



The Problems
of
Separation

essays
& diatribes

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It Exists .. but Not Unless You Use It.

An Essay on Democracy.

"Individualism does not come to man with any sickly cant about duty .. or self sacrifice. In fact, it does not come to man with any claims on him at all. It comes naturally and inevitably out of man ... And so Individualism exercises no compulsion over man. On the contrary, it says to man that he should suffer no compulsion to be exercised over him." - Oscar Wilde.

It's frustrating to be continually told that 'Democracy Doesn't Work. This of course, by those who've lived their whole lives enjoying the fruits of it. I do realise that they've never studied it at school and that they therefore don't actually know what Democracy is. We, their elders haven't exactly set a very good example, after all it's us who have allowed their educations to be taken over by misinformation and this crime of Political Correctness. Of course, having grown up in a time when we not only studied democracy at school but could also see and remember a time when more societies than not were undemocratic, this small fact should not surprise us. Still, it baffles me because I'm not so sure that their parents have actually told them that democracy hasn't worked, because it did work for them. And I'm sure that if they, our youth, looked around them they would be able to see that at times, and in places it has. The funny thing is that they do recognise those places without Democracy, so I wonder just where this notion, this idea comes from?

For instance, I have a young lady in my life who says that boycotting Coka-Cola will do more for the world than voting in an election does. She of course doesn't vote. She also didn't grow up in a democratic country, she's Chilean, and although she's been fortunate enough to have everything in the world that she's ever wanted, her mother told her that the one thing you should NOT DO was to 'rock the boat', that while it was ok to observe all the deceit and the inhumanity in the world, to acknowledge them behind closed doors, calling for democracy and a change to the way we approach the lies and the force

of unrestrained power was dangerous. It's the old case of *'I'm alright Jack, keep ya hands off of my stack'*. She has of course, made the choice to live in countries where the fear of being open, of being able to exercise her individuality and to speak freely has been allowed, and she is a very individual personality. Though when I ask her just exactly what status, what position, her family held in the anti-democratic republic of Pinochet's Chile .. she draws her finger across her mouth like a zip and then across her throat like a knife and this of course is to signify that democracy doesn't work. I understand that her and her friends don't see the changes happening in the world that they think should be happening and I also realise that we, my generation, have failed to ensure that these changes have been made, but I don't understand how it is that these changes will happen if *they don't participate* in making them happen. They say there's no point in voting, for instance, because nothing ever changes ... I ask, if not Democracy, which in theory, at least gives an opportunity to effect change peacefully, then what? What system do you suggest? I never get an answer to this question. They all just shake their heads at me and walk off as though I am part of the dreaded unfair undemocratic system. *They don't actually know what Democracy is.*

Though they do all jump up and down about saving whales and ridding the world of plastic and the pollution of fossil fuels. What they don't jump up and down about is man's inhumanity to man and the fact that governments are inherently evil - which they do believe - and that the only way to keep a government from becoming a slave maker is to jump upon it at every opportunity instead of ignoring it. They like to think that they are anarchists, but they don't understand what that means either. Anarchism is another concept they don't wish to discuss. They are certainly individuals and they want to do everything their own way and they don't want to be told they can't - who does? Its not just this young lady who prompts this essay, I have been fortunate enough to have spent the past 20 years immersed in youth as a teacher and mentor though perhaps not so fortunate in that the time we have lived in were spent under a near Democracy. These youths are the fruits of *a democratic way of life* but also a time where complacency in it has made them believe that things will always be perfect in their isolated

individual worlds. They do not see that it was firstly their parents and grandparents generations that participated in democratic action and that that has enabled their little worlds to appear to be as good as they have been.

(As I write this I have just been asked the rhetorical question, by a young man of the same age who has grown up in Australia, 'God knows where the world is heading?' ... We are heading towards Pinochet's Chile. We are heading toward Orwell's 1984.)

However, just for the moment, to get back to these young women and men who so frustrate and baffle me, it seems that when pushed they are most irate about the fact that, here in Australia, you can be *finned for not voting* - as though this is the greatest danger to their individual selves and the most obscene transgression of their rights! So this is my answer - not about Anarchism - but *about the process of achieving it*.

You see, a non democratic society can't make Democracy. Its rulers will never accept Democracy because they fear it, and the petty interests of those who feel 'lucky' are always pandered to by those of the ruling elite who have no belief in Democracy, and because Democracy comes from the bottom up, they fear it - its a vicious circle. So now in 2019 - not just in Australia but all around the world - we see the result of this. This age old fear of majorities; which makes us fortunates believe that we are always a minority, even if we happen to be in a majority.

"Despotism is a state of mind; a state of internal worry, and terror and fear - a perpetual concern of censorship and spiritual containment - its a system of rule as opposed to government." ... and like Despotism is a state of mind, so is Democracy. Though I'd prefer to think that Democracy is a currency, a method of transaction, it must used and believed in for it to be real. The way to true anarchism, which is what the youth appear to want, is through the use of this currency of democracy. It exists! But only if you use it.

"We learn in time of pestilence: that there are more things to admire in men than to despise." - Albert Camus, from *The Plague*.

However since my generation have forgotten how to use it we have bequeathed to our youth a future of despotism - once again all the

things that we think we may want, or need, must be tested first for us by those that our misuse of Democracy have placed at the top in authority; neo-priests and kings. Once again, only when these ideas, ideals, needs and desires have been tested for us will these priests and kings decide whether they are going to be 'good enough' for us. Of course, they will never be good enough for us unless they are good for this ruling elite and their fortunate sons, this authority. And this is exactly what the young ones don't like, whether they are fortunate sons or not - to have life tested for them. They live in fear that what they have in their isolation will be taken from them. They don't see that what they have has been given to them by Democracy.

These fortunate one's somehow, though they despise authority, believe, as they are told by authority, that there will always be that carrot at the end of a stick that they are told those less fortunates will one day get. But the unfortunates only get this carrot, their reward, when the authority, the system, has deemed that it is safe enough for all of us to have ... and that by being good and quiet and never rocking the boat everything will work out. Our youth, though they fiercely defend their individuality don't seem to see that those unfortunates, being individuals themselves, have their own minds and believe just like they do, that they are the best judge of what is good for them, and our fortunate sons deceive themselves that non-democratic authority will ever deem their unfortunate brothers and sisters 'good enough' for that reward. They fail, or rather wish not, to see that that stick, which we are told has a golden carrot somewhere at the end of it, grows longer and longer and longer. And I am told that apparently there is nothing we can do about it ... That's Democracy I'm told ... it doesn't work!

"Flaccid concord does not build an optimum foundation for surpassing achievement." - SJGould.

They fear the stick that the authority they despise holds over their heads and say, 'We will feel the stick whether we try to do something about it or not, so why bother.' To say we must bow down and accept our lot makes no sense. To say that we must be beaten into an amorphous mess before we can enjoy the good life held up to us by authority is the way of gods and priests and kings, of feudalism and

Fascism. Us previous generations have fought hard, many times, to do away with the ways of gods and kings and suddenly, here in Australia, we have again opted for the future of gods and kings. A future of miracles where the carrot dangling on the end of an endless stick will be the reward for giving our support to kings and to their authorised gods via the means of anti-democratic neo-freedoms. For those of us who, for whatever reason, cannot give our support to our present Kings - to the authority of fear - there shall be no heaven here on this earth. We must conform and lose our identities and our individuality for the good of the State. I cannot see how this can be of any benefit to these youthful pseudo-anarchists, nor can I see how they can stand so idly by and watch it happen. If you do not change your method of transaction the farce of the carrot will soon be forgotten and there will only be the stick left. This is history, this is Man's Estate - 'Le Conditione Humaine'. Those of us who believe that this is the eternal condition of Man, and that it is good, will feel this stick just as surely as those of us who recognise that for there to be overpowering authority, there must also be a very big stick. If we are content to have the stick hovering over us, then our priests and kings are happy, and with luck, with fortune, or is it perhaps Providence, we may get to share just a little of the authority's heaven here on earth. If we are not content to sit in silence under the overbearing coercion of despotic authority then we must feel the rod so that we may later take our rewards in heaven. It's silly beyond belief.

My youthful friends - and they are slipping away from the dreams of youth - do know of course, that peace and prosperity only for a few inevitably leads to war, to conflict, but they fail to see that that means that war becomes the guiding light of .. shall we call it civilization ... Is that what we were calling it these days, or is that another term to be prohibited? War is the profit of neoliberalism. In Australia, we've just had the clock turned back on us, but History is so much easier for us to heed now. It doesn't have to be 'read' anymore, it's all there on YouTubes and Fake-Books in glorious colour. So not only do we get to relive it, we can get to feel it too. Unlike previous generations when one had to search for history, and then read it, then imagine what it felt like, now because of the age we live in the technology of cameras and recordings allows us to see what it was actually like. Sure, we can deny

it and we can say, these things cannot happen anymore, but if we want to look, then we can see that not only can they, but they do and that they are. All of these things only happen with our participation, with our collusion ... because even when we decide that we aren't going to participate because it won't do any good - these things keep happening. ... but of course if you, the younger generations fail to read History and to take heed, then you won't actually know how times *have* changed, and you won't know just what these things that can't happen anymore are ... until its too late. *and you are riding that wave now.*

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Its ironic, isn't it, that this so called 'liberalism', this neoLiberalism as it is now, this false champion of choice, only gives one man choice by taking it away from another. Its war, its violence, its conflict and its not just for those of us that must lose our choice for another man's, but for those other men too. Because even if that other man can accept that he's had his, or her, choice forced on him against his will and decides he can live with it, he cannot live without feeling ... and who can guarantee that those without choice will sit meekly by and take the stick. It's never happened before.

Of course, the attitude that 'Democracy doesn't work' plays into the hands of that authority you say you despise, of men like Christian Porter, Peter Dutton and Scott Morrison and their partners in the neoliberal nationalist coalitions around the world, because they believe that *you have given them your support by your silence and your non participation;* that you've been cowed by a divine right and that you have supported their destinies.

At home, here in Australia, we have supported a belief in a miraculous special right of inheritance; a belief that wisdom is proven by the very fact that they who hold the stick are wise. These men don't live their lives democratically, the Party they serve isn't democratic, so how can they be expected to guide and do the business of the country democratically. They will not teach you Democracy they will teach you Fascism. Wisdom, it appears, is so much lighter than ignorance.

When Man believes that progress is dangerous, or that we

have reached the apogee of progress, or that progress has reached the point where it cannot progress further without ceasing to be progress, then, must we believe that we have built our heaven here on earth? Can we relax in the benevolence of our priests and kings; is this as good as it gets? Can we believe that we have finally reached the point where we are at one with the *right gods*, that we have made our image as is her design for us? If we are told we are happy, even if happiness feels like sadness use to feel, are we are content with what previously felt like discontent? Because our bellies are full when we know that others are empty, in fact when we are told, that for our bellies to be full others must be empty, can we still live in peace and expect no conflict? Can we be at peace if we must deceive ourselves and all others - are we truly content to believe that deceit is the new kingdom of gods, and that it is good for us? Can we still save whales and rid the world of plastic and stop burning up our atmosphere with endless fossil fuels?

Okay so this all may sound a little, by the way .. out of the way, but it is my passionate searching for a way to answer the question, or rather the statement that 'Democracy Doesn't Work', because that's the credo of Fascism: Democracy Doesn't Work. And since were not exercising democracy; it won't. It appears to me that there are only two ways in the modern world - Fascism which demands no participation and your fear, and Democracy which must have full participation.

So now I'm going to tell you that it, Democracy, does work, but that it takes effort, and not just on that one day an authority may give you every now and then to exercise a right - but on every single day of your lives forever. Because that's the thing about Democracy, it doesn't work unless you use it. Its a living thing and like our plants we've got to keep it alive, we have to tend to it not just for a little while but for as long as we wish to keep it alive and most importantly, we have to show the authority that we intend to keep it alive at all costs. We have to show that we know what Democracy is, that we know what keeps it alive and that we know its not a gift from an authority.

I hear that there is so much disappointment with the results of the last election. In fact, I'm actually told that there are a larger percentage of Australians who are disappointed with the result than

supposedly voted for the authority that has been handed draconian power over us. Of course, this can't be. This must mean that many of these 'disappointed folk' either didn't think it was necessary to vote, or were not allowed to vote, or somehow, had their votes stolen from them. And this can't be Democracy. It can't have been a democratic transaction if this is truly the case. Whatever it was, it didn't work. Now all our youth have noticed, or have felt, that this transaction was unfair and they feel that it's never fair - that somehow, if this was the great panacea 'democracy', it didn't feel right .. and, therefore, it doesn't work! It didn't work because we failed to tend it properly. Yes, I know that the transaction we were offered wasn't true Democracy but it's up to us to ensure that it is. It's up to youth. Democracy doesn't belong to a government, an authority, it belongs to the people - that's what it means, 'of-the-people'.

Not fair? Life wasn't meant to be fair - who says? By what authority should we be content with an unfair life? Isn't this what man's been progressing toward for all these centuries .. isn't this why we've fought so many wars and so many of our ancestors have died, to progress, to make things fair? Isn't this why we've destroyed so much of our Earth in the past, to enable us to make a better fairer future? This at least is the explanation that we give ourselves; that in the past it was necessary to plunder our planet in order to make progress. Is it worth nothing? Is it just an excuse? I'm going to say, that every interaction between one man and another should be decided by Democracy, it must be a democratic transaction or it is not fair. And who wants to be involved in an unfair transaction? Certainly not those youth who tell me that Democracy doesn't work - they're the first to shout, 'it's not fair!' Even if one is able to watch an unfair transaction between other men, one doesn't like to be a party to an unfair transaction. I should say, unfortunately, that one doesn't like to be on *the wrong side of an unfair*, an unjust transaction. All the kids I know and care about - and who I'm trying to convince that democracy does work are jumping up and down and saying, "it's not fair, it's not fair." ... And therefore democracy doesn't work. Did they participate in the transaction? Will they participate in the transaction in the future? Who knows, but you're not going to be able to complain or whinge or whine again. Not now that you know how

unfair an undemocratic transaction can be, and that you now know that its up to you to ensure that it is fair. Only you, the people, can make the transaction fair. A neoliberal - Fascist - authority is never going to *just give you* a democratic transaction. Its not in their interests. You are going to have to force it upon them. You have the power, they only have the stick. These governments, but particularly these governments of the Far Right, say that change only happens through the governing body - the Authority - that's not true, in fact its a lie; change only happens through you, in most cases the governing body has to be dragged kicking and screaming to change anything that threatens their authority. You make the governing body they don't make you; that's what Democracy is about, effort. Don't leave it until it becomes a mighty struggle.

'All argument employed to prove the insufficiency of democracy grow out of this one root - the supposed necessity of deception and prejudice for restraining the turbulent human passion.' - William Godwin.

I now hear, that under 35s makes up 40% of Australia's working age population and more that 55% of the world's. All the 'commentators' - whoever they may be - are deploring, not youth's lack of faith in Democracy, but your disbelief and distrust of government. This is a good thing in my opinion, because, as William Godwin said, *'government is, at its very best a necessary evil - but an evil it is.'* And Australia's newly elected government, the government of Scott Morrison, Peter Dutton and Christian Porter - is going to prove to be a government of the very worst ... a highly unnecessary evil. This neoliberal nationalist government has already said that they are not progressive, they have refused to use democratic process in the past and in fact, they've already shown a complete contempt for democracy and fair process and its only six of months since the election that you are all so disappointed with - that one day given up as a day of democracy by your authorities. This government will continue to rule by decree, by the abuse of power, by secrecy and a subversion of democratic process they euphemistically called 'Ministerial Discretion'. Its true that your participation was hindered by the fact that that many of you weren't yet of an age considered responsible enough to vote, or chose not to exercise your right to vote, or didn't vote because you have been led to believe falsely

that 'Democracy doesn't work!'

However I must say that even in my seclusion I've heard enough from this generation of youth to make me feel good - though those of you only just under 35 are precisely that age who live on the cusp of being corrupted and co-opted into the narrow self interested future sold to you by fascists as in your own interests. This age group, co-opted by authority and petty fears, their *now* suddenly much more important than the futures of youth and our planet that perhaps only a year ago they shared. They become the protectors of power for their own ends from those considered too young to have any intelligent or meaningful grasp on what future really means. So what these commentators are really saying is that the power of youth is a dangerous power ... and although dormant its a power that those of us who believe wholeheartedly in democracy but who have failed to use it properly - to your detriment - wish you to learn to use. We, us commentators, are worried about youth being disappointed with the way their futures are being traded by those whose futures have become shorter and more myopic as they have become co-opted and corrupted. If your disappointment leads to non-participation then you will prove to yourselves that Democracy doesn't work - Its a vicious circle that needs to be broken ... These commentators realise, that despite their previous apathy to your needs, now is the time to goad you into the use of democratic process because youth is now the only saviour of a future whose time is running out.

"It is better to do something than to do nothing; if you make a mistake, then something can be fixed; nothing can't be fixed." John Stevens, the Builder of the Panama Canal.

You have every right to be disappointed; those of us, my generation, can merely wallow in our anger. We're angry because we have ripped ourselves off .. and we're angry because our petty fears and greedy self-interest have well and truly ripped you off - you, who we dare to say we love. My generation - the over 55s - have no right to be disappointed, let alone angry. Ashamed, yes, ashamed because we were young once too and although we knew all too well the power of democracy we somehow didn't impart it to you who are after all, our

future. Your generation, youth, are now on the cusp. You are one very small step from being the 'control generation' but you will have to fight for it, it will take more effort than it should have due to our complacency. Four years is both a very long time and a very short time. You have a government now that doesn't believe in Democracy, it can't, because Democracy is progress, and any progress other than their own is anathema to Fascism. They like to and will, call themselves things other than fascists; corporative liberals, market liberals, neoliberals, conservatives - this is a factor of a still vaguely remembered but fast fading knowledge of history, something that is no longer taught as a matter of fact in modern schools - but Fascism, it is. Its an unpleasant memory which modern society hides from their children, not so much for the memory, as for the fact that its unpleasant and we are complicit in it. Its not in the interest of a ruling elite to embrace a progress that includes all of humanity, it endangers their ideal and threatens their power. This is something that's never changed ... But the great thing about this, shameful as it sounds from someone in my position - and its happened time and time again in Man's history - is that governments like these, that ignore the wishes of all the people, and science and reality, and purport to act on the children's behalf for their own good without open consultation, have only two ways to co-opt you - shall we say, to convince you - to 'vote' them in again; the club and the bribe. And, hey, which of you, showing such disappointment, will take the bribe to ignore the use of the club?

There is no progress in the life of man, no happiness, no contentment, without the progress, happiness and contentment of all of man. There's no getting away from the fact that we share a finite planet and that it is dying. And that its dying faster that it should be because of us, all of us, not just Australia, the whole wide world - we kill it equally; all of us in it together. And there's no getting away from the fact, that although you may be in a fortunate position at this very moment, things can change very quickly, and you can find yourself thrown into a very unfortunate' position. Australia can't stand alone in a world that's falling to pieces. We can't put a fence or a wall around it, or pretend that because we're an island, nothing unpleasant in the outside world will affect us.

So, its up to you - youth - to make Democracy and not to look to an authority to give it to you. Neoliberal authority will always seek to divide and sow a fear of false 'others' in a petty and elitist pursuit of power that is in reality only in the interests of their position and their assumed privilege. Just because it has 'never been different' doesn't mean that it 'must always remain so' - that's a defeatist attitude, which at this stage in our planets life will bring you only ruin, conflict and war. It must lead to war and conflict. The fundamental difference now, is that we don't have the time for these things anymore. We don't have the time to turn the clock back and do it all over again, and again.

Democracy is a language. Its a unit of transaction ... What guides progress is hurt; not individual hurt but the hurt you feel when you look across and see that another man is hurting too and that the earth is hurting and this makes you hurt too. That is Democracy. Those that have the ability to look across at a suffering fellow .. and wander off unperturbed, to close off reality for their myopic self-interest ... well, it would be nice not to have dealings with such people - we have the technology - but since we do need to make deals with this 'other', then we have the language of Democracy with which to do it. Democracy is the process of the interaction ... Or, we have conflict, war. We have the technology now to realise man's ideals - the same technology that the Fascists will use to enforce their finite ones. The use of Democracy can't lead to war. Democracy has only one enemy - unfeeling hurt, selfishness; Fascism. Of course, Democracy can be blanketed by a fear induced complacency .. as we have just seen, but don't despair of Democracy, because fear and despair are fascist weapons, Fascists will never underestimate the power of Democracy - its the only thing they fear. They fear it because it will always be standing at humanity's back ready to be called, but it will only come when called, and there is now, today, such a thing as too late! Democracy doesn't exist by itself, its an ideal, its the fundamental of human interaction and it requires men, all men, to carry it with them ... not just sometimes, but all of the time, every waking moment of every living day.

(In my obvious inability to separate, I need to remember, that I'm writing in answer to the statement, that Democracy doesn't work, and I don't want my digressions or my obvious bias to mislead you because

I'm determined to convince you that it does! I must convince you of the value of democratic process because I can't see an alternative other than war ...)

Youth only has to 'discover' Democracy and learn to recognise its difference from THE DEMOCKRACY that fascism will try to sell you. Fascism you won't fail to recognise when it hits you, and believe me, it has. *What transactions can you possibly have with Fascists without the use of Democracy. War? The club?*

Value and worth are disparaged concepts nowadays, but what is value without worth? 'Freedom is the Man who Would Turn the World Upside Down' and since my generation is no longer capable of doing this, we have no right to prevent you from doing it. It's sheer conceit ME believing that I have a right to make your future because at whose expence does this come - certainly not mine. I think that your generation, those under 35 - will easily see that ideals, the ideals of democracy and full inclusion, are worthy ideals and that they are there to be fought for now before it becomes too late. Ideals are targets to aim for, and they are perhaps not so important to hit, as to make sure that at the very least, one is shooting in the right direction. Are we shooting in the right direction? There are enough humans under the age of 35 to make a difference and only they can look at the future from a proper perspective. Look back on Man's history and see that this is true. But don't think that suddenly, for some reason, we won't make the past mistakes again. Learn from the mistakes of our past because now they can be seen in a better light and we have the technology to make the future better for us all - we have had it for an awful long time now. Discover Democracy and use it in your transactions - take a risk, be true anarchists*.

You are all anarchists you young ones, the only difference is within you - its the ability to look across at one who is hurting, and to feel the hurt too, and to know that it doesn't have to be so. Unfortunately, time being what it is, it is no longer on your side.

"By Anarchy I mean the natural process of love, work & knowledge which has always governed economy and the social & cultural life of man as long as there is human community. Anarchy is the sum total of all

naturally developed and developing life functions which organically govern rational human relationships." - Wilhelm Reich. (Reich used 'Work Democracy' as his term for Anarchism as he was writing in a time of great fear; the rise of fascism in Nazi Germany less than 100 years ago.)

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*By authority, I mean authoritarian regimes and specifically here in Australia, I mean the Imperious divine Right Oligarchy.

*True Anarchism is realised and transacted with democracy, and not in some future heaven, but here on our Earth now - Democracy is the process of interaction. More than at any other time in Man's history we have the right technology to realise our ideals, we have reached the point where we do not have to destroy the Earth for our 'resources' ... And if we wished we could also still drink Coke, even though it doesn't show much intelligence, is it any wonder that any other intelligent life there may be in the Universe keeps well away from us - *our deceit and hypocrisy would destroy any civilization.*

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