all regardless of nationality. Moreover, the idea of community can be found all throughout the new system described here, especially in the myriad democratic processes that allow people to come together to discuss how they feel or to solve societal problems.

As for basing a new society on Rawlsian liberal theory, the new system is posited on a revolution (real change) that has to come from within and doesn't just solely tap people's rational side. It is easy to tell people that they should have a duty to create social justice and to empathize with others' circumstances, but to make change we have to touch people's hearts. Although the veil of ignorance is a hypothetical solitary state of mind, it allows us to reflect and to understand the world through the lens of what Trinh Minh-ha calls an inappropriate other.²³ An inappropriate other being an individual that is not afraid to think outside binaries and social constructs created to confine individuals' identities and aims to understand a multiplicity of others. It is only after one's state of mind has changed that it will be easy for people to come together as a collective unit to create a community oriented towards social justice.



A. Political Institutions

A new state political institution will be a nonpartisan, hybrid direct and representative parliamentary democracy. In it, the level of democracy varies with the level of government. At the local level (cities), mayors and city council members will be elected *vis-à-vis* direct democracy. Since this level of government is the closest to the people, it is best for city leaders to be directly elected by the population to ensure that the people's interests will be served. To, say, run for mayor or the city council, interested individuals must declare their candidacy at a city council meeting no later than one month and no earlier than one year before the election. At the time of the election, the mayoral candidate who wins the popular vote becomes mayor; and, depending on the number of people in the running, the top 10 will be voted into the city council. Importantly, the new political system would have no political parties to divide people. Instead, to ensure that a plurality of voices is heard, up to 15 people could run for city council and 10 for mayor. Political competition is welcome, though not to the extent that elected members of government find it hard to compromise and work together for the overall good.

At the state or regional level, individuals who stand for election must appeal to the represented region's whole citizenry. All candidates must make public appearances within each city they hope to represent, thereby demonstrating a true dedication to the populace. At election time, the region's citizens will cast their vote within their local precinct. Then, all local governments within the region that the member of parliament is running to represent will gather the day after the elections and through a deliberative process²⁴ decide who (based on election votes received) from the top contenders will be the region's member of parliament. If the majority of the region's people are not content with the city leaders' decision, they may then issue a referendum to propose a second election. If 51 percent of people petition for a second election, the region's members may vote for a member of parliament based on the top three candidates previously selected in the first popular direct vote. The winner from the second election will be the official member of parliament for that region, representing the region in the legislative process. In the transition from our current system to the new one, members of



parliament will also be the ones who influence the general will, instilling social justice into laws. Ideally, in this system even those people who don't value social justice will come to appreciate it as an operating principle. And the relatively high cap on the number of people who can run for parliament (10) ensures that diverse interests all get discussed during the election season.

The same process used at the regional level would be used at the national level to select a prime minister. Citizens will vote in their city and the mayor will transmit local election results to the member of parliament's office. After results from every region of the country have been collected this way, members of parliament will meet in the national capitol to explore in a civic dialogue the reasons for or against a candidate running for prime minister. It is crucial that members of parliament represent the will of their constituents during this dialogue by being active community members and working to understand the people's concerns throughout the election.

This is not the same process as the current US delegation system. In the United States, delegates are chosen to vote on the behalf of the people to determine who wins the election but don't necessarily have to vote the same way as the people. In this new system, members of parliament are delegates insofar as they determine the winner, but as elected officials they will be held accountable by the people if they fail to represent the region's overall vote. Moreover, coming to consensus on who the prime minister will be requires representation from the whole nation.

A new political system will be a parliamentary democracy with a prime minister instead of a presidential democracy with an elected president. Yet, the selection mechanism for the new government combines elements of both systems. The UK parliamentarian system involves the active selection of the head of the party by its members, followed by a general vote in which citizens decide which party they support, thereby determining who the prime minister becomes. In the US, candidates first compete in a primary election that determines the party's candidate in the general election. In the new system, the first step in selecting the prime minister will be to hold forums throughout the nation to actively select community members to participate in facilitated dialogue to express their views about the



candidates for prime minister. Step two is a general election held so all individuals can vote for the candidate they support. Neither of these two processes occurs in the UK. In step three, after the general election members of parliament will deliberate on behalf of the majority within their region. Last, at the end of this deliberation a prime minister will be selected to head government, much as now happens in the UK selection mechanism for determining the head of a party.

Within these three levels of government, certain guidelines will be followed to ensure the fair representation of all peoples. Based on Sylviane Agacinski's concept of parity within government "that the interest in things public and the responsibilities attached devolve to men and women equally,"²⁵ new political institutions must proportionally represent men and women alike. Although Agacinski purposely fails to recognize other forms of discrimination besides so-called sexual difference, a new society requires an intersectional approach recognizing all historically appropriated differences, including race, sexuality, ethnicity, and more. Proportional representation will be achieved through the collection of census data several months before every election.

In the new system, there will be no fixed terms. The prime minister and ministers of parliament may run for office as many times as each desires. This way, members of government interested in being reelected will be held responsible by the people during their full tenure in office. In accordance with current UK policy, the prime minister also has the power to declare the election year. However, in the new system, the minister can call elections no sooner than two years from the previous one, thus allowing time for the prime minister to establish legislative precedents, and no later than six years to allow government to be restructured depending on public sentiment. In any case, the prime minister must announce the election a year before the election date. To ensure that elections run smoothly, parliamentary elections will be held the year after prime minister elections.

All elections in the new society will be publically financed. The amounts of money allocated to campaigns will be set through a direct democratic process, and all candidates for a given office will receive the same amount as their opponents. Candidates running for mayor or city council election will receive less than



the amount apportioned to candidates in regional elections. Those in national elections will receive the most since the bigger the election, the larger the sum needed to reach all people of a region or country.

Although this new system is meant to fully represent the people, it also creates incentives for people to participate in the system. The hope is that by guaranteeing that members of parliament fully represent their constituents, the people will feel like their voice matters. In a transparent and responsive governmental system, citizens will have the power needed to question their government leaders if any injustices obstruct progress. In this system, the people will not feel helpless because the duty to do what is right will inspire them to speak up.

Considering the complexities involved in developing a system that values people's voices and rights, proponents of authoritarianism might argue that a nonpartisan, hybrid direct and representative parliamentary democracy is not efficient because often the people do not even know what they want. In line with Hobbesian views, authoritarians might suggest that the ever-changing needs of the people are irrelevant compared to the need for stability. But though authoritarianism *may* guarantee stability, it is temporary and it often comes at the expense of people's well-being. Before the Mexican Revolution, President Porfirio Díaz offered stability and used force and massive power to drive economic progress. Díaz also consolidated his power for 37 years by entrusting political positions to his confidantes. In the kind of economic prosperity that came with upholding only elite interests, most Mexicans suffered. When Díaz refused to resign from his position or to create room for an opposition to provide different ideas so as to improve Mexican society, the Mexican Revolution ensued. Even though a nonpartisan, hybrid direct and representative parliamentary democracy is not as easy to implement as authoritarianism, totalitarianism, or other competing political institutions, the case of Mexico proves that the easiest route is not necessarily the best route over time. Stability under authoritarian rule is not really stability when people are starving or lack the basic resources to lead healthy lives. Indeed, stability is a term used to mask a system that is actually failing; for justice, fairness, and substantive equality are the best indicators of societal well-being.



B. Economic Institutions

Economic and political institutions are not mutually exclusive, so the economic systems set in place within a new society are crucial to maintaining democracy and social justice. But though many Americans adamantly defend the power of free markets and the invisible hand, under capitalism's umbrella our current system is plagued by inequality, poverty, massive unemployment, exploitation, environmental destruction, and the degradation of democracy. Clearly, it is time to accept that our current economic structure is creating more harm than good. Going forward, the most suitable economic institution in relation to a nonpartisan, hybrid direct and representative parliamentary democracy is a democratic market socialist economy.

In socialist economies, large-scale economic enterprises are publically owned and structured for the common good. Under capitalism, large-scale enterprises are privately owned and organized for private profit, markets determine the price of goods and services as well as where investments are made, and whoever owns the means of production sets the wages for laborers. Capitalism may appear to be the most efficient way to allocate resources and organize labor, but as David Schweickart states, "Competition is not the antithesis of socialism."²⁶ As a matter of fact, a democratic market socialist economy is just as susceptible and just as responsive to market forces. Its competitive markets allow it to efficiently allocate resources and respond to consumer demands. In a democratic market socialist economy, inessential²⁷ businesses will go bankrupt if they don't turn a profit or appeal to consumers. In both systems, market mechanisms ensure that that all businesses in the system are working efficiently.

According to R. G. Peffer's *On Market Socialism*, democratic market socialism has other fundamental components besides markets.²⁸ These include mixed private-public ownership of businesses (private ownership of small businesses and public ownership of large enterprises through community ownership, cooperatives, and government-owned enterprises); the legal requirement that medium- and large-scale enterprises must allot their net profits (as determined by democratic processes) to their employees; and public control of raising and allocating



most of the economy's long-term investment and short-term credit, by levying a capital assets tax on medium and large-scale enterprises to a national investment fund (allocated by democratic processes and distributed through government efforts and publically owned nonprofit banks). Basic guidelines for managing these components to ensure societal well-being include universal, quality health care provided by a company or government (depending if the employer is a government or nongovernment entity), social security to protect the elderly or those who are unable to work, generous unemployment benefits, free public education from primary school through higher education coupled with vocational schools for individuals who pass qualifying tests, and high minimum wage jobs.

Peffer also suggests that “the yearly incomes not exceed a ten to one ratio,”²⁹ thus complying with Rawls’ difference principle. From this premise, the most reasonable, lowest after-tax wage a person in this society can make is \$40,000, while the highest after-tax wage a person can make will be \$400,000. This way, all members of society can live reasonably without significant disparity between those who earn the most and those who earn the least. While Peffer leaves it an open question as to whether community-owned and government-owned enterprises should be governed by worker self-management, essential in a new system is worker self-management (democratic workplace practices) in all enterprises.

To further gender equality, it is also important to take into account the needs of working class parents. They need access to affordable and easily available day-care services, and they need such basics as diapers and formula to be affordable. In today’s economically discriminatory system, single mothers who can’t afford to chip in a supply of diapers may not be able to enroll their young children in daycare services. And, if they must take a second job to pay for diapers as a daycare entrance requirement, they may need even more daycare hours or have to settle for seeing less of their child. By the same token, since maternity leave often provides wages and benefits, a woman may be forced out of the labor force altogether. In sum, basic resources need to be affordable and easily accessible, and parents should face no anti-family discrimination in the workplace. Instead, they should count on paid maternity leave, paid emergency family leave, and



sufficient facilities for nursing mothers to pump their breast milk during break time. Although homemaking and child care are often uncompensated in today's economy, in a democratic market socialist economy, unemployed parents of children less than five-years-old will receive a monthly stipend (with the amount determined by democratic processes) for their work after registering their status within any social service-related government office.

Considering how different our current system is from the one described here, it is important to address the concerns raised by proponents of opposing economic theories. *Laissez-faire* capitalists (libertarians) will most likely argue that government control and the democratic processes that allow citizens to make enterprise-related decisions invite economic instability. Critics may say that people (employees) are not educated enough to run a business efficiently. But in the new system, education will be universal, all will have equal opportunities to receive a quality education, and enterprises won't be primarily oriented toward profits and expansion. Therefore, employees have an incentive to make good decisions related to "organization of the workplace, enterprise discipline, techniques of production, what to produce, how much to charge"³⁰ and who to elect to the worker's council.

Beyond that, consider that owner-workers have enjoyed real-world successes at income generation. The Mondragón Cooperative, founded in Spain by Priest José Maria Arizmendiarieta, is the world's most successful cooperative, with nine corporate offices internationally, one hundred and twenty-eight production plants worldwide, and its own bank and insurance company.³¹ The Mondragón Cooperative owes its success to the democratically efficient system it has created. Upon entering the cooperative, employees are obliged to buy into the enterprise through paycheck deductions, which gives them a vote in enterprise decisions. Upholding Peffer's modified difference principle, the highest to lowest pay ratio is 4.5 to 1. As Peffer states, "They have done this in a way that allows each worker to benefit from the equity value of his/her own ownership, but does not threaten the integrity of the cooperative."³²

As for the efficiency of government-owned enterprises, Yugoslavia had a successful democratic market socialist economy from 1949 to 1979. Run like the



Mondragon Cooperative system, the country's small businesses let employees select their managers and other enterprise experts after firing the previous manager and experts. In large enterprises, employees voted in a workers' council to represent them to management and company experts. All important business matters were dealt with through all-employee votes regardless of the size of the business. Granted, Yugoslavia no longer exists, but the state did not fail because of its economic model; rather, its undoing was in the ethnic conflicts and civil wars of the late 1980s, which devastated its economy as well as its people.

Another *laissez-faire* critique is that the new system will decrease entrepreneurial incentives. Although this fear is valid, entrepreneurial opportunities will still be rewarded in a new system. Entrepreneurs will be able to start their own small businesses by saving up their own start-up capital or by applying for start-up loans from the public banking system. That said, once their businesses become large enterprises (a cutoff point determined by democratic processes), they will be bought by the public sector at market value.³³ Capitalists may see a forced sale as a disincentive, but these successful entrepreneurs will be free to use their after-tax profits to start new small businesses. The real incentive is to repeat the enterprise-making process to increase net worth.

A Keynesian critic in favor of robust welfare state capitalism might argue that a democratic market socialist economy is too extreme, compared to a welfare state that can help people while maintaining a capitalist system. While a welfare state is more progressive than a *laissez-faire* capitalist economy, all the welfare in the world wouldn't alleviate all the problems associated with capitalism. Premised on the power of aggregate demand and its impact on unemployment, Keynesian economic theory holds that a decrease in aggregate demand leads to increased unemployment. Per Keynes, the state then implements fiscal and monetary policy to mitigate these problems. Historically, however, this approach has led to inflation. In contrast, democratic market socialism avoids the problems associated with Keynesianism and more efficiently solves the unemployment problem. Unemployment is rampant in capitalist economies because it raises the profits of owners by controlling costs, and because fear of job loss keeps people in check



and promotes overwork. Within a democratic market socialist economy, there is no reason to threaten people with unemployment, since the goal is the well-being of the individual and greater society rather than strict profits. With this in mind, Schweickart argues that if there are no other jobs available in any other economic sector for displaced workers, then it is the government's duty to provide other jobs. These may include civic projects, such as environmental cleanup, whose double dividend is decreasing unemployment while improving societal and ecosystem health.

Another problem with Keynesian economics is that though it is aimed at helping people, a welfare system is premised on disparity. Yet, our “next system” goals are to end disparity and keep it from reemerging. As long as we maintain a capitalist system that by nature thrives on inequality, progress will not be achieved because of beliefs—such that of early Robert Nozick—that nurture resentment from those who are well-off towards those that are marginalized and need the extra help.

These sentiments speak to the class wars identified in Karl Marx's *The Communist Manifesto* between the “haves” and “have nots” (proletariats and bourgeoisies, in Marx's theory).³⁴ For example, in the United Kingdom under Thatcher's government, the Labour Party drastically changed its views on class relations in direct response to the Thatcherite government's procapitalist agenda. In his “Selected Diary Entries,” Tony Benn discusses how much the Labour Party changed during the Thatcher Revolution. Watching members leave behind their socialist roots and move more to the center, Benn argues that “what the Labour Party has done is to accept the Tory definition of class.”³⁵ The Party lost sight of its initial socialist and class-based identity, because Thatcherite principles had taken over society. This is evident in an interview with Ken Livingston, who argued that the Labour Party should help “minorities and the dispossessed.... on an issue basis rather than a simple class approach.”³⁶ Livingston's perspective therefore embraces the Thatcherite idea of class as a matter of the “haves” and “have-nots,” and uses the Thatcherite concept to suggest a new form of left-wing politics. Thus, if we truly want to change society, it is time for a new system premised on new ideas and the value of people as people, rather than people as labor.



A Marxist critique, on the other hand, would challenge the market aspect of a democratic market socialist economy. According to Marx, “This market has given an immense development to commerce... This development has, in its turn, reacted on the expansion of industry... in the same proportion the bourgeoisie developed, increased its capital, and pushed to the background every class handed down from the Middle Ages.”³⁷ Marx argues that markets have given rise to commercial development and, in doing so, gives power to those who control the means of production. This is a valid concern, but these power dynamics are a problem only insofar as the system is set up to help capitalists. In a democratic market socialist society, no one can own huge enterprises, and employees are highly involved in decision-making. Once again, the whole reason for maintaining a system of markets is so the economy can flourish in the long run, and for that we need demand mechanisms to inform businesses of what works and what does not. This is not to say that command economies are complete failures. The Soviet economy grew rapidly following its four-year civil war in 1921 up until WW II, and the USSR was also able to compete with the US in the Cold War thereafter. Nonetheless, with no market feedback mechanism, the Soviet command economy slowly fell apart.

Another Marxist critique may be directed toward the private ownership of small businesses and homes. In the *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*, Marx claims that “Private property is, therefore, the product, the necessary result, of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself.”³⁸ Once again, this is a valid concern, but there is no logical reason for the government to own a small family business or a local corner grocery store. In a democratic market socialist economy, private ownership of a small business embodies and symbolizes one’s hard work and anyone who wants to can start a small business. More generally, everyone will have an equal opportunity to acquire private property. In all, a democratic market socialist economy will be set up so that unemployment will be minimal and workers will be active decision-makers in their workplaces. Democratic practices will be an inherent mechanism for solving problems in both economic and political institutions.



IV. International Application of New Political and Economic Institutions

Today, the world can be depicted in terms of north/south disparities, war, exploitation of peoples, terrorism, nuclear weapons, and self-interested states. But if humanity is to endure, the current world order has to end. Hans Morgenthau, a contemporary international realist, argues that internationally related political actions are based on power and state leaders' desire for power. Based on the historical decisions made by heads of state, this is a hard point to contest. Indeed, the argument's validity justifies reconstructing the world order politically and economically.

In a new system, we need both individual states oriented toward social justice and a world government to spearhead and enforce international law aimed at social justice. The international sector as it is today has no authority. The International Court of Justice has no enforcement mechanisms, and the UN has been structured so that progress is difficult if even one of the five members of the permanent Security Council vetoes a proposal. The very concept of state sovereignty is problematic since it has become the first line of defense for powerful states trying to avoid complying with international law or UN mandates. For example, the United States is one of the few states that has yet to ratify The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), claiming that it will undermine state sovereignty and national values. Its lack of support for gender-based initiatives sends a message as a world leader to other nations that these issues don't matter. Clearly, the current system has been structured to benefit certain powerful sovereign states over others.

Cosmopolitanism, the ideology that all people and states are part of a global community, will be the basis for a new world order. In *Perpetual Peace* (1795), Immanuel Kant proposed the creation of what he called the pacific federation, a league of states united to establish peace among states without undermining state power.³⁹ In a more contemporary understanding of international relations, Jürgen Habermas has made it clear that a new world order must be “political (and



not merely juridical); institutional (and not merely organized informally or by policy networks); transnational (to the extent that it would be like the European Union, an order of political and legal orders); and in some sense democratic.”⁴⁰ A new world order will maintain Kant’s premise of a league of states, but do so under a world government along the lines Habermas suggests.

Utilizing constructions similar to those undergirding the local, regional, and national political and economic institutions discussed here, a new world order would improve some current institutions and replace others. First and foremost, it is crucial to restructure the UN, which will be the new international governmental institution. The Security Council will remain, but its role will be much more limited and its membership determined by democratic elections every four years among other all member states. The Security Council’s only power will come into play only during crisis—whether economic, political, major human rights violations, unjust war, or terrorist attacks. No state will have veto power, and any decision will require a two-thirds vote by the Security Council with each state having one vote.

Everyday decisions will be made by all member states together through votes on proposals and international laws. To ensure consensus on basic issues, three-fourths of the elected ambassadors representing their respective state must agree with the international law proposed. Ideally, ambassadors to the UN—the second heads of state that represent their nations in the international sphere—will be chosen by each state through deliberative general elections like those for prime minister and members of parliament. In the UN, all ambassadors will work together to create global solutions.

Nations will have sovereignty over strictly national issues. Issues that pertain to the international community—or that emerge in the state but develop into an international problem—will be dealt with by the UN. The state’s ambassador to the UN will represent the state’s interests in the international sphere so long as those interests coincide with what is good for all. When a state’s self-interest is safety from aggression by another state, all other member state ambassadors will be obliged to listen to the troubled state’s concerns before making any decisions. In *Perpetual*



Peace, Kant writes, “The peoples of the earth have entered in varying degrees into a universal community, and it has developed to the point where a violation of the rights in *one* part of the world is felt *everywhere*.”⁴¹ In a cosmopolitan world order, all have a unique and inherent obligation to ensure the well-being of all.

Recognizing the concerns of feminists and others in this new world order, no country will be forced to develop the political and economic institutions laid out here. The international sphere will be limited to creating international laws that guarantee people’s human rights, environmental protection, and global fair trade markets while state governments will determine the best methods for approaching these issues and complying with international law. Currently, such states such as the United States and such western institutions as the UN have taken it upon themselves to define universal concepts, such as human rights. Although these actions reflect good intentions, as Leela Fernandes points out in *Transnational Feminism in the United States*,⁴² in practice they cast nonwestern countries with different practices as “other,” thereby implicitly chastising them for “evil” practices. Finger-pointing like this allows such countries as the United States to ignore the ways its own people are oppressed. Consider, for example, the US mentality that Islam culture oppresses women by forcing them to wear *hijabs*—this in a country that hasn’t ratified CEDAW or adequately combatted discrimination against women within its own borders. Consequently, a world government will be responsible for making laws that ensure the well-being of all regardless of nationality and that, as noted earlier, that states will implement. This way, each state can work toward social justice while preserving the diversity of cultures among states.

Although the goal is for every state to be democratic, early on in the development of a new world system, this will not be the case. During the transition period, the objective must be to ensure that states at least minimally comply with UN human rights and other mandates. With time, people aware of positive changes unfolding in other places will push their governments to become democratic or spur a democratic transformation themselves.

Ideally, all states would have a democratic market socialist economy in the new



world order. But this model is easier for wealthy than poorer countries to achieve. The way forward here is to convert all wealthy countries into democratic market socialist economies, shifting much of the world from a free trade mentality to what David Schweickart calls a “fair trade” mentality.⁴³

In this new system, transnational movements of capital will cease, thereby diminishing outsourcing and the associated exploitation of people and lenient environmental policies in other countries. To ensure fair trade, social tariffs will be levied on all “cheaply” imported goods, forcing consumers to pay for the real value of goods. All tariff proceeds from this arrangement will be sent back to a good’s country of origin. As Schweickart states, “The point is to allow for competition, but only of a healthy sort.”⁴⁴ Here, a capitalist might ask what poor people in underdeveloped countries will do for income if exports to western companies no longer create a need for their labor. The answer is relatively simple. Third world countries will be encouraged to implement land-reform policies that redistribute land to small farmers, and also to adopt a policy of national food self-reliance, aimed at growing enough crops to minimally feed people, and establish a food-entitlement system, to ensure that all people have sufficient nutrition. The goal is that these programs will help feed people and also create jobs that will eventually empower people to pursue a job of their interest.

In addition to internal state mechanisms that will help alleviate poverty and create stability within the south, such economic institutions as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, will be restructured to better serve third world countries. The new mandate would entail debt relief and end the structural readjustment programs tied to international loans. To further alleviate poverty in poor countries and also help the environment, R. G. Peffer suggests implementing an egalitarian carbon credit scheme in which countries dedicated to decreasing their greenhouse gas emissions can trade with wealthy countries to obtain advanced eco-friendly technologies,⁴⁵ thereby drastically revolutionizing the markets of the south.

Through these redistributive mechanisms and the creation of an economic system premised on fair trade, the south will slowly become as well-off as its already



wealthier counterparts. As southern countries' economies develop, incentives will enable them to develop democratic market socialist characteristics. Once the state's economic capacity has been fully developed, the south can fully establish democratic market socialist economies. True, rearranging and in some cases creating these structures will take time. But consider the worthy goal of well-being for all states under a progressive world government and remember that once all states are economically equal, resentment against other states for historical decisions and actions that have created today's disparity will fade amid greater mutual understanding and shared prosperity.

VI. Conclusion

The world as we see it today is the result of our ancestors' actions based on a hunger for power that has led to social and economic disparities as well as hatred. A new society, however, turns that historical hatred and lust for power into an antithetical force for something much more powerful: social justice. Social justice is the fire that will burn down the structures and institutions that incentivize disparity and oppression, and from the ashes create fertile soil on which to build a strong new society oriented toward fairness, substantive equality, justice, and empathy.

It is time to light a fire in people's hearts. There is hope for a better future so long as we revolutionize what we know and transform it into what today may seem unknown. Although the picture of society painted in this essay will not be easy to accomplish, we cannot yield to fear and maintain a system that benefits few as the rest of society is left to carry the weight of struggle. There is much to be gained from a new world order, and so little significance in what is holding us back. The day that society is socially just will be the day generations after us will look back and ask what took us so long. As Emma Watson said in her United Nations HeForShe campaign speech, "If not me, who? If not now, when?"⁴⁶ It is thus our time to be the architects of a new society and create a world that serves all.

April 2017



Notes:

- 1 David Schweickart, *After Capitalism, 2nd edition* (Plymouth: Rowan & Littlefield Publishers, 2011), 10.
- 2 Henry S. Richardson, “Moral Reasoning,” *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (winter 2014 edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/reasoning-moral/>.
- 3 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (London: Green Dragon, 1651), prepared for McMaster University Archive by Rod Hay, <https://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/hobbes/Leviathan.pdf>, 32.
- 4 J. J. C. Smart, “Distributive Justice and Utilitarianism,” in *Justice and Economic Distribution, 2nd edition*, ed. John Arthur and William H. Shaw (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 110.
- 5 Immanuel Kant, *The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, ed. Allen W. Wood (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 18.
- 6 Immanuel Kant, *Metaphysical Elements of Justice, 2nd edition*, ed. John Ladd (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1999), 25.
- 7 Robert Nozick, “Anarchy, State, and Utopia,” in *Justice and Economic Distribution, 2nd edition*, ed. John Arthurs and William Shaw (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 1991), 64.
- 8 Will Kymlicka, “Liberal Equality,” in *Contemporary Political Philosophy*, ed. Will Kymlicka (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 77.
- 9 Kathy Rudy, “Liberal Theory and Feminist Politics,” *Women in Politics* 20, no. 2 (July 1999): 42.
- 10 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Terence Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing), 1999.
- 11 John Rawls, “A Theory of Justice,” *Justice and Economic Distribution 2nd edition*, ed. John Arthur and William H. Shaw (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1991), 13-60.
- 12 Rawls, “A Theory of Justice,” 21.
- 13 Rawls, “A Theory of Justice,” 24.
- 14 Rodney G. Peffer, *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990).
- 15 Peffer, *Marxism, Morality, and Social Justice*, 404.
- 16 Rodney G. Peffer, “A Modified Rawlsian Theory of Justice: Justice as Fair Rights,” (not published, 2015), 9.
- 17 Note that the liberties discussed in section I are liberties that must be upheld by governmental institutions. Nevertheless, these particular liberties do not make up an exhaustive list, and a whole host of other rights and liberties will be part of the new state’s constitution, including freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, freedom to marry whomever one desires despite gender, and so forth.



- 18 Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address," November 19, 1863, <http://www.abrahamlincoln-online.org/lincoln/speeches/gettysburg.htm>.
- 19 John Locke, "Two Treatises of Government," in *Great Political Thinkers: Plato to the Present*, 6th edition, ed. William Ebenstein and Alan Ebenstein (Boston: Wadsworth, 2000), 403.
- 20 Jean Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract," in *Great Political Thinkers*, 460.
- 21 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, 78.
- 22 Hobbes, "Leviathan," in *Great Political Thinkers*, 369.
- 23 See Trinh Minh-ha, "Not You/Like You: Postcolonial Women and the Interlocking Questions of Identity and Difference," in *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives*, ed. Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 415-419.
- 24 The deliberative processes among government leaders on the day after the popular vote will be premised on the information gathered earlier from civic engagement fora in which actively selected members of each region together discuss their views of the candidates. Citizens of the region are actively selected to ensure that the number of voices heard proportionally represents the region's diversity of people's perspectives. See Tina Nabatchi et al., ed., *Democracy in Motion: Evaluating the Practice and Impact of Deliberative Civic Engagement* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 52. The results from each regional forum will be sent to the member of Parliament or city officials (depending on the type of election) so that they will understand the people's perspectives before they deliberate with other city leaders or members of Parliament in decision-making.
- 25 Sylviane Agacinski, "Parity of the Sexes," in *The Essential Feminist Reader*, ed. Estelle B. Freedman (New York: Modern Library, 2007), 417.
- 26 Schweickart, *After Capitalism*, 25.
- 27 Note that essential businesses are businesses that contribute to the overall economy, such as the steel industry.
- 28 Rodney G. Peffer, "On Market Socialism," (not published, 2015), 1-34.
- 29 Peffer, "On Market Socialism," 12.
- 30 Schweickart, *After Capitalism*, 49.
- 31 Mondragon Corporation, <http://www.mondragon-corporation.com/eng/>
- 32 Peffer, "On Market Socialism," 9.
- 33 Entrepreneurs are allowed to own only one business at a time to ensure that there are no monopolies or huge economic disparities among people. See Peffer, "On Market Socialism."
- 34 Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, trans. Samuel Moore, Marxists Internet Archive, last modified 2010, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/download/pdf/Manifesto.pdf>.



- 35 Tony Benn, "Selected Diary Entries," in *The End of an Era: Diaries 1980-1990* (London: Century Hutchinson, 1994).
- 36 Jeff Rodrigues, "Interview with Ken Livingstone," *Marxism Today* (November 1981), 16-20.
- 37 Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, 15.
- 38 Karl Marx, "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," in *Great Political Thinkers*, 661.
- 39 Immanuel Kant, "Perpetual Peace," in *Great Political Thinkers*, 483-493.
- 40 James Bohman and William Rehg, "Jurgen Habermas," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (fall 2014 edition), ed. Edward N. Zalta, last modified August 4, 2014, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/habermas/>.
- 41 Kant, "Perpetual Peace," in *Great Political Thinkers*, 489.
- 42 Leela Fernandes, *Transnational Feminism in the United States* (New York: New York University Press, 2013).
- 43 Schweickart, *After Capitalism*, 83.
- 44 Schweickart, *After Capitalism*, 82.
- 45 See Rodney G. Peffer, "World Justice, Carbon Credit Schemes, and Planetary Management Authorities," in *Political Ecology, Global and Local*, ed. Roger Keil (Routledge, NY, 1998).
- 46 Emma Watson, "Gender equality is your issue too," speech at a special event for the HeForShe campaign on September 20, 2014, <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2014/9/emma-watson-gender-equality-is-your-issue-too>.



About the Author: Melissa A. Padilla

Growing up in a Mexican American home along with seeing the effects of domestic violence on her family— Melissa Alexandra Padilla has cultivated a passion for women’s rights, human rights, poverty alleviation, political theory, and civic engagement. Overcoming many challenges, Melissa is a first generation college student at the University of San Diego pursuing a bachelor of arts in political science with a double minor in philosophy and gender studies. Her dream is to work and dedicate her life to the alleviation and eradication of these issues through the realm of public policy. Her research experience includes analyzing United States foreign policy and the role it plays in the sphere of international women’s rights. She is currently working on analyzing and understanding the scope of femicide in Mexico, and the limitations that arise as a result of the current focus on femicide in Ciudad Juarez. The goal of her research is to motivate academics, activists, and international NGOs to address femicide as an issue that is taking place throughout Mexico as a means of pushing for justice in the country.



The Next System Project: What's Next?

In 2016, the Next System Project sponsored "What's Next?", an essay competition inviting a broad audience to share their visions of a next system. We wanted to throw open the debate to a wide range of contributors willing to do the hard work of moving beyond critique to proposing solutions in the form of comprehensive alternative political-economic system models and approaches that are different in fundamental ways from the failed systems of the past and present. We were looking to hear from people across the United States and beyond about the kind of future world in which they wished to live. Hundreds of people joined in this effort to explore genuine alternatives to the current system, and we hope you enjoy the prize-winning essays. With the help of renowned judges Naomi Klein, Dayna Cunningham and Raj Patel, these winning essays were chosen based on their content, creativity, thoughtfulness, persuasiveness, clarity of argument, organizational structure, and rationale. The opinions expressed in the essays reflect the views of their authors and should not be attributed to the Next System Project.

Visit thenextsystem.org to learn more.