

Footnote: The Capitalist Mentality

Capitalists are a world-wide exclusive minority of devious greed-driven power-crazed self-justifying opportunist who strive single-mindedly for unlimited self-gain by gambling the livelihoods of the rest of humanity. [PDF]

Because they possess wealth and power, it is assumed by most that the rich elite also are of high intellect. However, their mental abilities, though meticulously honed, are extremely specialised. They invariably appear quite shallow and unperceptive in every subject other than those which pertain to satisfying their own narrow self-interest of unlimited acquisition.

Their Driving Force

When I was a boy, we stopped for a picnic in the wilds of the Forest of Bowland. There I discovered two starving kittens which had been abandoned. Feeling sorry for them, I managed to persuade my parents to adopt them. One was all black. One was black and white. So I called them Blacky and Blighty. At meal times, their food was divided into two piles. Blighty was greedy. She always stood over her own portion while gobbling up Blacky's portion faster than Blacky could eat it. Once Blacky's portion had gone, Blighty gulped her own portion while maintaining an impudently defensive posture over it to prevent Blacky from getting any. Shortly after, Blighty would throw up.



To me, the greedy kitten typified the mentality of those who possess and control the economic resources of the Earth, the enterprises which form them into products, and the global 'free' market through which those products are exchanged. Their singular aim in life is to acquire. To acquire beyond their natural needs. To acquire without limit. Each is driven as if by an insatiable inner force to out-acquire all his peers. Their only measure of an individual's stature is his wealth. His rank within their society is determined solely by his propensity for acquisition.

The reason the capitalist is hell-bent on unlimited acquisition is not because he needs all this wealth. After all, he can only eat one meal at a time. He can only wear one suit at a time. He can only drive one car at a time. No. He does it to satisfy his inner-most lust to out-possess his neighbour. To control more of the Earth than his peer. To rule a greater number of his fellow beings than his competitor. To the rich, this game of gain is indeed a game. It is a permanent open challenge which every capitalist issues against all his peers. It has nothing to do with his needs, his survival or his well-being. It certainly has nothing to do with providing people in general with their needs of life.

Driven by greed and lust for power, the capitalist's purpose in life is to win the game of acquisition by gaining as much personal wealth and property as possible, have a comfortable life, then pass on his wealth to his children. He regards any consequential adverse effects which his endeavour may have on others as 'not his problem'.

Ways and Means

To achieve this, the capitalist uses as capital the wealth he inherited from his parents. If he inherited no wealth but has the right contacts and is of a sufficiently persuasive nature, he persuades those with inherited wealth to lend it to him on agreed terms. This added tenet of capitalism enables many wealthless-but-persuasive individuals (commonly known as *con men*) to exploit whatever natural and human resources that *borrowed* capital is able to command.

The *natural* resources he uses are located on or beneath land which was gained by its owner not by merit but by conquest, enclosure, inheritance or chance. The *human* resources he uses are the labouring poor from whom the natural right to use the land to turn their labour into their needs of life was wrested long ago by that bullying elite whose descendants now possess it.

However much a capitalist may gain by employing his capital, he sees himself as under no obligation to share that gain with those whose labour actually generated it. He need only provide, in return for labour, the minimum necessary to secure that labour for as long as it is needed. Most of the time, that minimum is the amount necessary to keep the labourer and his dependants fed, clothed and sheltered to the minimum standard required for him to function acceptably as a part of the society in which he lives.

The capitalist sees it as right and just that the wealth he gains from the Earth through the labour of the poor should be protected by force of law from being 'stolen back' by that labouring poor. In other words, the capitalist sees it as wrong for the labourer to take back (by force or stealth) any or all of that *portion* of the fruits of his labour which the capitalist has arbitrarily decided to keep for himself.

The capitalist is essentially a warrior. His *modus operandus* is merely a sanitised form of combat. His language is the language of war. He endlessly assesses the threats and opportunities within his market. He devises strategies and tactics to protect himself and annihilate competition. It is war fought without physical violence. Nevertheless, it still has victors and vanquished. It still has conquerors and casualties. Its conquerors take all and live in splendour. Its casualties may not actually die, but they lose all, and as a result, descend into the living death of poverty and social isolation.

The violence of *economic* war may not appear physical. But it is. The rules by which the capitalist wages his war are rules which he devises to his advantage. He it is who [influences the voter](#) to elect [the government](#) which enacts the rules by which he fights his economic war. These rules deliberately favour the rich at the expense of the poor. They are weighted to make it easier for those who have much, to get more; making it harder for those who have less. These same rules make it impossible for those who have nothing to start with ever to gain anything.

To make it even more unfair, the rich think nothing of breaking their own rules to gain an advantage. But they will never tolerate them being broken by the common people they employ. If, to survive, a poor man should contemplate violating these biased rules, he is faced with the real and present threat of physical violence from the [law enforcement](#) agency of the capitalist regime in whose jurisdiction he lives.

The economic wars of capitalism are not simple grandiose wars fought along single well defined front lines. The free market battle field comprises many market sectors, each one hosting a separate war. The battles themselves are less like strategically planned campaigns and more like opportunistic raids of pillage.

I saw a wild-life documentary in which a cheetah laboriously stalked a wildebeest. After much time and effort by the cheetah, the hunt ended in a long fast chase which culminated in the wildebeest being caught and killed. The cheetah had, by the natural way of things, earned its kill. It left the

cheetah exhausted and unable to do anything for many minutes while it recovered from the chase. Just then, a group of two or three hyenas wandered by and saw the cheetah's kill. They mobbed the cheetah and took over its kill. After all that effort, the cheetah went away with nothing. The hyenas went away with everything.

The rich elite of this world are like the hyenas. They are opportunists. They let others spend their mental and physical efforts inventing, developing, producing, opening up markets. Then, when they spot that some hard-working artisan's efforts have borne fruit, they come in with their devastating capital and take over his hard-won market. The originator is driven away with nothing. The capitalist walks away with everything. The capitalist takes advantage of opportunities for gain, no matter how it may hurt others. He acquires by systematically dispossessing those who are poorer and weaker than he is, then making them his economic slaves.

Twice a Slave

The vast majority of mankind has no direct means of turning its labour into its needs of life. Consequently, in order to live, each must try to sell his labour to somebody who has such means. He must endeavour to become employed by a member of that exclusive elite minority, who possess the means of turning labour into the needs of life. In the past, he became a slave and received his subsistence in kind. In today's world, he becomes an employee and receives his subsistence as money. In both cases, the principle is the same.

He is thus once a slave.

The labour of the employee creates all the needs of human life. Notwithstanding, all that the employee produces, takes form as the property of his employer. In order to live, therefore, the employee must receive his needs of life from his employer - or, more realistically, many employers. In today's world, that means the employee must buy his needs of life from the free market, through which all employers sell their produce. And the prices set by the market (the employers) are always the maximum the employee is able to stand and still survive. The dispossessed employee has no other means of acquiring his needs of life. So he is also a slave of the market.

He is thus twice a slave.

Air of Contempt

The rich generally exhibit a tangible *air of contempt* for the poor. This is undeniably felt in the behaviour of corporates towards the individual consumer, especially in the area of marketing.

For many years, the ordinary consumer suffered much stress and financial loss as a result of corporates refusing to action a consumer's legitimate requests to cancel a subscription to a service. This is particularly the case with telecommunications services. I remember that AOL stone-walled for ages in refusing to cancel my account, even after I had left the country. They continued relentlessly to debit my bank account, always saying something like "The system is down so you'll have to try again in another 5 days". I still have all the relevant documentation and correspondence. Of course, the system was never "down" if you wanted to open a new account! This experience continued when I lived in Brazil, again mainly with [telecommunications services](#), but also with magazines and cable TV services.

Perhaps the most dastardly example of the contempt these corporates have for the lowly consumer - at least in Brazil - was the practice of placing people on a public [bad debtors](#) list in the event of their discontinuing subscription payments charged after a service had been cancelled. Being placed on such a list renders an individual ineligible for any form of credit and labelled as being financially

dubious and unreliable. And in this case, falsely so. It amounts to a public *tort of defamation*, against which the lone individual, with his limited financial resources and no access to credit, has no practical means to defend. The corporate service provider is thus, in effect, using the public bad debtors list as an *instrument of extortion* against a far weaker party, namely, the consumer.

If and when such a matter is eventually resolved, through a consumer watchdog agency or the courts, the innocent person's name will be removed from the list. Notwithstanding, the fact that an innocent person's name has been on a public bad debtor's list means that people will have seen it and institutions will be aware of it. Damage has been done. And back-up copies of the old list may well still exist.

Another forceful demonstration of the contempt with which corporate power regards the lowly individual is [telemarketing](#). This is the practice of making unsolicited telephone calls to members of the public from lists furnished by market research companies and even utility companies. Even government - especially local (or municipal) government - stoop to the level of selling details of every private individual on an electoral roll. How low can they go! They cannot be unaware of the devastating effect this has on people.

There have been periods - extending to as much as two years - in which I have been barraged by from 8 to 12 (or sometimes more) unsolicited commercial nuisance calls per day during working hours. As a writer, trying to concentrate on what I am writing, this is a disruption, which, at times, has brought my production to a complete standstill for considerable periods. Each call completely breaks my concentration and destroys my train of thought. Of course, these selfish corporate good-for-nothings are totally unconcerned about the effect their malicious telephoning has on people. Their only concern is reaching the few mindless individuals who will actually respond positively to their telephonic barrages. The collateral devastation is an externalised cost heaped upon people like me.

I am obviously not alone in this frustration. This is evinced by an on-going evolution in behaviour of telesales callers. Instead of receiving a load of verbal sales hype, as in the past, I now receive silence. When I answer the phone, nobody speaks. The call drops almost immediately. From this I deduce that perhaps the telesales callers have had enough of the anger and verbal abuse received from frustrated recipients. So they just make the connection so that the telesales equipment monitors that they have made a sales call, and hang up. The corporate employer of these telesales callers obviously gains nothing from these silent calls. It merely continues to deliver disruption and frustration to the recipients and pay packets to the callers. The cretinous corporate is obviously too stupid to know what is happening.

The final example of corporate contempt for customers that I have experienced is from a telecom company. I remember that my monthly telephone bill would always arrive on my mat either on, or a couple of days after, the payment deadline, with the result that a small fine + interest was added to my bill the following month, which was again late in arriving. What a highly illustrative example of their underhanded dishonest penny-pinching mentality.

Social Effects

For the most part, the coterie of the rich dominant elite is an exclusive club. It does not usually admit new members from the outside. Occasionally, an individual suddenly finds himself catapulted into this exclusive fraternity simply by happening to be the right person in the right place at the right time. Such people often bewilderedly find themselves suddenly elevated on a fashion-driven bandwagon into this exclusive club of the super-rich. But once in there, they soon seize their opportunities and invariably soak up and adopt its inhumane mentality of exploitation and oppression. They too will

force one dying of thirst in the desert to trade their all for a cup of water. They too will use the power of their law - and even hired violence - to exploit the weak.

These favoured few are often many orders of magnitude richer than society's poorest. Yet they are not a higher form of life than the poor. They share the same bio-mechanical specification. They have no built-in superiority. Hence they cannot have acquired their disproportionate wealth by working that many orders of magnitude harder than the poor. Every rich man acquired his copious wealth from the labour of many poor men. The reason he can accumulate such wealth, and pay himself a 'fat cat' salary, is because he is the one whose particular economic function is to control the flow of money and resources within his enterprise. He 'justifies' his self-awarded gargantuan salary by claiming that it is what the open market would gladly pay for the sheer magnitude and quality of the job he does.

Over the past few years, I have met many people who, like myself, are out of work. They possess a rich diversity of complementary skills and expertise in areas such as organisation & methods, project planning & management, information technology & computer software, engineering, public relations, law, banking, finance, accounting and personnel management. Given our present circumstances, any of us would jump at the chance of a job paying £25,000 a year (circa 1996). A mutually-picked team of 12 of us at £25,000 a year each could easily do that same job as a fat cat for a mere £300,000 a year - over 36% less than the current salary of the particular fat cat of whom I am thinking.

To suggest that the 12 of us as a team could not match the solo capability of this chief executive would just be plain arrogance. In fact, I would relish the challenge of trying to train a neural network to do his essential job alongside him to see if, as I suspect, it could take over from him. I think that a personal computer running a neural network package would be considerably more competitive than employing a fat cat human. Of course, the real reason he is in his overly elevated position is because he happened to be in the right place at the right time and had the right friends.

The obvious, visible and undeniable sociological effect of capitalism is gross disparity in wealth and well-being among the inhabitants of this planet. Capitalism may even be *defined* as an economic system which concentrates the wealth generated by the many into the hands of a favoured few. That is its shamelessly declared purpose.

Pang of Conscience

Though they be at almost all times immersed in their quests for endless acquisition, capitalists on occasions are troubled by conscience at the sight of the poverty which surrounds their affluence. Most try to keep it out of sight and hence out of mind. They go to live on the other side of town. Nevertheless, when the tenets of religion start to invade their thoughts, their consciences are not so readily appeased. They are then forced to seek a more philosophical or even scientific justification for what they do.

Thomas Malthus tried to justify poverty in his society by saying that it was caused by the fact that population grew geometrically without limit until the environment could no longer support it, at which point poverty, disease and starvation put the natural brake on further increase. Attributing poverty to natural cause absolved the propertied elite of his day of responsibility for the sorry state of the dispossessed. It allowed them to carry on with their comfortable lives with clear consciences before God and man.

But Malthus had got his mathematics wrong. It did not account for natural feed-back mechanisms in the human body which reduce fecundity automatically when population gets too high for the environment to support. This has happened. For what is thought to be the first time in history the

overall fecundity of the human species has dropped below unity, causing the rate of growth of the [world's population](#) to fall.

Population is observed to be governed not by geometric progression as Malthus postulated, but by the [Standard Logistic Difference Equation](#). This contains a second term which counters the run-away effect of pure geometric growth. It represents the behaviour of mechanisms within the human body which automatically impose an upper limit on population. These *natural physiological control systems* of the human body are not well understood. One is thought to involve a form of signalling between individuals within a population which is facilitated by the emission and detection of odours of which the individuals are not consciously aware.

Poverty in Malthus's day, as today, was not due to over-population but to a social system which *unfairly distributed* the means by which people could turn their labour into their needs of life. Malthus seemed unable to grasp the difference between the *natural* laws of cause and effect and the *man-made* economic policies of his society. He, like his capitalist counterparts today, saw them as inseparable parts of a single indivisible continuum. They place 'laws' enacted by a bunch of guffawing buffoons in a little hot air parlour by the River Thames on an equal standing with the laws that sustain the operation of the universe.

Poverty arises because the *physiological control systems* of the human body were never programmed to compensate for the irrational effects of *human politics*. This is why they fail to restrict population increase when poverty stems from a *politically imposed* disparity in personal wealth rather than from a *naturally imposed* limit to the productivity of the Earth's ecosystem. The poor man's body detects the presence of fertility and abundance all around him. The fact that he does not have the money to buy any of it makes no sense to his body's aromatic signalling system.

Although *many* had trouble reconciling the presence, in their society, of a majority labouring poor to their moral consciences and religious beliefs, *most* seemed to accept it as part of the natural order. Even the members of the egalitarian society proposed by François Quesnai and so warmly embraced by Dr Adam Smith towards the end of his [4th Book](#) on The Wealth of Nations were not ordinary people. They were land owners, gentleman farmers, industrialists and merchants whose economic system relied totally on a vast pool of labouring poor. From the point of view of any member of these capitalised classes, such a society would be egalitarian. However, from the point of view of any of their labouring poor, their society would be distinctly authoritarian.

Justification

Most petty capitalists do not, however, think that deeply about the social conditions around them. They dismiss them as not being their concern. They manage to justify their disproportionate share of wealth with much shallower arguments. The young director of an equipment dealership who had the exclusive sales mandate with a large equipment manufacturer within his prescribed local territory put it simply:

"I started my business from scratch and built it up to what it is today. I am therefore perfectly right to pay myself far more than I pay my employees."

He had started a small business out of his third bedroom at home. He then joined up with a partner. They were just about surviving when a foreign manufacturer who was new to the U. K. needed a dealership in their area. The two young men happened to be in the right place at the right time with the right set-up. Their business took off. They moved first to a small unit on an industrial estate. Their business grew rapidly. They soon had to move to a larger unit. Today they run a large established company.

I have spoken since to many in small technical niches who are just like these two were when they started out. Many of them would like to have their own businesses and work directly for people and be recognised and appreciated personally for what they do. But they can't. Not because they are any less capable than the others but because all the manufacturers in their line of business now already have dealers in all areas. The opportunity to set up a dealership no longer exists.

The reason the original two young men were able to become directors of a large dealership, pay themselves great profits and bonuses, drive around in brand new Mercedes-Benz cars and go on expensive foreign holidays was primarily because they *happened* to be in the right place at the right time. Not because of anything they themselves consciously did out of the ordinary. Those who came along after them simply did not have the opportunity to start and build up a business the way they did.

A couple of their young technicians wishing to start up on their own would simply have no territory for their fledgling dealership if they started one, and no alternative manufacturer for whom to become dealers. The two young technicians are supporting a part of the market held by their employers. But the way the capitalist free market operates causes the very existence of their established employers to prevent them from being able to start up on their own and thereby gain the profit element from the work they now do for their employers' customers.

The profit element of the young technicians' labours goes straight into the pockets of the *original* two young men for no other reason but that they had been in the right place at the right time. But happening to be in the right place at the right time is not, in my opinion, a morally valid reason for keeping all the profit and paying one's technical equals a subsistence wage just because they did *not* happen to be in the right place at the right time.

Conclusion

The capitalist mind is a manifestation of naked human greed. It is irrational. Nobody needs such unlimited wealth. World poverty could be eliminated by redistributing the unnecessary excess wealth which the rich undeservedly accumulate. The inexcusable disparity caused by capitalism troubles the capitalist's conscience. He seeks satisfying arguments to appease his conscience, but in the final analysis, none is morally valid. The designed intent of the capitalist system is to siphon off the fruits of the labours of the poor and concentrate them into the hands of a favoured few. It is, by any natural sense of right and wrong, a thoroughly reprehensible system.

But it is not new. Capitalism is simply a new manifestation of an [old mentality](#). It is the mentality of *exclusivism*: the enforced restriction of the possession and control of resources to a small exclusive group. It is the mindset of ancient kings, barons, dictators, war lords and mafias. The capitalist has merely found a convenient way of externalising - or out-sourcing - the task of enforcing wealth disparity. He does not need an army or a gang of thugs: he has the State with its police to enforce a law which he fashions to his own favourable design through [covert influence and manipulation](#).

A society based on *exclusivism* is inherently unfair. A fair society has to be *inclusive*: it must facilitate well-being for all. To do this, it must allow each human being free access to - and unencumbered use of - [his fair share](#) of what the planet provides for converting human labour into human needs. A society that embraces capitalism cannot do this.

Since an *inclusive* society would obviously be the better option for the dispossessed majority, why do they tolerate capitalism? Why don't they, with their vast number, overthrow and destroy it? The answer is: because they are divided and thereby ruled. They are divided and ruled because they are ignorant. And, in my opinion, they are ignorant because they are too lazy and timid to think for

themselves. They could do. Each has the same 200 billion neuron brain as any of the elite. But they don't. So, one could say that it is their own stupid fault.

Notwithstanding, some do think for themselves. But they are few. And they do not have sufficient power and resources to overthrow capitalism unilaterally. Humanity must therefore continue to suffer the disparity of capitalism until the desire to pursue systematic self-education seeps through to the common mind.

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