ECONOMICS
Seeing Wetiko: On Capitalism, Mind Viruses, and Antidotes for a World in Transition

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Comments 36

It's delicate confronting these priests of the golden bull
They preach from the pulpit of the bottom line
Their minds rustle with million dollar bills
You say Silver burns a hole in your pocket
And Gold burns a hole in your soul
Well, uranium burns a hole in forever
It just gets out of control.

What if we told you that humanity is being driven to the brink of extinction by an illness? That all the poverty, the climate devastation, the perpetual war, and consumption fetishism we see all around us have roots in a mass psychological infection? What if we went on to say that this infection is not just highly communicable but also self-replicating, according to the laws of cultural evolution, and that it remains so clandestine in our psyches that most hosts will, as a condition of their infected state, vehemently deny that they are infected? What if we then told you that this ‘mind virus’ can be described as a form of cannibalism. Yes, cannibalism. Not necessarily in the literal flesh-eating sense but rather the idea of consuming others—human and non-human—as a means of securing personal wealth and supremacy.

You may dismiss this line of thinking as New Age woo-woo or, worse, a lefty conspiracy theory. But this approach of viewing the transmission of ideas as a key determinant of the emergent reality is increasingly validated by various branches of science, including
evolutionary theory, quantum physics, cognitive linguistics, and epigenetics.

The history of this infection is long, strange, and dark. But it leads to hope.

**Viruses of the Mind**

*The New World fell not to a sword but to a meme.*

~ Daniel Quinn

One of the most well-accepted scientific theories that helps explain the power of idea-spreading is memetics.

Memes are to culture what genes are to biology: the base unit of evolution. The term was originally coined by the evolutionary biologist Richard Dawkins in his 1976 book, *The Selfish Gene*. Dawkins writes, “I think that a new kind of replicator has recently emerged . . . It is still drifting clumsily about in its primeval soup, but already it is achieving evolutionary change at a rate which leaves the old gene panting far behind.” He goes on, “Examples of memes are tunes, ideas, catch-phrases, clothes fashions, ways of making pots or of building arches. Just as genes propagate themselves in the gene pool by leaping from body to body via sperms or eggs, so memes propagate themselves in the meme pool by leaping from brain to brain, via a process which, in the broad sense, can be called imitation.”

One of the high priests of rationalism, the scientific method, and atheism, is also the father of the meme of ‘memes.’ However, like all memes or ideas, there can be no ownership in a traditional sense, only the entanglement that quantum physics reminds us characterizes our intra-actions.

Of course, similar notions of how ideas move between us have been around in Western traditions for centuries. Plato was the first to fully articulate this through his Theory of Forms, which argues that non-physical forms—i.e., Ideas—represent the perfect reality fr
which material reality is derived.

Modern articulations of the Theory of Forms can be seen in Pierre Teilhard de Chardin’s idea of the Noosphere (the sphere of human thought) and Carl Jung’s Collective Unconscious, where structures of the unconscious are shared among beings of the same species. For Jung, the idea of the marauding cannibal would first be an archetype that manifests in the material world through the actions of those who channel or embody it.

For those who prefer their science more empirical, the growing field of epigenetics provides some intellectual concrete. Epigenetics studies changes in organisms caused by modification of gene expression rather than any physical alteration of the gene itself. In other words, how traits vary from generation to generation is not solely a question of material biology but is partly determined by environmental and contextual factors that affected our ancestors.⁵

The Wetiko Virus

*We did not think of the great open plains, the beautiful rolling hills, and the winding streams with tangled growth as “wild.” Only to the White man was nature a “wilderness” and only to him was the land infested by “wild” animals and “savage” people. To us it was tame. Earth was bountiful and we were surrounded with the blessings of the Great Mystery. Not until the hairy man from the east came and with brutal frenzy heaped injustices upon us and the families we loved was it “wild” for us.*

~ Luther Standing Bear, Land of the Spotted Eagle⁶

Many spiritual traditions, including Buddhism, Sufism (the mystical branch of Islam), Taoism, Gnosticism, as well as many Indigenous cultures, have long understood the mind-based nature of creation. These worldviews have at their core a recognition of the power of thought-forms to determine the course of physical events.

Various First Nations traditions of North America have specific and long established lore
relating to cannibalism and a term for the thought-form that causes it: *wetiko*. We believe understanding this offers a powerful way of understanding the deepest roots of our current global polycrisis.

*Wetiko* is an Algonquin word for a cannibalistic spirit that is driven by greed, excess, and selfish consumption (in Ojibwa it is *windigo*, *wintiko* in Powhatan). It deludes its host into believing that cannibalizing the life-force of others (others in the broad sense, including animals and other forms of Gaian life) is a logical and morally upright way to live.

*Wetiko* short-circuits the individual’s ability to see itself as an enmeshed and interdependent part of a balanced environment and raises the self-serving ego to supremacy. It is this false separation of self from nature that makes this cannibalism, rather than simple murder. It allows—indeed commands—the infected entity to consume far more than it needs in a blind, murderous daze of self-aggrandizement. Author Paul Levy, in an attempt to find language accessible for Western audiences, describes it as ‘malignant egophrenia’—the ego unchained from reason and limits, acting with the malevolent logic of the cancer cell. We will use the term *wetiko* as it is the original, and reminds us of the wisdom to be found in Indigenous cultures, for those who have the ears to hear.

*Wetiko* can describe both the infection and the body infected; a person can be infected by *wetiko* or, in cases where the infection is very advanced, can personify the disease: ‘a *wetiko*.’ This holds true for cultures and systems; all can be described as being *wetiko* if they routinely manifest these traits.

In his now classic book *Columbus and Other Cannibals*, Native American historian Jack D. Forbes describes how there was a commonly-held belief among many Indigenous communities that the European colonialists were so chronically and uniformly infected with *wetiko* that it must be a defining characteristic of the culture from which they came. Examining the history of these cultures, Forbes laments, “Tragically, the history of the world for the past 2,000 years is, in great part, the story of the epidemiology of the *wetiko*
We would presumably all agree that behavior of the European colonialists in North America can be described as cannibalistic. Their drive for conquest and material accumulation was a violent act of consumption. The engine of the invading culture sucked in lives and resources of millions of others and turned them into wealth and power for themselves. The figures are still disputed, but it is safe to place the numbers killed in the tens of millions, certainly one of the most brutal genocides in history. And the impact on non-human life was equally vast. Moreover, it was all done with a moral certainty that all destruction was justified in the name of ‘progress’ and ‘civilization.’

This framing belies the extent of the wetiko infection in the invader culture. So blinded were they by self-referential ambition that they could not see other life as being as important as their own. They could not see past ideological blinders to the intrinsic value of life or the interdependent nature of all things, despite this being the dominant perspective of the Indigenous populations they encountered. Their ability to see and know in ways different from their own was, it seems, amputated.

This is not an anti-European rant. This is the description of a disease whose vector was determined by deep patterns of history, including those that empowered Europeans to drive ‘global exploration’ as certain technologies emerged.

The wetiko meme has almost certainly existed in individuals since the dawn of humanity. It is, after all, a sickness that lives through and is born from the human psyche. But the origin of wetiko cultures is more identifiable.

Memes can spread at the speed of thought but they usually require generations to change the core characteristics of cultures. What we can say is that the fingerprints of wetiko-like beliefs can be traced at least as far back as the Neolithic revolution, when humans in the Fertile Crescent first learned to dominate their environment by what author Daniel Quinn calls
‘totalitarian agriculture’ — i.e., settled agricultural practices that produce more food than is strictly needed for the population, and that see the destruction of any living entity that gets in the way of that (over-)production—be it other humans, ‘pests’ or landscaping—as not only legitimate but moral.

This early form of *wetiko-logic* received an amplifying power of indescribable magnitude with the arrival of Christianity. “Let us make mankind . . . rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground,” said an authority no less than God in Genesis 1:26. After 8,000 years of totalitarian agriculture spreading slowly across the region, it is perhaps not surprising that the logic finds voice in the holy texts that emerged there. Regardless, it was driven across Europe at the point of Roman swords in the two hundred years after Christ’s death. It is no coincidence that, in order for Christianity to become dominant, the existing pagan belief-system, with its understanding of humanity’s place within rather than above nature, had to be all but annihilated. 8

The point is that the epidemiology of *wetiko* has left clear indicators of its lineage. And although it cannot be pathologized along geographic or racial lines, the cultural strain we know today certainly has many of its deepest roots in Europe. It was, after all, European projects—from the Enlightenment to the Industrial Revolution, to colonialism, imperialism, and slavery—that developed the technology that opened up the channels that facilitated the spread of *wetiko* culture all around the world. In this way, we are all heirs and inheritors of *wetiko* colonialism.

We are all host carriers of *wetiko* now.
Wetiko Capitalism: Removing the Veils of Context

*I don’t know who discovered water, but I can tell you it wasn’t a fish.*
~ Attributed to Marshall McCluhan

When Western anthropologists first started to study *wetiko*, they believed it to be only a disease of the individual and a literal form of flesh-eating cannibalism. On both counts, as discussed, their understanding was, if not wrong, certainly limited. They did, however, accurately isolate two traits that are relevant for thinking about cultures: (1) the initial act, even when driven by necessity, creates a residual, unnatural desire for more; and (2) the host carrier, which they called the ‘victim,’ ended up with an ‘icy heart’—i.e., their ability for empathy and compassion was amputated.

The reader can probably already sense from the two traits mentioned above the *wetiko* nature of modern capitalism. Its insatiable hunger for finite resources; its disregard for the pain of groups and cultures it consumes; its belief in consumption as savior; its overriding obsession with its own material growth; and its viral spread across the surface of the planet. It is wholly accurate to describe neoliberal capitalism as cannibalizing life on this planet. It is not the only truth—capitalism has also facilitated an explosion of human life and ingenuity—but when taken as a whole, capitalism is certainly eating through the life-force of this planet in service of its own growth.

Of course, capitalism is a human conception and so we can also say that we are phenomenal hosts of the *wetiko* mind virus. To understand what makes us such, it is useful to consider a couple of the traits that guide the evolution of human cultures.

We have decades of evidence from social science describing just what highly contextual beings we are. Almost all aspects of our behavior, including our moral judgments and limits, are significantly shaped in response to the cultural signifiers that surround us. The Good
Samaritan studies, for example, show that even when people are primed with the idea of altruism, they will walk by others in need when they are in a rush or some other contextual variable changes.\textsuperscript{10} And the infamous Stanley Milgram experiments show how a large majority of people are capable of shocking another human to a point they know can cause death simply because an authority figure in a white lab coat insists they do so.\textsuperscript{11}

We really are products of our environment, and so it should be taken as inevitable that those who live in a wetiko culture will manifest, to one degree or other, wetiko beliefs and behaviors.

Looking through the broader contextual lens, we must also account for the self-perpetuating nature of complex systems. Any living network that becomes sufficiently complex will become self-organizing, and from that point on will demonstrate an instinct to survive. In practical terms, this means that it will distribute its resources to support behavior that best mimics its own logic and ensures its survival.\textsuperscript{12}

In other words, any system that is sufficiently infected by wetiko logic will reward cannibalistic behavior. Or, in Jack Forbes’ evocative language, “Those who squirm upwards [in a wetiko system] are, or become, wetiko, and they only perpetuate the system of corruption or oppression. Thus the communist leaders in the Soviet Union under Stalin were at least as vicious, deceitful and exploitative as their czarist predecessors. They obtained ‘power’ without changing their wetiko culture.”\textsuperscript{13}

This ensures that the essential logic of cultures spreads down through generations as well as across them. And it explains why they self-organize resources to maintain a high degree of continuity in distributions of power, when those distributions efficiently serve their survival and growth. When this continuity is interrupted or broken, revolutions occur and the system is put under threat.

However, as the above quote suggests, the disruption must happen at the right level. Mere
trading one *wetiko* for another at the top of an otherwise unchanged *wetiko* infrastructure (as in the case of Stalin replacing the czars or, more contemporarily, Obama replacing Bush) is largely pointless. At best, it might result in the softening of the cruelest edges of a *wetiko* machine. At worse, it does nothing except distract us from seeing the true infection.

The question, then, for anyone interested in excising the *wetiko* infection from a culture is, where is it? In one respect, because it is a psychic phenomenon that lives in *potential* in all of us, it is non-local. But this, though ultimately important to understand, is not the whole truth. It is also true that there is a conceptual place where the most powerful *wetiko* logic is held, and that, at least in theory, makes it vulnerable.

In the same way that a colony of bees will instinctively house its queen in the deepest chambers of the hive, so a complex adaptive system buries its most important operating logic furthest from the forces that can challenge them. This means two things: first, it means siting the logic in the deep rules that govern the whole. Not just this national economy or that, this government or that, but the mother system—the global operating system. And second, it means making these rules feel as intractable and inevitable as possible.

So what is this deep logic of the global operating system?

It comes in two parts. First, there is the ultimate purpose, which we might call the Prime Directive, which is to *increase capital*.

We often dress this up in a narrative that says capital generation is not the end but the means, the engine of progress. This makes the idea of dethroning it feel dangerous and even contrary to common sense. But the truth is, we have created a system that artificially treats money as sacred. At this point in capitalism’s history, life is controlled by, more than it controls, the forces of capital. The clue is really in the name. But if you need further proof, look no further than how we define and measure progress: GDP. More on that below.

Then, there is the logic for how we, the living components of this system, should behave,
which we would summarize with the following epithet:

*Selfishness is rational and rationality is everything; therefore selfishness is everything.*

This dictates that if we all prioritize ourselves and maximize our own material wealth, an *invisible hand* (ah, what a seductive meme!) will create an equilibrium state and life everywhere will be made better. We are pitted against each other in a form of *distributed fascism* where we cocoon ourselves in the immediate problems of our own circumstances and consume what we can. We then couch this behavior in the benign language of family matters, national interests, job creation, GDP growth, and other upstanding endeavors.

Put these two parts of the puzzle together and it’s easy to see why the banker who generates excess capital receives vast rewards and is labelled ‘productive’ and ‘successful,’ almost regardless of the damage s/he causes. Those who are less ‘successful’ at producing excess capital, meanwhile, are rewarded far less, regardless of the life-affirming good they may be doing. Nurses, mothers, teachers, journalists, activists, scientists—all receive far less reward because they are less efficient at obeying the Prime Directive and may even be countermanding the ‘self-interest’ operating principle. And as for those who are actually poor—well, they are effortlessly labelled not just as practical but also moral failures.

This infection is so far advanced that the system now requires exponential capital growth. The World Bank tells us that we have to grow the global economy by at least 3 percent per year to avoid recession. Let’s think about what this means. Global GDP in 2014 (the last full year of data) was roughly USD $78 trillion. We grew that pie by 2.4% in 2015, which resulted in the commodification and subsequent consumption of roughly another $2 trillion in human labor and natural resources. That’s roughly the size of the entire global economy in 1970. It took us from the dawn of civilization to 1970 to reach $2 trillion in global GDP, and now we need that just in the differential so the entire house of cards doesn’t crumble. In order to achieve this rate of growth year-on-year, we are destroying our planet, ensuring mass species extinction, and displacing millions of our brothers and sisters (who we
commonly refer to as ‘poor people’) from around the world.

So when people tell us that the market knows best, or technology will save us, or philanthrocapitalism will redistribute opportunities (pace Bill Gates), we have to understand that all of these seemingly common sense truisms are embedded in a broader operating system, a wetikonomy, with all that that means. And the more they are presented as ‘unchangeable,’ the more often we’re told, ‘there is no alternative,’ the more we should question. There is actually a beautiful irony in the fact that, when we know what we’re up against, such statements are our signposts for where to look.

It is not that we are against markets, technology, or philanthropy — they can all be wonderful, in the right context—but we are against how they are being used as alibis to excuse the insanity of the wetiko paradigm that they are inseparable from. We are reminded of Jack Forbes’ heavy words; “It is not logical to allow the wetikos to carry out their evil acts and then to accept their assessment of the nature of human life. For after all, the wetiko possess a bias created by their own evil lives, by their own amoral or immoral behavior. And too, if I am correct, they were, and are, also insane.”

**Seeing Wetiko: Antidote Logic**

> Launch your meme boldly and see if it will replicate—just like genes replicate, and infect, and move into the organism of society. And, believing as I do, that society operates on a kind of biological economy, then I believe these memes are the key to societal evolution. But unless the memes are released to play the game, there is no progress.

~ Terrence McKenna, Memes, Drugs and Community
You might just be a black Bill Gates in the making.
~ Beyoncé, Formation

A key lesson of meme theory is that when we are conscious of the memetic viruses we are less likely to adhere to them blindly. Conscious awareness is like sunlight through the cracks of a window.

Thus, one of the starting points for healing is the simple act of ‘seeing wetiko’ in ourselves, in others, and in our cultural infrastructure. And once we see, we can name, which is critical because words and language are a central battleground. To quote McKenna again:

The world is not made of quarks, electromagnetic wave packets, or the thoughts of God. The world is made of language. Earth is a place where language has literally become alive. Language has invested matter; it is replicating and defining and building itself. And it is in us.

His last line is critical for exploring our own agency in the replication of wetiko. We are all entangled in the unfolding of reality that is happening both to and through us. In place of traditional certainties and linear cause-and-effect logic, we can recast ourselves “as spontaneously responsive, moving, embodied living beings—within a reality of continuously intermingling, flowing lines or strands of unfolding, agential activity, in which nothing (no thing) exists in separation from anything else, a reality within which we are immersed both as participant agencies and to which we also owe significant aspects of our own natures.”

If wetiko exists, it is because it exists within us. It is also entangled with the broader superstructure, relationships, and choice architecture that we are confronted with within a neoliberal system on the brink of collapse.

Forbes reminds us that we cannot ‘fight’ wetiko in any traditional sense: “One of the tragi
characteristics of the wetiko psychosis is that it spreads partly by resistance to it. That is, those who try to fight wetiko sometimes, in order to survive, adopt wetiko values.

Thus, when they ‘win,’ they lose.22 A lot of reform-based initiatives, from the sharing economy to micro-lending have succumbed to the co-optation and retaliation of wetiko capitalism.

However, once we are in the mode of seeing wetiko, we can hack the cultural systems that perpetuate its logic. It is not difficult to figure out where to start. Following the money usually leads us to the core pillars of wetiko machinery. Those of us that are within these structures, from the corporate media to philanthropy to banking to the UN, have access to the heart of the wetiko monster.

For those of us on the outside, we can organize our lives in radically new ways to undermine wetiko structures. The simple act of gifting undermines the neoliberal logic of commodification and extraction. Using alternative currencies undermines the debt–based money system. De-schooling and alternative education models can help decolonize and de-wetikoize the mind. Helping to create alternative communities outside the capitalist system supports the infrastructure for transition. And direct activism such as debt resistance can weaken the wetiko virus, if done with the right intention and state of consciousness.

By contracting new relationships with others, with Nature, and with ourselves, we can build a new complex of entanglements and thought-forms that are fused with post-wetiko, post-capitalist values.

We have to simultaneously go within ourselves and the deep recesses of our own psyches while changing the structure of the system around us. Holding a structural perspective and an unapologetic critique of modern capitalism—i.e., holding a constellational worldview that sees all oppression as connected—serves our ability to see the alternatives, and indeed, all of us, as intricately connected.
Plato believed that ideas are the ‘eyes of the soul.’ Now that the veils obscuring wetiko are starting to be lifted, let us give birth to, and become, living antigens, embracing the polyculture of ideas that are challenging the monoculture of wetiko capitalism. Let us be pollinators of new memetic hives built on altruism, empathy, inter-connectedness, reverence, communality, and solidarity, defying the subject-object dualities of Cartesian/Newtonian/Enlightenment logic. Let us reclaim our birth right as sovereign entities, free of deluded beliefs in market systems, invisible hands, righteous greed, chosen ones, branded paraphernalia, techno utopianism and even the self-salvation of the New Age. Let us dance with thought-forms through a deeper understanding of ethics, knowing, and being, and the intimate awareness that our individual minds and bodies are a part of the collective battleground for the soul of humanity, and indeed, life on this planet. And let us re-embrace the ancient futures of our Indigenous ancestors that represent the only continuous line of living in symbiosis with Mother Nature. The dissolution of wetiko will be as much about remembering as it will be about creation.

Endnotes

1 These are lyrics from a song entitled “The Priests of the Golden Bull” by the Native Canadian singer/songwriter Buffy Sainte-Marie from her 1992 album entitled Coincidence and Likely Stories. The authors believe this was their first encounter with the memetic mind virus of wendigo (a version of wetiko). This will all make sense at the end of this article.


4 ‘Intra-action’ is a neologism created by Karan Barad and described in her book, Meeting the Universe Halfway (2007). Barad writes about intra-action, rather than interaction, to illustrate how entanglement precedes thingness. In other words, there are no things as such, just relationships—and these ongoing relational dynamics are co-responsible for how things
5 Recent research, for example, has shown how the grandchildren of Holocaust survivors have different stress hormone profiles than those from otherwise very similar circumstances but whose grandparents did not suffer through the Holocaust. Rodriguez, T. “Descendants of Holocaust survivors have altered stress hormones,” *Scientific American* (March 2015), accessed at: http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/descendants-of-holocaust-survivors-have-altered-stress-hormones/


8 See *Not in His Image* (2006) by John Lamb Lash for a comprehensive account of the systematic annihilation of paganism by the new Christian religion.


14 A version of this argument was originally published on Occupy.com by the authors in a two-part essay entitled “Capitalism is Just a Story and Other Dangerous Thoughts.” See more at: http://www.occupy.com/article/capitalism-just-story-and-other-dangerous-thoughts-part-i#sthash.INKCFdNs.dpuf.

15 For example, see this forecast report by the World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/GEP/GEP2016a/Global-Economic-Prospects-January-2016-Global-Outlook.pdf
18 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NO6-1sqQme0.
19 These lyrics are from Beyoncé’s song “Formation,” which was originally debuted at the 2015 Super Bowl. For a critical analysis, see Dianca London’s article entitled Beyoncé’s capitalism, masquerading as radical change.
20 McKenna, T. *The archaic revival: Speculations on psychedelic mushrooms, the Amazon, virtual reality, UFOs, evolution, shamanism, the rebirth of the goddess, and the end of history.* Harper Collins (1992).
23 Karan Barad talks about the confluence of ethics, knowing, and being as an ‘onto-ethico-politico-epistemology.’ Ontology refers to what is in the world. Epistemology is about how we know what is in the world. And ethics is how we should engage in the world. These are not separate, but emerge materially in an ongoing dynamic. The nature of reality and the nature of knowledge are entangled—not fixed or final or determinate— and thus cannot be divorced from power and what we find valuable or just.

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Malcolm
May 11, 2016, 5:32 pm
References (1, 2, 3.....) are missing

Nancy Roof
May 13, 2016, 7:42 am
Thanks, Malcolm. We have just added the references.

David Hazen
May 17, 2016, 1:40 pm
Systemic change begins with the mutations at the periphery, and we are the
mutations we’ve been waiting for! The necessary adaptation for survival has become the valuing of people over profits, relationships over stuff. Abandoning the current paradigm (with love), adopting an attitude of forgiveness (everyone is always doing the best they can with what they have in the moment, nobody is to blame, everyone is response-able) are good first steps, and the journey ahead is a long one.

I have diagrammed what I believe to be the flow of recovery from a culture of domination and violence, and hopefully you can see it here:


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Nancy Roof
May 18, 2016, 4:03 pm

Just took a look at your diagram – great to see this as a diagram in addition to having it explained. “We are the mutants we have been waiting for” is a prize winner! Nancy Roof

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Dariel Garner
May 18, 2016, 10:50 pm
I have always thought of capitalism as simply emergent of the favoring and eventual domination of self-centric behaviors over holo-centric behaviors…with separation, fear, private property, hierarchy, and eventually capitalism, the current maximalist expression, being produced along the way. Eventually it becomes a snake eating its tail and ultimately destroys itself (and certainly the world as we know it) as undoubtedly as I imagine your Wetiko concept eventually would. The deepest antidote to that system is simply love, expressed as caring, compassion for self, others and all of creation.

Regards creating replicable cultural memes…Personally I wouldn’t want to try and sell a cannibalism theme. Way too many negatives that would attach to the giver of the meme. A ballet dancer on the back of the Wall Street Bull is very different than the image of the dancer being ravaged and eaten by the bull. Positive imaging is really what we should be about anyway, in my estimation.

I do applaud your embrace of constructive behaviors and alternative institutions drawing from a life affirming values system. But please keep in mind there is going to be a tremendous call for obstructive actions coming from a love in action source, if we are to resolve all the environmental and social crisis that we are part of in the time we have.

A great ride we are on.

Thanks for a really interesting article.

REPLY
Darin Stevenson
May 18, 2016, 11:44 pm

Excellent material. As a cognitive activist, I research the ways in which our relationships with language and knowledge either empower or disable us. Brilliantly written, and I agree wholeheartedly with nearly all that was said here.

Some of my own work on similar topics can be found at organelle.org, but this essay in particular is closely related.

http://www.organelle.org/skyBook/skyBook%28r%29.html

REPLY

Ray Songtree
May 23, 2016, 1:26 pm

I have published this comment on my blog with images, and mirrored the article.


The authors of the excellent article on the meaning of Wetiko, below, recognize that the global system is destructive and self-destructive. In reviewing history, they miss that it was disease, not sword, not meme,
which conquered Mexico and Hawaii and most every other place; Cortez brought small pox. While they use word meme, I use word values. In my opinion, they are spot on about exposure as the first step to awareness and correction. This is what all we truthers are about. “If is it covered up, it is true.” Criminals cover their tracks. We uncover their tracks.

The authors do not understand this part, “Following the money usually leads us to the core pillars of wetiko machinery. Those of us that are within these structures, from 1) the corporate media to 2) philanthropy to 3) banking to the 4) UN, have access to the heart of the wetiko monster.” They might follow the money to understand the creation of credit and see that banksters spawned the rest of list. The Rothschilds are the “father of modern finance” and the (3) central bankers of world. Jacob Schiff, a Rothschild, created (besides the FED, NAACP, ADL and CFR) the Rockefeller Foundation and all that fake (2) philanthropy. The Roth-efellers created Congress of Vienna 1815, League of Nations 1921, and (4) UN 1945. All these monopolizing institutions were to be the solution to the very wars the Rothschilds planned and funded. Thesis-antithesis-synthesis. The (1) corporate media is the all seeing eye symbol, and is owned by same group of banksters who have spiritual/demonic/extraterrestrial roots. I discovered in my research that Wetiko is more organized than the authors might realize. Wetiko is destructive of life because it is not life, it is like an invasive nano-robot. Wetiko is anti – organic. The origin is off planet artificial stations, if you will. If I mention mother ships, people will scoff, but with time, all the evidence will be exposed. We have moved from discovery of electricity to artificial intelligence in just 3 human lifetimes. This is organized and the source is off planet.

The authors mis-identify Christianity. Jesus came to correct Genesis, not
enable it. Yes Rome morphed to Church, and the colonialists were
supremacists, but these so called Christians dragged along the Old
Testament. The important Genesis excerpt in their Wetiko article is not New
Testament, it is Judaism, which (not by coincidence) is the fake ethnicity of
the Rothschilds. Moses was a channeler, and Genesis is an extra-terrestrial
meme, as is the channeled off-planet language Sanskrit. Our selfish greed
is fueled by positions of authority. Structure of authority is one and the same
as greed. The Brahman system and the monotheistic system classify
pagans and slaves as inferior, which justifies supremacy, greed or “wetiko.”
Both Brahmanism and Judaism were channeled, that is, of off planet origin.
ET or angels/devils is same thing. Off planet.

While doing a good job of pointing out the insanity, the authors have not
identified the source of the pathogen that is destroying life on Earth. It is not
the pursuit of capitol, but is an extra-terrestrial agenda that uses personal
greed to accomplish “progress” which is centralization. The goal is one
slave state controlled, not by humans with hearts, but by artificial
intelligence. Default software connected to electric fences and armed
drones. AI can never be self conscious, but it can be programmed to self
replicate and defend itself. We then arrive at the Terminator Movies with
skynet and the war with machines. Drones are real now. When this movie
was made, they were not.

Wetiko is more than a meme or a belief system, it is an artificial lifestyle
which is parasitic, non-symbiotic. The extra-terrestrial parasite will exhaust
this planet and move on to another. This has been going on a very long
time. We are the brain washed slaves for THEIR machine to harvest the
organic for the artificial.

In my view, the antidote is not a better meme, and I disagree with authors
that existence is a thought. Plato was a head tripper. The antidote is touching the Earth, in my opinion. I believe the Earth will enforce this and cities will empty and become scrap yards. There is a race between conscious independent local de-centralization and centralized illuminati slave robot cannibalism.

No thought by the reader will matter compared with actions. What matters is if you support local farmers or the bio-tech plague. Organic or wetiko? What matters will be how you vote with your wallet and how soon you leave the city. Waking up will mean unplugging. – Ray Songtree May 23, 2016

REPLY

Hypertiger
May 23, 2016, 7:50 pm

Your bodies are composed of trillions of absolute capitalistic or animal cells.

No such thing as human being cells

Absolute capitalism takes more power than it gives to sustain their continued existence

Like chopping down trees faster than they regrow to sustain continued existence

Great at the start…but as the trees run out…it becomes harder and harder to take more power than is given…at the logical conclusion where the trees run out…the path of salvation is revealed to be the path of damnation

The default path of less effort which all and everything in the universe
ignorant of truth follows

Responsible capitalism shares power as equally as possible to sustain continued existence

The same as chopping down trees as fast as or slower than they regrow to sustain existence

Horrible at the start…but since the trees never run out…there is no logical conclusion…salvation is always the result

The path of more effort which all and everything knowledgeable of truth follows

1 = A
26 = Z

1+2+3+4+5=6+7+8+9+10+11+12+13+14+15+16+17+18+19+20+21+22+23+24+25+26 = 351

3 x 51 = 153

The = 33
Archangel = 69
Michael = 51

33+69+51 = 153 reverse is 351

AEIOU

1+5+9+15+21 = 51 = Michael…the angel of revelation

1 = A
26 = Z

126 reverse is 621

6 x 21 = 126
30th prime = 113 = 4th prime that adds to 5
32nd prime = 131 = 5th prime that adds to 5
64th prime = 311 = 6th prime that adds to 5
30+32+64 = 126
5 x 5 x 5 = 125+1 = 126
113+131+311 = 555
456+654 = 1110
1110/2 = 555

In computer science, a high-level programming language is a programming language with strong abstraction from the details of the computer. In comparison to low-level programming languages, it may use natural language elements, be easier to use, or may automate (or even hide entirely) significant areas of computing systems (e.g. memory management), making the process of developing a program simpler and more understandable relative to a lower-level language. The amount of abstraction provided defines how “high-level” a programming language is

Less = 55 = Satan
More = 51 = Michael

Quis ut Deus?, a Latin sentence meaning “Who is like God?”, is a literal translation of the name Michael (Hebrew: מיכאל, transliterated Micha’el or Mîkhā’ēl).

מיכאל is 101 in Hebrew gematria
26 = God
26th prime = 101
101 = Tree of life
In Jungian psychology, archetypes are highly developed elements of the collective unconscious. Being unconscious, the existence of archetypes can only be deduced indirectly by examining behavior, images, art, myths, religions, or dreams. Carl Jung understood archetypes as universal, archaic patterns and images that derive from the collective unconscious and are the psychic counterpart of instinct. They are inherited potentials which are actualized when they enter consciousness as images or manifest in behavior on interaction with the outside world. They are autonomous and hidden forms which are transformed once they enter consciousness and are given particular expression by individuals and their cultures.

Samael = 51

Samael (Hebrew: שָמָאֵל, “Venom of God” or “Poison of God,” also Sammael or Samil) is an important archangel in Talmudic and post-Talmudic lore, a figure who is an accuser (satan), seducer and destroyer, and has been regarded as both good and evil. Rabbinical writings describe Samael as the guardian angel of Esau and a patron of Edom (or, the Roman empire).
Samael is 131 in Hebrew gematria.

He is considered in Talmudic texts to be a member of the heavenly host (with often grim and destructive duties). One of Samael’s greatest roles in Jewish lore is that of the main archangel of death. He remains one of Yahweh’s servants even though he wants men to do evil. As an angel, Samael resides in the seventh heaven, although he is declared to be the chief angel of the fifth heaven, the reason for this being the presence of the throne of glory in the fifth heaven.

The angel of death = 131

Hypertiger = 131

There was another angel in the seventh heaven, different in appearance from all the others, and of frightful mien. His height was so great, it would have taken five hundred years to cover a distance equal to it, and from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet he was studded with glaring eyes, at the sight of which the beholder fell prostrate in awe. “This one,” said Metatron, addressing Moses, “is Samael, who takes the soul away from man.” “Whither goes he now?” asked Moses, and Metatron replied, “To fetch the soul of Job the pious.” Thereupon Moses prayed to God in these words, “O may it be Thy will, my God and the God of my fathers, not to let me fall into the hands of this angel.”

You have come into contact with an archetype.
Rosemary
December 13, 2016, 9:54 am
Interesting concept.. I am learning also from the many responses....

REPLY

CD Womack
May 24, 2016, 11:56 am
Reminds me of McCarthy’s Pulitzer The Road.

REPLY

Lizzy
November 4, 2018, 1:47 am
That novel may be more of a documentary from a future than a fictional tale. There is much truth, sadly, in its statements about human nature. Although, with the information in this article, an argument could better be made that the novel explores the potential of wetiko to obliterate a society.

REPLY
A hearty thank you to both of you for sharing such a deeply resonant, rigorous, revolutionary, and galvanizing essay with all of us who have ears to hear and hearts to understand. Your timely reminder is delightful. Actually discovering what Life centered systems of governance and co-creation are, both ‘within and without’, is greatest adventure of the 21st century. I look forward to reading more and doing my inimitable part in this unfolding drama.

Namaste.

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You just posted the solution to the world’s problems…one word.

Namaste

The God in me honours the God in you.

This means we are all part of the divine, life is sacred, Life is Prime Value.

We Are All One
Patrick Kamotho  
May 30, 2016, 2:09 am  
Thanks for such insightful #Wetiko idea, I will have to reread it again to conceptualise .Thank You  

REPLY  

Anna Harris  
May 30, 2016, 9:08 am  
Thank you for linking through Wetiko the amputation of emotions with corrosive capitalism. This is supported by research in neurobiology. A new book by Darcis Narvaez, Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality, links early infantile experience with lack of empathy and other mental illness in later life.  

Parenting practices regarded as normal leave the helpless newborn to cope alone with its distress, imprinting it thereby with the experience of a hostile world which will not respond to its needs. These attitudes, laid down in pre-verbal experience, remain in the unconscious to colour all later responses. As you say in your article, Darcia puts the cut off point as the rise of agriculture, and settled lifestyles, quoting anthropological research of small band hunter gatherers to establish 7 conditions for good parenting practice.  

As a grandparent I am aware how enormously important this information is
for helping parents to understand the damage that distress in infancy can cause. There are practical ways to stop this original damage happening, as well as helping people reclaim empathic relationships later. New born babies are still routinely separated from their mothers at birth in most maternity hospitals. And parenting is still not acknowledged with the support that is needed for this difficult job. That is the point where the Wetiko virus is passed on, or not. Tackling the infection at source could bring huge benefits.

REPLY

Eric Lim
May 30, 2016, 9:56 am
To overcome the meme of wetiko, we need zene (syn with Zen spirituality)…so it gene-meme-zene or body-mind-spirit all out efforts to get rid of the wetiko……spirituality in the context of collaborative commons.

REPLY

Uzleb
July 2, 2016, 2:45 pm
For those that truly see/experience Wetiko (Wendigo) in themselves or around them, you do no suffer alone. When I do see and feel it, I can only
describe it as painful, frightening and overwhelming. The more I recognize it the more clear it becomes and the deeper the sense of urgency becomes.

REPLY

Marlowe Brown
July 7, 2016, 3:15 pm
Brilliant. Could it be the Weitiko virus attacks the mother first? If infected, is it the mother who withdraws basic core needs from the child (love, bonding, nourishment), who is in turn suffers with the disorder known as greed (The pervasive fear of lack brought about by deprivation of core needs)? Or is it the father who is first infected? Is he first drawn away from the family unit, leaving the mother without support and protection in order to provide core needs? Can we trace the withdrawal of the male protector from the family unit to a point in history that will show the origins of this virus? Who was the original host/victim? I have read this virus was first introduced through a meme we call “pride”. The whispering to one individual as being “better than” the rest – introduced and perpetuated through the “Science of Imagery”, which continues to this day. Whatever the case may be, I very much appreciated your thorough presentation of a massively important issue. Ultimately, I believe the antidote will be found in the transmission of beautiful images and sounds, embedded with bright feelings, originating and transmitting via humans capable of purity of emotion and a high speed of thought. “It is possible to control a dream with the energy of thought, and its ability to free any reality through penetration of images.” ~ Ringing Cedar
Thank you for this thoughtful comment. Nancy Roof

I thoroughly enjoyed this article and will do my best to echo its sentiments around the world. I’m sensing that there are countless souls waking up to this notion. Citizens who are, like me, doing everything within their power to isolate and quarantine themselves from further infection. I myself have been searching for decades for a cure to this destructive virus. Dec 2015, I posted a blog, Greed Kills, We’re all Guilty
https://peruvianheartache.wordpress.com/2015/12/29/greed-kills-were-all-guilty/

After posting to my social media channels: LinkedIn, Facebook, Google and Twitter a horrendous backlash arrived. I was dumbfounded by the unbridled anger received for my confession of wrongdoing. Close friends and family
members rebuked me for having stated such heresy. The more I analysed their comments, the more a pattern developed. Those who reacted vehemently appeared to be carrying the heaviest burden of guilt. Their arguments and justifications were devoid of empathy or compassion. They shamed me for having pointed a finger at them, even though as I protested, I had also included myself in the sentencing.

As a filmmaker/journalist/activist it’s critical that I understand how to reach the masses, how to counter these forces/illness and how to deliver the cure… The cure being love, compassion, tolerance, sharing… the most effective of all being love.

Thanks for providing me with a proper diagnosis so I am more able to foster a cure and develop a ‘vaccine’ against reinfection and transmission.

REPLY

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**Rosemary**

December 13, 2016, 9:43 am

I agree with you and have been and still am in the same position as you. I remember as I had done an expose in high school in Europe about the sentence: L’enfer c’est les autres ( JP Sartre ) and I corrected it and said: L’enfer c’est nous autres, which sparked controversy from my schoolmates, teachers and Nuns…This was part of the existential movement in Europe, before WW 2.

Translation: Hell is the others and my correction : Hell is us…..

REPLY
Bob Hiller  
October 25, 2016, 2:07 pm  
Great article, Thanks.  
There is a typo:  
“This means two things: first, it means citing the logic in the deep rules that govern the whole.”  
‘citing’ should be ‘siting’  
REPLY

Rhonda Fabian  
November 2, 2016, 7:25 pm  
thank you!  
REPLY

A.W. Hill  
November 28, 2016, 7:55 am  
The Prime Directive. What an eye-opening concept. Beautifully written and
deeply subversive piece. The Empire Never Ended.

REPLY

**Rosemary**
December 13, 2016, 9:34 am
Most interesting and true expose about what is has been happening for centuries and is at its culmination right now..

REPLY

**Alton C Thompson**
January 5, 2017, 8:58 pm
The concept of a “wetiko virus” strikes me as nonsense—a “terminological explanation” that is, therefore, a substitute for an actual explanation! Also, it’s doubtful that Arctic climate scientist John B. Davies would agree that “once we are in the mode of seeing wetiko, we can hack the cultural systems that perpetuate its logic,” given that he wrote this in 2013 ([http://arctic-news.blogspot.com/2013/09/a-runaway-greenhouse-event.html](http://arctic-news.blogspot.com/2013/09/a-runaway-greenhouse-event.html)): “The world is probably at the start of a runaway Greenhouse Event which will end most human life on Earth before 2040.”

REPLY
Joseph M. Quinones  
March 26, 2017, 7:28 am  
Thank you!

BillGammon  
April 17, 2017, 6:39 pm  
I have often thought that societies and those who make up their membership suffer from various forms of mental illness. The trends are predictable, sustained by those who engage evil and, fighting against it blow for blow, become contaminated by it: zombies replace those who once were caring individuals.

Pavel  
October 24, 2017, 2:34 am  
The non-cyclic democracy is a permanent, constant election process which has its point of commencement but is infinite in terms of time perspective. It enables people to vote at any time they wish with no limitation on the
number of votes.

Open vote means the right of people, in case they wish, to step out of their anonymity as voters in the continuous election process of the non-cyclic democracy.

Vote of correction means an open vote of confirmation or rejection at any, desired by people time from the continuous election process with the non-cyclic democracy.

With the non-cyclic democracy, the number of mandates is changeable. It is defined by the sum from the number of anonymous cyclic votes, combined with the number of open and correction votes at any time from the continuous election process.

Threshold of trust of an elected via voting candidate in elective office means half of the number of people who have voted for them minus one vote.

With the non-cyclic democracy, the duration of the mandate of an elected via voting candidate is discontinued with the expiry of the allotted for the mandate time or with the reaching of the threshold of trust.

The list of candidates in elective office is bulk of information of free public access with data about each candidate in elective office. There, at any time from the election process, each voter and each public organization can add candidates or withdraw their trust from the proposed by them candidates in elective office.

The open-type voters have the right of a correction vote at any time from the continuous election process of the non-cyclic democracy.

The vote of correction is as follows:

1. Open vote against one’s own choice, leading the elected one closer to
2. Open vote in favour of another candidate from the list of names, leading the elected one closer to the threshold of trust at any time from the continuous election process of the non-cyclic democracy.

3. Open vote in favour of a chosen by other voters candidate, leading the elected one closer to the threshold of trust, distancing the newly-elected from the threshold of trust at any time from the continuous election process.

With the non-cyclic democracy, the current updated rating of a candidate in elective office for the purpose of their positioning towards the threshold of trust must be freely and publicly accessible in the list of candidates at any time from the continuous election process…

REPLY

Floris Koot
December 4, 2017, 12:41 pm

Great essential article. I wrote last year an article with very much the same metaphor, that is more so much a metaphor, of the Windigo, as I called the Wetiko. https://medium.com/the-gentle-revolution/usa-united-states-of-abomination-i-12063e3ea2c6 with a focus on the dominant logic in most media about political ‘truth’s’ (read lies).

Your approach on the viral aspect of memes, ideas is also brilliantly handled in Margaret Wheatley’s book, Leadership and the New Science, in the last chapter. And her book A Simpler Way is also full of confirmations that your path is possible and closer to how reality works, than the current ‘deadly
game of monopoly’ we play with life.

REPLY

Raza
January 23, 2018, 5:51 pm
We will need to touch on many metaphors at once as we discuss Wetiko. It feels different to different people.

http://poetsart.com/poem/attrition/

REPLY

Eduardo Jimenez
December 20, 2017, 1:51 pm
Crystal clear
I am agree 10% with this vision and analysis
I will share this article thru my connections web
Thanks

REPLY
Nancy Roof
December 21, 2017, 5:04 pm
Thank you for sharing, Eduardo. Nancy

Sircamel
December 8, 2018, 11:49 am
“Wetiko” is just another word for a fear based mind and culture ant it’s only a symptom of artificial scarcity. The cure is to restore abundance. The problem is that artificial scarcity is systemic – i.e. caused by our monetary system and socioeconomic framework.

As long as our monetary system forces us to fight for survival despite living in a world of abundance we will always be stuck in mental modes of fear, anxiety, greed, competition, hate, etc. …

If you wan to get rid of wetiko you need to communicate socioeconomic alternatives:

http://sacred-economics.com/

Also if you want to understand how fear and quality of consciousness is related:
https://books.google.at/books?id=RYHtBPiZVgsC&lpg=PA1&hl=de&pg=PA113#v=onepage&q&f=false

Those are pretty much the two books you need to read in order to understand wetiko. It’s a fear based, high entropy consciousness … generated by our monetary system and thus culture.

REPLY

Winhoki
February 11, 2019, 1:26 am

What’s up everyone, it’s my first pay a quick visit at this website, and article is really fruitful in favor of me, keep up posting these posts. winhoki.com

REPLY

ADD COMMENT

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