**Simple Societal Success Equation**

What does every human life have in common? The desire to live as high a quality of life as possible. To be free of need and pressure, to *not* be perpetually stressed out and under worrisome duress, to have a place of one’s own, to own and have access to everything of concrete value which has the potential to add to one’s quality of life, to be enriched by social and economic systems which provide all social and purpose-driven forms of fulfillment; all of which equates to the possibility of loving life, aka ‘happiness.’

We start from this point. From the assumption that life is inherently valuable, and that it constitutes its own point. The point of life, in other words, is for life to be ‘good;’ as good as possible; for existence to be as fulfilling and enjoyable as possible. Now, this doesn’t mean just *our* life, or the life of one type or group of people, but *all* of human life. In the Simple Societal Success Equation, let’s call this **A**: the goal; the point; the pursuit of the maximization of the experience of life for all humans and, ideally, *all of life*.

How is this achieved? Now, this takes an imaginative capacity, but try to envision *everything* of value. In this context, by value I mean everything of value to human existence, for now setting aside all other forms of life whose quality tends to coincide with this, for when the planet and its resources are protected and balanced in distribution, *all* life wins. You can call all such things those things which have a quality of life utility value; that is, they have the inherent capacity to be used to add value to human life; to increase **A**. Let’s call all the things which have the ability to contribute to **A** all things of value: **B**.

There is no way that I can enumerate everything belonging to **B**, but as simply as possible, this includes all resources, all necessary services, all opportunity, the fruits of all of our endeavors. It includes all the land and permanent improvements of that land whereupon we live, explore and work, all the food cultivated and harvested upon that land, all the other natural resources embedded in that land… The land has always been and will always be the starting point. Those that control it dictate everything, because most everything that adds to **B** is harvested and distributed and otherwise based upon land.

But much more belongs in **B** than the land itself. All the water we drink, all the wood and stone we build with, all the non-poisonous real medicine we cultivate. Anything produced from the land through our labors, all the fruits of professional and economic activity, everything that artists craft, that craftsmen construct that adds to the quality of human life, all of it. Use your imagination. What must be stressed is that we live in a richly-abundant planet providing an absolutely incalculably-immense total value for **B**.

So, the goal of humanity is what? To translate **B**, everything of value that has the potential to add quality of life to human existence, into **A**, the total quality of human existence. This simple set of variables allows us to say that the only *moral* purpose of all human systems, **C**, is to effectively translate **B** into **A**.

That is, we can assume that the only moral means at looking at the equation of **C** translating **B** into **A** is to say that it is the job and very purpose of **C** to grant all forms of life, each individual or group of **a**, as much of every form of **B**, each specific type **b**, we may say, to the extent they need to at least have the opportunity to maximize their respective quality of lives, **a**, which, when added together, maximizes **A**.

One way to write this is to say that **B** times the effectiveness of **C** equals **A**, or **B x C = A**.

Now, as with **B**, though likely to a lesser degree, **C** is *highly* involved, and all human systems whose common job is to translate **B** into **A** can’t be enumerated here. But, for the sake of simplicity, we can lump much of **C** into the categories of political, economic, commercial and theological systems which feed into most of the rest, including the educational systems they craft, the nonprofit and governmental organizations that they influence, if not outright dictate, and any other institutions translating **B** into **A**.

Again, the moral purpose of **C** is to put as many people as possible in the best possible position to produce **a** in their own lives, and the lives of their families, and to thereby maximize the value of **A**.

Another way to say this is to say that all of **C** is morally meant to *serve* **A** through the best use of **B**.

So, as a quick review, the three elements of our Simple Societal Success Equation are:

**A: The *total* quality of life; the goal; the point; ideally for life on a *global* scale.**

**B: Everything possessing a quality of life utility value; anything with the potential to add to A.**

**C: The human systems put in place with the moral purpose to translate B into as much A as possible.**

Now, if **C** is *100%* effective, every element of **B**, every **b**, will be translated into an increase in the opportunity to increase the quality of existence of every person or group in **A**, every **a**. That is, everything that has the potential to contribute to the quality of human existence will be well utilized in doing so, resulting in the total value of **A** being as high as possible through the best design and use of **C**.

Before we get into what might be looked at in **B** and how it translates into **A**, let’s take an extreme hypothetical example and make a basic assumption about **B** in orderto illustrate the equation:

Let’s take a society composed of 75% slaves, 20% slave-drivers and 5% aristocratic owners of all production.

Let’s further estimate that the slaves receive 5% of their total possible **b** values, the slave-drivers receive a quarter, or 25% of their **b** values, and the aristocrats receive *far more* than their **b** values. These percentages, in other words, represent how much of the total possible amount of all things of quality of life utility value that are necessary to produce the highest quality of life is received by each of these respective groups, with, again, slaves receiving 5% of what they need to maximize their quality of existence, slave-drivers 25% and the aristocrats many times over 100%, likely over a thousand percent.

Here we arrive at a critical insight: you can continue trying to stuff **b** into **a** *long* after the point at which **b** actually translates into increases in **a**. That is, the aristocrats can and, of course, historically *do*, continue to amass **b** *long* after the point at which their **b** can actually effectively add to their **a**. In fact, there is a *diminishing return* relationship built into the translation of **b** into **a** for any one person or group of people. We can, in fact, consider each such group or person **a**, and say that the more of **B** dedicated to **a**, the less **B** makes **a**.

One of the key points here is that any of the total amount of **B** available to life at any one time which continues to be dedicated to any **a** *past* the point where **B** can actually add to **a** equals **a waste of** **B**.

This diminishing returns and opportunity cost related to the quality of life utility value per person of everything of value (**B**) in the rendering of quality of life (**A**) is the heart of *Quality of Life Economics*.

*Quality of Life Economics* is detailed in several other pages and presentations on the *Infinite of One Publishing* website, as well as in the books written by its main author, if you want more information.

For now, let’s return to our illustrative example of the Simple Societal Success Equation:

I’ll be using decimal fractions of the total possible outcome of **A** to illustrate the point (i.e. 99% = 0.99).

100% is the highest possible result of the Simple Societal Success Equation from which we can judge the success of society; i.e., if **B** is processed through **C** with 100% efficacy to produce 100% of the possible **A**.

So, with our example:

75% of the society is composed of slaves averaging 5% of their possible **a** = .75 x .05 = .0375

20% of the society is composed of slave-drivers averaging 25% of their possible **a** = .20 x .25 = .05

5% of the society is composed of aristocrats averaging 100% of their possible **a** = .05 x 1 = .05

So our **A** value = .0375 + .05 + .05 = 0.1375, or **13.75%**

This hypothetical society has a Simple Societal Success Score of 13.75% (out of 100% possible).

Now, obviously achieving a perfect 100% score is impossible; yet it’s what you *shoot* for, knowing that shooting for the heights gives you the best possible chance to achieve your heights, *regardless* of what is perceived to be ‘realistic.’ ‘Realism,’ you will hopefully find, is just an excuse *not* to fight for the best, and is therefore typically advocated for by those looking to justify their immorality and mental laziness.

This is the philosophical perspective of *idealism*, which requires morality, courage and imagination.

Now, 13.75% is a sad score, yet global society doesn’t do much better, depending upon the calculation.

So, what would you say are the most important elements of **B** which **C** must best use to put as much of the global population as possible into position to maximize their respective **a**’s in the production of **A**?

Financial resources are a good place to start – how global society uses its economic theory, its business structures and the political systems *said* to represent the will of the people in translating the economic output of the world into the financial resources which the people might thereafter use to produce **A**.

After all, considering the fact that most of the **B** that produces **A**, including all goods and services and properties and even political representation *isn’t* freely given, but must be *purchased* in capitalist societies, it’s safe to say that people’s access to financial resources is a core component of their **a**’s.

So, please excuse the oversimplification, and the fact that these are older statistics taken from a 2013 *Wikipedia* article on global wealth distribution, but know that, as the wealthy use much of their wealth to put themselves in the position to take ever more wealth, these statistics are only likely to get worse.

If we divide the worldwide ‘wealth pyramid’ into 4 sections stacked one on top of the other, we get:

* The ‘top’ 0.5% of the global population (0.005) controls about 40% (0.4) of the wealth
* The next 7.5% of the global population (0.075) controls about 40% (0.4) of the wealth
* The next 22% of the global population (0.22) controls about 14% (0.14) of the wealth
* The ‘bottom’ 70% of the global population (0.7) controls about 6% (0.06) of the wealth

So, if we consider wealth to be the primary mechanism by which **A** is produced, and add up wealth at every socioeconomic class, **a**, to produce a total **A**, we can interpret the equation to produce the result:

0.005 x 0.4 = 0.002

0.075 x 0.4 = 0.03

0.22 x 0.14 = 0.031

0.7 x 0.06 = 0.042

**A** = 0.002 + 0.03 + 0.031 + 0.042 = 0.105 = **10.5%**

So, as a global society, one version of our simplified ‘success’ score (**A**) = **10.5% out of a possible 100%**

Alternatively, we can simply say that 92% of the global population controls 20% of the world’s wealth and that, therefore, the *vast* majority are likely lacking what they need of it to produce decent **a** levels.

What about global income? Obviously, with income being one of the core contributors to wealth, the numbers here are also abysmal. For example, one source, the *World Inequality Database*,reports that:

* The top 1% of income earners takes away approximately 22% of the global income
* The next 9% take away approximately 30% of the global income
* The middle 40% take away approximately 38%
* Leaving the bottom 50% of the global population taking away about 10% of global income

0.01 x 0.22 = 0.0022

0.09 x 0.30 = 0.027

0.40 x 0.38 = 0.152

0.50 x 0.10 = 0.05

**A** = .0022 + .027 + .152 + .05 = 0.2312 = **23.12%**

This still sad score is nevertheless over double the result derived from looking at wealth. This can be attributed to the fact that most income of the vast majority doesn’t turn into wealth, what is left of that income for ‘disposable means’ to increase **A** to any decent level *after* meeting the needs of survival.

What if we only look at U.S. income, and try to account for the translation of income into quality of life?

As one relevant example, a 2010 Princeton University study established a threshold in the United States of about $75,000 a year as the point at which clear improvements in claimed quality of existence, or ‘happiness,’ can no longer be assured with increased income, whereas a drop from $75k a year produces accelerating decreases in quality of life (ever steeper quality of life drop-offs relative to annual income).

So, again working from statistics gathered by *Wikipedia*, this time on annual income per person, we can gather the people in the United States into socioeconomic classes based upon the following categories:

* The ‘Upper Class:’ 1 % of the population with an income in excess of $500K/year
* The ‘Upper Middle Class:’ 15% of the population with an income between $75k - $500k/year
* The ‘Lower Middle Class:’ 32% of the population with an income between $35k - $75k/year
* The ‘Working Class:’ 32% of the population with an annual income between $16k - $35k/year
* The ‘Lower Class:’ 20% of the population with an annual income less than $16k/year

So, if we assume there is truth to the 2010 Princeton University study, we can estimate that 16% of the population of the United States has maxed-out it’s **a** value (1.0), the quality of life that it can assure itself through income. And yet, extrapolating from *Pew Research* numbers, we can safely say that this group takes in a good 70% of the total income in the United States, meaning that somewhere between two-thirds and three-quarters of the total income in the United States does *little to nothing* to increase quality of life, even as 84% of the total population of the United States could increase the quality of its existence with any share of that *wasted* income. In fact, taking into account the aforementioned law of diminishing returns, we can say that at least half the U.S. population could *dramatically* increase the quality of its existence with any considerable share of that wasted income. Taking this law into account, we can roughly estimate that the ‘lower middle class’ averages about 50% of the resources that it needs to maximize its quality of life, the ‘working class’ averages about 25% and the ‘lower class’ about 10%.

So if we add up these **a** values, we get (0.16 x 1.0) + (0.32 x 0.5) + (0.32 x 0.25) + (0.20 x 0.1) = **A =** **0.42**

Therefore, even with a generous calculation, the U.S. scores 42% in its Simple Societal Success Score.

What else can we look at? How about land, considering that, given a plot, one can produce *so much* of what brings quality of life to human existence, including the production of food and natural medicine, the joys of cultivation, the ability to raise and connect with livestock, the means to produce housing and even the simple fact that we are naturally meant to be *connected* to the land, and that so much of what ails modern humanity is the fact that so many live most of their lives deprived of natural immersion?!

Since land is essentially a form of wealth and can only be purchased through the income that is amassed because it *doesn’t* go to expenses, like paying for the right to use the land owned by the wealthy through leasing contracts, you’d expect the numbers to be as abysmal as those of wealth. They’re close.

The global numbers here are much harder to come by for a variety of reasons, so let’s just look at the U.S., where statistics are available. A 2016 study by a New York University economist reports that:

* 1% of households owned 40% of the nation’s “non-home” real estate (unimproved land value)
* The next 9% of households owns 42% of the nation’s non-home real estate
* The remaining 90% owns just 18% of the nation’s non-home real estate

As a disturbing example of the 1% concentration here, the top two U.S. private land owners own 4.2 *million* acres between them, all as the majority of the nation owns no real estate whatsoever.

* 1. x 0.40 = .004

0.09 x 0.42 = .038

0.90 x 0.18 = .162

**A** = .004 + .038 + .162 = **20.4%**

Of course, even being so low, this is an *extremely* generous number that would be *much* lower with accurate information on the breakdown of 90% of the population. Throw a times *zero* for the percentage of the U.S. population that owns no real estate and this score would plummet closer to 10%.

I suppose that makes this the ‘land of the free to keep all the land away from the vast majority!’

How about business ownership? The relative proportion of people who own any significant share of the bottom line of what they contribute to their respective businesses through the economy? This is, after all, how income is derived, how wealth is amassed, and how land is purchased. For when the many are excluded from owning any significant share of their endeavors, they are excluded from all the benefits of ownership, which one might argue is the heart of *all* of the injustice highlighted by this equation.

According to the *Harvard Business Review*, about 10% of employed individuals in the United States own some share in the equity of their businesses. Yet that 10% owns the tiniest fraction of total business equity, and this stat is misinterpreted by politicians that want to portray economic circumstances as better than they are by saying that 10% of the workforce ‘owns their own business,’ which isn’t near to the case. These are the same politicians that point to unemployment rates and housing starts as indications that the economy is healthy, excluding the fact that the majority of the ‘employed’ are barely surviving low quality lives on minimum or near minimum wage jobs and a sizeable percentage of new housing construction is for second/vacation homes or properties that are rented to those that can’t afford to purchase their own homes and so are preyed upon by landlords who leech off their disadvantage. In reality, according to the *Financial Times*, U.S. business equity distribution looks like this:

* The ‘top’ 1% owns about 58%
* The next 9% owns about 30%
* The ‘middle’ 40% owns about 20%
* The ‘bottom’ 50% owns the remaining 2%

.01 x .58 = .0058

.09 x .30 = .027

.40 x .20 = .08

.50 x .02 = .01

**A** = .0058 + .027 + .08 + .01 = 0.1228 = **12.28%**

There are, again, innumerable other things of value, **B**, which we can look at as contributors to **A**. We could, for example, look at the fact that the United States and those nations following our lead claim to be democracies whose ‘representatives’ represent the popular will in working to convert **B** into **A**, but which, obviously, horrendously fail to do so. Why? Because we’re a plutocratic republic in which, through Citizens United, lobbying, campaign financing, the perfectly divided and controlled two parties and their candidate-selection processes and even the electoral college system that can discard popular choice in the end no matter what that popular will is, *completely fails to represent the people and endorse or protect all the myriad ways in which* ***B*** *would be better converted into* ***A****.* We can look at healthcare and the food production industries and the use of truly healthy, natural medicines and the protection of the planet, systems which impose *immense* financial and health costs by failing the people through, respectively, concealing ills and throwing toxins at people by not understanding and supporting means to health because they aren’t profitable for the few, the complete failure of the industrial food industry to provide healthful food for the vast majority while gradually eroding the environment and the fact that all natural means to heal and improve the health of people are sadly considered ‘alternative!’

Proceeding from these conclusions, we must ask: *Why* is this the case, and *what* can we do about it?

The reason, of course, is the *drastic* failure of **C**, the systems which, combined, produce *failing* scores.

Why have they failed so miserably?

Also simply put, because they were designed by those of wealth and power to serve the continued consolidation of wealth and power, which can only come by exploiting (i.e. failing) global society. You cannot serve the god of greed and serve the best interests of the global population at the same time.

How do you live in a world that produces these results and *not* try to change them? How do you simply fight for a position within them, attempting to garner as much of **B** for yourself as possible while remaining unconcerned and unmotivated by the fact that **B** is so *horrendously* used to produce total quality of human life, **A**? How can we the people of the world just play within the systems, **C**, that have been placed before us by the conquerors and aristocratic ownership class of the world, knowing how miserable are so many and why this is the case, the *pathetically unjust* use of **B** in the production of **A**?!

You cannot count yourself amongst progressives, those that have always pushed the controllers of **C** into using **B** to improve **A**, *unless* you are both aware of how low **A** is and are doing something about it!

Now, while it’s an oversimplification to reduce **C** to a handful of human systems, I find it useful to build up from a foundation; a foundation which I imagine to be framed by the following four cornerstones:

1. The Spiritual Cornerstone: an answer to religion’s corruption and division is *Monoexistentialism*
2. The Political Cornerstone: an answer to fake democracy (plutocratic republic) is *True Democracy*
3. The Economics Cornerstone: an answer to free-to-exploit economics is *Quality of Life Economics*
4. The Commercial Cornerstone: an answer to equity-excluding business is *Business Collectivism*

There are many other ideas and structures that can, and should, be built off of these four cornerstones into the foundation of any truly progressive society, but I believe we must start with the cornerstones!

Why? Because these cornerstones (**C**) connect to all else, and are *far* better than the currently prevalent human systems (mostly built by aristocratic oppressors) at translating value (**B**) into quality of life (**A**)!!!

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