

STUDY GUIDE

ROCKET SCIENTISTS' GUIDE™ TO MONEY AND THE ECONOMY

ACCUMULATION AND DEBT

BY

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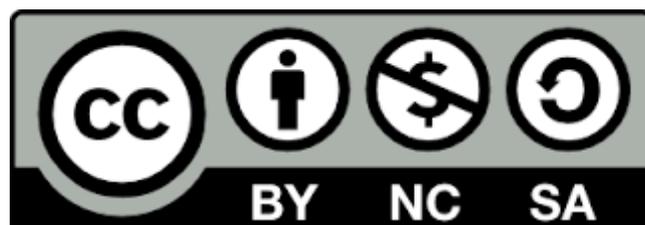
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PREFACE

This booklet is the student study guide for the book *Rocket Scientists' Guide to Money and the Economy* and the accompanying animation *Money Moksha*. This booklet is provided free of charge to students to help a) deepen their understanding of the concepts and ideas presented, b) prepare for class work, and c) study for exams. The booklet provides a chapter summary, key points, key concepts, and study questions. There is also a **CLASSROOM FOCUS** section that you can use to support group work, and to help more advanced classes dive deeper into some of the concepts and issues raised in the book.

INTRODUCTION

The *Rocket Scientists' Guide to Money and the Economy* is a deceptively simple yet deeply sophisticated expose of the nature and function of **The System**. The book starts with the basics, i.e. "What is Money" and "What is an economy" and dives deep into the structure and function of said System. The book looks at the problems with the money, ideology, education, the corruption of the market (through mechanism that inflate demand, or create demand where it is not), the corruption of the workplace, obstacles and resistance and so on. There is a particular focus on the ecological, social, and psychological costs of "unfettered accumulation," which is the unregulated accumulation of money that is allowed to occur when money is mystified and misunderstood.

As a student there is a lot you will learn from this book, but you will have to do some work. Although all the information you need to completely understand any economic system on the planet is contained in the book, the information is buried in a narrative, a story. If you want to get the most benefit out of the book you'll have to study and focus, but not on everything the first time. Follow the lead of your teacher. She or he may highlight certain aspects of the information suitable for your educational level and appropriate for your course. And of course, don't be afraid to ask questions. Taking an active stance and asking questions is the best way to learn.

This study is broken down into sections. Following a brief summary of the significance and main message of the book, each section of the book is summarized. You can benefit the most from your study by reading each section in the study guide before you read the associated section in the book. Doing so will prime your mind to recognize and understand key concepts and ideas in the text.

BOOK SUMMARY

The main message of the book is that money is human labor. Money is the abstraction of labor into an easy-to-trade, easy-to-accumulate, commodity. As such money is a significant and powerful improvement over barter. Money has allowed the creation of our modern, developed world by providing an easy way to exchange our labor with others. However, the easy way in which money can be accumulated, and the ease with which the money can be mystified, has made unfettered accumulation of money in the interests of personal greed and power much too easy. As a result, economic activity is no longer about trading labor, the satisfaction of human needs, or the betterment of the world, but is instead about the full time pursuit of accumulation (i.e. making money/generating profit). The long term consequence of this “corruption” of money is the degradation of human experience, the degradation of the planet, cyclic and painful economic collapse, and perpetual war (just like George Orwell suggested in his book 1984). At the end of the book, solutions are suggested.

THE NATURE. SOURCE. AND VALUE OF MONEY

SUMMARY

The first section of this book reveals the nature of money. As you will clearly see, money is labor power. That is, money is abstracted labor. Money is a solution to the problem of inefficient economic exchange. In order for economies to operate, labor must be exchanged. In traditional systems of exchange, i.e. barter systems, a loaf of bread may be exchanged for an hour of home building labor. *Traditional methods of exchange are concrete (products and labor are exchanged for products and labor) and thus extremely inefficient.* Money solves the problems associated with concrete exchange by allowing for the abstraction of labor.

As the book notes, money, has no intrinsic value; nevertheless money is manifested as a container for labor. With money, exchange is no longer concrete but abstract. Instead of exchanging a loaf of bread for a dozen eggs, now a loaf is exchanged for a certain amount of labor, abstracted and stored in money. *Money, as abstracted labor, lubricates economic exchange making complex modern economies and massive development projects possible.* However, money also facilitates the efficient accumulation and storage of labor leading, as we see in the rest of the book, to massive system-dysfunction and, inevitably, war, death, and destruction.

KEY POINTS

- Money is labor / $\text{Money} = \text{Labor Time} / \text{Money} = \text{Abstracted Labor Time}$
- The Economy = Labor Exchange
- Money is inherently social. Economic exchange is fundamentally social! We enter into economic arrangements to trade our skills with others. The social character of economic exchange is obscured/mystified when labor is abstracted into money. The social function of exchange is erased when accumulation of labor/money/power becomes the sole goal of economic activity.
- Money replaces barter as the dominant method of exchange in modern, capitalist economies. Money is much more efficient than barter because money *abstracts* labor.
- Money has no intrinsic value. The value of money is the result of collective agreement. A thousand-dollar bill is worth a thousand dollars only because everyone agrees it does.

- The Labor-Exchange (or just Exchange) value of money is determined by the amount of labor that the “players” agree it will contain.
- Economy = Exchange of Labor
- Capitalist Economy = Exchange of abstracted labor (i.e. Money).
- Money facilitates economic exchange. Money is social. Money is good.
- Money is not evil; but, money can be accumulated. The covetous accumulation and control of labor power is what leads to evil.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Money
- Accumulation
- Labor time
- Monetized economy
- Non-monetized economy
- Barter
- Official economy
- Underground economy / black market
- Informal economy
- Abstracted labor power
- The two step creation of money
- Labor Value / Monetary Value
- *Exchange-Value (E) = Labor in Society (T)*

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What is the nature and purpose of money? Why did humanity create money?
2. How is the value of money determined?

3. Think about the nature of money and the modern world we live in. Could our modern world exist without money as a means of market exchange and economic lubrication? What does Michael S. mean when he says “Money gives life to the social fabric” mean? Discuss.
4. Compare the pros and cons of barter versus a monetary economy in terms of flexibility and ease of use. What forms of economic exchange do you use (money, bartering of services, trade). Why is money the most efficient form of economic exchange?

CLASSROOM FOCUS

What is Money: Research a definition of money. Look in your library, look online, look in an economics textbook if you happen to have one lying around. If your teacher lets you, survey your parents and friends. Ask them the question, “What is money.” Collect their answers and compare them to what you have learned in this unit. What do you think of the answers you received? Do people have a good understanding of what money is? Write their answers down and give them to your teacher so she or he can share with the class.

THE PROBLEMS WITH MONEY

SUMMARY

With labor abstracted into money, efficient trade *and* efficient accumulation begins. In a monetized economy, a single individual is able to easily accumulate the labor of others. In an unregulated economy, there is massive incentive to accumulate and store labor because stored labor represents *power* over the world. An individual with one billion accumulated labor units (dollars, rands, pesos, etc.) can command 1 billion units worth of labor power. These units can be used to either purchase employees labor time or purchase commodities/products. The benefits of accumulating labor are obvious: power and privilege. Those with a “head start” in the accumulation process use their “power” to create legal, economic, political, ideological, psychological, and sociological conditions that facilitate their accumulation. Social class is born when those in the higher social classes having access to increasing amounts of accumulated labor, which they can use to further enhance their position, while those in the lower classes begin to suffer from inability to exchange.

KEY POINTS

- In a barter economy, there is a built in limit on how much an individual can accumulate. Money, which is abstracted labour, is extremely easy to accumulate and this causes problems.
- Accumulated money gives power to command the labor of another. The ability to command labor gives power. Power is seductive. Once people get a taste of the power and privilege that comes from accumulation of money, accumulation and not socially rooted economic exchange, becomes the driving force of the economy. A little bit of power leads to the lust and desire for more.
- Power leads to inequality and the instantiation of social class. Social class is the difference between those with power, and those without. Social class divides those at the top of the hill from those at the bottom (and later, those in the middle).
- People with power use that power to create political, economic, and social conditions/institutions that support increased accumulation of power (i.e. they create **The System**). This includes the creation of instruments of ideological, political, and economic control (metaphorically referred to as “The Institute”). Social class is instantiated and life becomes a obfuscatory shell game where the simple truth of

money, accumulation, and power become obscured behind full time misdirection.

- The real secret to richness and wealth is the unfair accumulation of the labor of others.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Accumulation
- Power
- Profit
- Monetized Economy
- Baker's Story
- Social Class
- Private party
- The Institute of Fiduciary Responsibility (The Institute).
- EPMO
- The Report.
- The real secret.

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Why is the easy accumulation of money a problem? How does accumulation of money lead to power? What do people with power generally do with that power (i.e. create "institutes, obfuscate the meaning of money, etc.)? Discuss.
2. What happens when people "at the bottom of the hill" start to catch on? What are some of the ways that those "at the top" divert, dispel, dismiss, and demolish awareness and dissent?
3. What does Dr. Mike's metaphor of "The Institute" represent? Is the institute a single thing (like education) or does it include Hollywood, the media, and what else? Who works in The Institute?

CLASSROOM FOCUS

Why are people poor: Why are some people rich and some people poor? If your teacher lets

you, ask your friends and family this question. What sorts of answers do you get from them? Why do you think they answer in the way that they do? Collect their answers and compare them to what you have learned in this unit. What do you think of the answers you received? Do people have a good understanding of what causes poverty? Write their answers down and give them to your teacher so she or he can share with the class

The Gold Standard: The value of money that should circulate in an economy was once determined by the *gold standard*. The gold standard occurs in a monetary system in which the total value of money in an economy is based on the amount of gold that a country has. Almost all countries have abandoned the gold standard now. Why? Because money represents labour and there simply isn't enough gold in the world to represent all the labour that goes on, and there never will be.

Research the gold standard. What do online resources say about it? Why was it created? Why was it abandoned? When did Canada and the U.S. abandon the gold standard? Given what you know about the value of money as abstracted labour, do the explanations you find online make any sense at all? Discuss.

THE FALL

SUMMARY

Accumulation leads to the emergence of class society. Increasingly stark divisions between those at the top and those at the bottom lead to increase agitation and anger. In order to suppress and divert anxiety, anger, and resentment, the people in charge develop excuses and justification. They say “it was always like this” or “God wants it this way” or “it is part of the evolutionary plan.” In addition to excuses, obfuscatory discourse and confusing explanations are seeded that are designed to mystify and confuse people about what is really going on. Most, but not all, fall victim or succumb. Those that don’t become “agitators” or protestors. In order to control the agitators, the people at the top coopt them into a well paid intelligentsia. The intelligentsia are indoctrinated into the belief systems of the upper classes and go on to support, for the most part, whatever system of accumulation they find themselves in.

KEY POINTS

- The longer accumulation continues, the more unequal things become. Thus, accumulation necessarily leads to dissatisfaction and discontent.
- Discontent must be managed lest the people’s agitation ascend to violence, as it did during the French Revolution, with disastrous consequences for the elites. Something must be done.
- Those who benefit from regimes of accumulation work hard to justify and excuse, obfuscate and obscure, the “real secret” to their prosperity. Excuses are made and institutions set up that support The System in some fashion. The net result is the obfuscation of accumulation regimes and the creation of a “middle class” of intelligentsia whose primary task is to support The System by confusing the issue.
- Since the elites don’t want to bear the full cost of the middle classes and the institutions that support The System, taxation helps pay for the additional roles.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Accumulation
- Power

- Indoctrination
- Social Class.
- Private party
- The Institute
- The Report
- Intelligentsia
- Co-optation
- Taxation
- The Institute
- The Report
- The real secret
- EPMO

STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is co-optation? How does co-optation solve the problems of anger and resentment that are associated with large scale accumulation of labor power?
- How might psychology, history, economics, and even philosophy be implicated in System maintenance and support? This is a big and complicated question, so ask your teacher for help.
- What is social class? What are the different social classes? What is your social class? Check out what Wikipedia has to say about it https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class.

CLASSROOM FOCUS

Contradictory Positions or “Let he who is without sin cast the first stone”: This unit gives man people a bad rap, but it shouldn’t because we all live in contradictory positions. We do not support The System and we are critical of its outcomes and consequences, but at the same time we live in it and support it in various ways. It is not a black and white issue and humans are not, despite what some might say, a black and white species. Nobody wakes up and says “Today I give into the dark side.” We are all human beings and we all do what we think is right.

Brainstorm the contradictions. Who do you know that lives a “contradictory” life? Although this

is not discussed in the text, what can you see are some of the emotional/psychological consequences of this contradictory position?

PROGRESS

SUMMARY

Initial accumulation leads to imbalances of wealth and power. Wealth and power are drugs that few are capable of resisting. In order to get more, efforts are turned to increasing the efficiency of labor-accumulation. Various strategies are devised to increase the intensity of accumulation. The book identifies only a few. Products are differentiated; planned obsolescence is introduced; psychologically and emotionally manipulative marketing practice develop. Labor costs are driven down through the use of sweatshops; barter is eliminated through globalization; etc. The efforts are extremely successful. Increasingly efficient labor-accumulation is leads to a further concentration of wealth and power.

KEY POINTS

- With The *Institute* in full operation, and the masses appropriately sedated, the PTB turn their full attention to increasing the rate at which they may accumulate labor.
- The word “progress” becomes the ideological banner around which greedy excess is justified. Mass marketing, psychological manipulation, legal action, and other strategies make those at the top of the pyramid incredibly wealth.
- Global accumulation moves full steam ahead. Accumulation becomes so efficient that even the storage of money becomes a problem. Various creative ways to contain accumulated money are devised.
- Global accumulation accelerates until the inherent contradictions in the system bring the system to the brink of collapse.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Progress.
- Product Differentiation.
- Planned Obsolescence
- Precious Stones and Metals Cartel / Banks

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. What does it mean to say that “progress” is the ideological banner of unfettered accumulation? Discuss with examples from your own thinking.
2. What are some of the techniques used to increase the rate of accumulation? Can you think of anything not mentioned in the text?
3. Although the text does not mention the social, psychological, emotional, or environmental costs of unfettered accumulation in this chapter, speculate. What do you think are some of the costs to families, to relationships, to the environment, to the children in developing nations, and so on.

CLASSROOM FOCUS

Explore sweatshops: What are sweatshops? Where on Earth do we find do we find sweatshops? Who works in them? Where do the products made in sweatshops end up. In the context of this chapter/course, what is the purpose of a sweatshop?

Explore the psychological impact of advertising, particularly on women. What impact do you think manipulative advertising has on body image, anorexia, depression, and so on.

CRISES

SUMMARY

As labor is accumulated, money is extracted out of the economy. Money, which is the “life blood” of modern economies, gradually becomes scarce. Recession results when there are insufficient funds in the economy to facilitate exchange of all available labor. That is, people want to exchange/work, but there isn’t enough money for them to do that. At that point, action must be taken to re-inject money into the economy.

The best solution is to just give the money back into the economy. Doing so would, however, expose the System at its root. In order to avoid “giving away what is rightfully theirs”, and in order to avoid tipping their hand about the System and true nature of the economic recession, the Family a) indoctrinates people and b) finds ways to defibrillate the economy.

Initially the Family defibrillates the economy by lending, but lending only exacerbates the problem by entrenching debt. Crises are cyclical and they worsen over time. In order to cope, the family tries manipulating perceptions and expectations (marketing/advertising), deleveraging (i.e. repossession), austerity, and even printing more money and lending at interest. Unfortunately, as we see in the next unit, these injections result in more debt. Economic recessions, which are cyclically inevitable, deepen. Eventually global economic collapse arises and *war* is the only thing that will maintain The System.

KEY POINTS

- Unfettered accumulation of labour leads inevitably to recession and unrest. The only real solution to the unfettered accumulation is to put all the accumulated labor/money back into the economy—to give it all back. The Family doesn’t want to do this so they find other ways to prolong accumulation.
- Stop gap solutions that allow the Family to continue to accumulate include the use of force, food banks, and social welfare. In addition, media (Hollywood, news, etc.) is employed to distract, sanitize (perception), and indoctrinate.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Unemployment

- Regime of Accumulation
- Recession
- Depression
- Debt
- Confidence
- Deleveraging
- Indoctrination
- Disney Pocahontas
- Lending and Interest
- Austerity measures
- Distraction
- Perception Sanitation
- World Food Program Hunger FAQ

STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is indoctrination? What are the consequences of indoctrination? What does Michael S. mean when he says *“Indoctrination is a powerful mechanism of prolonging accumulation that works by negating the people’s suffering and turning it into a good thing.”*
- The National Bureau of Economic Research says *“In recent years, ordinary people have had little idea about such things. What they think they know is often wrong. Widespread ignorance and misperceptions of inequality emerge robustly, regardless of the data source, operationalization, and method of measurement.”*¹ How have indoctrination and perception sanitation led to this unfortunate economic ignorance? What do you think can be done about this?

¹ (Gimpelson & Treisman, 2015) A quick summary is provide (Badger, 2015)

CLASSROOM FOCUS

What causes an economic recession/depression: What causes an economic recession? Discuss in your group. Carrying on with the theme of previous class assignments, ask your family and friends what they think causes depression. Compare their answers to this question with the answers provided in this course-let. Are the answers different? In what way? Share your work with your group and then with your teacher.

DEBT

SUMMARY

Unfettered accumulation leads inevitably to an economic crisis caused by debt. One solution to the crisis is for the Family to “lend” their own money out to people who need it to exchange. If that’s not enough (and when economies get huge, it is not), another solution is to create a central bank tasked with printing money and injecting this money into the economy. The problem is, when money is injected into a starved economy it is injected with the expectation that it will be paid back with interest! Lending money at interest can never solve the economic problem caused by accumulation because lending money at interest just makes it worse. It makes it worse because a) now the Family has their fingers into the pie in two ways, thus *increasing* accumulation and b) digging the economic hole even deeper still as a result. Stop gap measures like **deleveraging** and **austerity** stave off total collapse, but as global debt expands into the trillions we move inevitably and inexorably towards a massive, global economic apocalypse, and possibly a global war.

KEY POINTS

- Debt emerges when money is inserted in order to resuscitate an asphyxiating economy. Money can be inserted by personal lending, but a central bank with the authority to inject money on a continuous basis is the ultimate “solution.”
- Because money is never just given back, and always inserted “with interest,” the “solution” exacerbates the problem. The economic black hole gets wider, deeper, and increasingly impossible to deal with. Eventually, the hole gets big enough to swallow the whole Earth.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Central Banks
- Family Confidence
- Interest-bearing cash intravenous
- Debt

- über-crises
- Cyclic Economic Crises
- Deleveraging
- Austerity
- Alan Taylor / cyclic crises
- Peter Spence / global debt
- Beat Balzli and Michaela Schiessle
- Negative Interest Rates
- Economic Transfer

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. How does accumulation lead to debt? What problem is “lending” seen as a solution for? What happens when the Family starts to lend? How does “lending at interest” exacerbate debt?
2. Is it possible, do you think, to “lend” into infinity? Are there limits on how big the debt-hole can get? Brainstorm some of the consequences. According to the text, what is the inevitable outcome?

CLASSROOM FOCUS

Global Debt: Do some online research. What are some countries that have recently experienced financial crises? Greece comes to mind, research others. What news can you dig up about the situation? What happened? Where there examples of deleveraging and austerity? What are the consequences for the people? Is your nation close to a financial crises? Discuss.

SOLUTIONS

SUMMARY

The world is in crises and unless we change tracks, the crises will only get worse. Several solutions, several areas of activity, present themselves as viable, workable, and urgently needed. First, we need to educate about the nature of money and also about the social, environmental, psychological, and political problems caused by unfettered accumulation of money. Then, action is required, in particular a global debt jubilee and an economic revolution that ends, or at least properly regulates, accumulation. Finally (or is that firstly), a global change in values and priorities, and a global shift in thinking, are required. Without a global change in values and priorities and a voluntary shift to new systems, global violence and ecological, political, social, and economic catastrophe may ensue.

Though the solution is easy to specify, action and transformation are challenging. Resistance in the form of hostile environments, intellectual and emotional obstacles in the form of corrupted old energy archetypes and ideology, the difficulty of coming up with new ways of thinking to replace dated or inadequate systems that support violence and exploitation, and **damage to the human body and psyche caused by toxic socialization**, make moving forward and saving the planet a particular challenge. In this regard, authentic spirituality and authentic mystical connection may provide the *rocket boost* needed to initiate the necessary transformation.

The biggest obstacle to exploring mystical experience and spiritual connection may be science. There is a general perception that science, as a whole, is an atheist/agnostic institution. To a certain extent this is true. Many scientists are atheist and many atheists resist exploration, but the general notion that all scientists are atheists and that exploration of mystical experience is out of the question as a result, is false. Not all scientists are atheists and, arguably, spirituality is just an extension of a scientist's already powerful drive for truth. Therefore, an examination of human spirituality, and in particular the transformative potential of mystical experience, is a natural extension of a scientist's already powerful drive for truth. Beyond examination of the area, science should also participate in the enchantment of a world that they so thoroughly emptied of its mystical and spiritual significance.

KEY POINTS

- A global debt jubilee and the elimination of accumulation economies is the only way to

save the world from catastrophe.

- In order to move forward and accomplish the above, we need to educate ourselves, overcome hostile environments, change our values and priorities, replace corrupted archetypes, develop new ways of thinking, and heal our damaged body/mind.
- As noted in the book, the problems associated with education, value chapter, corrupted archetypes, new thinking, and healing are complex; but a rocket boost forward may be accomplished by fostering global mystical experience.
- Science is not necessarily incompatible with religion or spiritual experience. Both science and religion are simply expressions of the same powerful human need for truth. Einstein saw them as compatible and necessarily complementary (i.e. they both strengthened each other). Therefore, science should not be used as an excuse to avoid inquiry into mystical experience, or a cudgel with which to beat those who wish to explore and understand.

KEY CONCEPTS

- Debt Jubilee
- New Energy Jobs
- Old Energy Jobs
- Species Extinction
- Spiritual Revolution
- Hostile Environments
- David L. Mech / Alpha Male / Scientific Ideology
- Buddha / Attachment / Spiritual Ideology
- Bourgeoisie
- Proletariat
- Toxic Socialization
- Eugene Ruyle
- Kakistocracy

- Monthly Review
- Authentic Core
- Old Energy Archetypes / Star Wars
- New Energy Archetypes / The Song of Creation
- The biggest lie
- J. Harrold Ellens / Master Story
- Agents of Consciousness
- Arthur E. Waite / Western Tarot
- Law of Attraction
- Albert Einstein
- Authentic Spirituality
- Abraham Maslow / cognitive need to know and understand

STUDY QUESTIONS

- What is a debt jubilee? Do some online research. Who is talking about it? Do you or your study group think this is a viable solution? Why or why not?
- What is a *hostile environment*? Have you tried to discuss the concepts in this book and have you or members of your study group experienced hostility and resistance? If so, what forms of resistance have you experienced? Brainstorm positive and productive solutions to overcoming hostility, resistance, and fear.
- “By suggesting that “alphas” are acting “naturally,” Mech invokes the full authority of science (just like a priest may invoke the full authority of the bible, or God) in order to provide an easy ideological cover for arguably toxic patterns of behavior.” Discuss. What other “scientific” ideologies can you think of that are used to justify the System.
- “The basis of exploitation is violence.” What does this mean? Is this true? Brainstorm examples from the real world where you can see that violence is the root of exploitation. Also, consider your own life. Do you make excuses for various forms of emotional, psychological, or even physical violence?

- Abraham Maslow said we have powerful needs to know and understand. Have you ever wondered why children always ask “What is that?” and “Why?” Do you think these questions are derived from an inborn drive for Truth? Do you see this drive for truth expressed in your daily life? Discuss and provide examples.
- What is the Master Story? What are its elements? How can the Master Story be used to justify violence, abuse, and even war.
- What is the significance of *mystical experience* and the *authentic core*? Are you an atheist, agnostic, deist? What do you think about the idea of merging science and spirituality? What do you think about the idea that mystical experience may be root of transformative global change?

CLASSROOM FOCUS

The Master Story: What is the master story? What are the key elements of this master story (e.g., cosmic good, transcendental evil, apocalyptic conflict, violence against others, authoritarian Gods, murder of a child, death)? What is your belief system? Are you Christian, Hindu, atheist, or agnostic? Do you follow George Lucas’s cosmic duality? Whatever your believe system, look into it. Do you see elements of the master story in your belief system? If so, how does it make you feel to find elements of a 10,000 year old ideology in your spiritual/scientific/atheist/agnostic belief system? Share with your group and get your teacher to share your group findings with the class.

The Master Story Justifies Violence: Consider the Master Story. How can the Master Story be used to justify violence and conflict? Have you used the Master Story to provide excuses/justify your own violent behavior? Do you “punish” others because you think they deserve it, because their behavior is bad, or because you are convinced they are evil? If so, then you are using elements of the Master Story.

Mystical Experience: According to researcher, mystical experience comes in many forms, from connections to “God” to nature experience to, as Einstein had, sentiments of cosmic unity and intelligence. Have you ever had what you consider to be a mystical experience? If so, share it with your group. Don’t be shy. As Harmless (2008) notes in his book entitled *Mystics*, when he asks his students, almost all of them report having had some type of mystical/spiritual/religious experience.

CONCLUSION

SUMMARY

We live at the cusp of a golden age. Science and technology are rapidly advancing and with the advance many of the most intractable human problems can now be solved. In addition, automation is poised to free vast swaths of human labour. This human labour would be available to build a planetary utopia. The problem is, accumulation have given the Family inordinate power and control. Couple there resources with advances in surveillance and online technology, and the Family has what it needs to prevent forward progress of the human race. However if the Family shifts and if the regime of accumulation is ended, global utopia could easily be achieved. In order to encourage the Family to get on board we have to control anger and hostility, educate the family, and lead by example.

KEY POINTS

- Saving the planet requires immediate and rapid change, but because power and resources are concentrated in the hands of the Family, any global transformation requires their participation and assent.
- In order to get family on board, avoid anger and resentment, educate the Family, and lead by example

KEY CONCEPTS

- Epstein and Robertson / Search Engine Manipulation Effect (SEME)
- Warren Buffet / Class War
- Giving Pledge
- Motor Neurons
- Leading by Example
- The Last Mimsy

STUDY QUESTIONS

- In the textbook we find the following quote

Any authentic solution to the crises at hand must include an awareness of the nature of money and the problems associated with accumulation...if people talk about God or faith or climate change or terrorist interventions or whatever their particular issue is, but they do not talk about the problems with money and accumulation, their solutions are probably unreasonable and untenable because they lack grounding in the critical financial realities of this planet”

Do you agree with this sentiment? Give your reasons.

- Google has the power to influence elections on global scale.

CLASSROOM FOCUS

Mirror neurons: Since the publication of the original study, mirror neurons have been linked to human learning, bursts of human evolution and even human empathy. In your group, consider implications of this against typical Hollywood fare, i.e. sitcoms where people live their lives in one funny situation after another, dramas, reality television shows that model social violence, and action flicks filled with conflict and the Master Story narratives. What do you think the impact of watching all this has on the human psyche? Discuss and share your conclusions with the class.

Google Search: If Google can influence elections, what about Facebook or Instagram or any of the other social networks out there now. Recently “fake news” on Facebook has been called a “threat to democracy.” Do you agree with this sentiment? Why or why not?

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