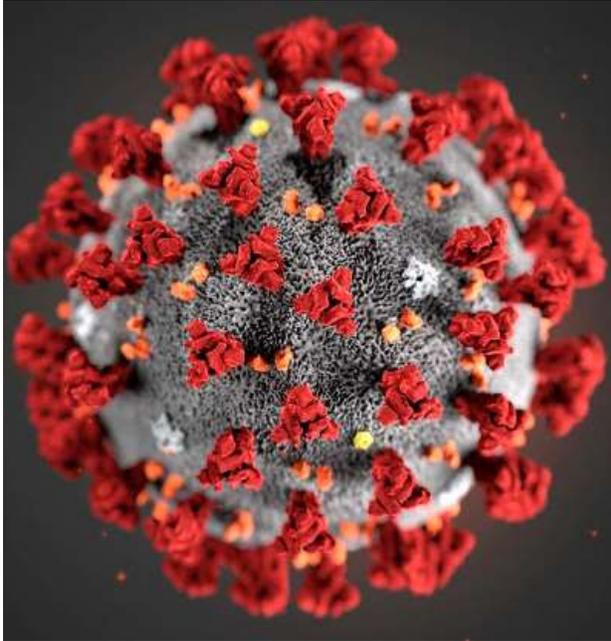


PWPA USA: Institutional Viruses and the Covid 19 Pandemic

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April 29, 2020



Introduction:

Biological viruses like the Coronavirus attack and hijack human cells as a host for their own growth and reproduction. In recent years we have become aware of computer viruses, which are aptly named "viruses" because a "host" computer is "infected" with a "virus" that appropriates its resources for other purposes and, if the infections are too severe, they will overload and crash or "kill" the computer with a "blue screen of death." The recent Academy Award winning movie *Parasite* exemplifies how self-centered individuals can live as parasites off their "hosts." In the movie a wealthy software designer who is productive and earns a lot of money is used and finally destroyed by an expanding and increasingly dysfunctional household of parasites.

Social institutions, for example governments, agencies, political parties, religions, corporations, non-profit organizations, and clans, are also invaded by parasites or "viruses" to host selfish parasitical behavior and redirect institutional resources away from their purposes and towards other ends.

In *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness, Version 4.0*,¹ I explained that a system of governance is a legal "operating system." As a computer operating system directs the relationship of the components of a computer, like a hard drive, the memory, the power supply, the software programs, the printer, etc., government is a legal mechanism for the interaction of individuals and social institutions. In creating the U.S. Constitution, the Founders sought to erect protections to prevent individuals and interest groups from hijacking the governance system. It sought to erect barriers against "viruses" that hijacked previous forms of governance. In the book, I outlined five core governance principles that the founders heeded in drafting and approving the Constitution: Protection, Subsidiarity, Separation of Powers, Transparency, and the Right to Secede. The remainder of the book is a discussion of these principles, how they got hijacked and circumvented over the more than 200 year history of the union, and proposals for updating the operating system to rid it of its viruses.

Everyone is aware of the importance of fighting viruses in their own body and the importance of the immune system. Computer users are aware of the importance of anti-virus software like Norton Antivirus and McAfee to keep their computer operating system healthy like the immune system in the body. However, most people are not as aware of the importance an active immune system for social institutions like governments, corporations, churches, and NGOs. In my book I discussed the evolution of governance from ancient kingdoms (version 1), to the social contract that created the Roman Republic (version 2), to

¹ Gordon L. Anderson, *Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness, Version 4.0* (St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 2009).

the U.S. Constitution (version 3). Each version was an improvement on previous and each included more checks and balances on power than the previous, but the U.S. system was, as the founders said, only "more perfect," not perfect. For, the development of any new virus needs new checks by the immune system (version 4.0).

After the U.S. Constitution was adopted, little maintenance of its immune system has taken place. We created laws to eliminate slavery after the Civil War, enfranchise women in 1920, and rein in banks after the Great Depression. But this only happened following severe crises that affected the life of the system. Rather, from the very founding people began trying to try to hack into the system and hijack it, often through the use of political parties as a vehicle for lobbying, and cronyism. Such hackers have been very successful. Laws the founders put in place prevent hijacking were circumvented and even amendments to the constitution were written to undo checks and balances the founders had put in place and give the hijackers greater legal power.

As confused as we are about the Coronavirus just a few months after it was discovered, the average citizen might already know more about how it replicates itself in human cells that are hosts, than they know about the viruses that infect social institutions. One main reason for this is that our "representatives" have become party operatives and the media their propaganda machine. Viruses exert significant control over the government and the news media. It is in their interest to keep their nefarious activities as invisible as possible in order to keep and expand power.

Most laws that are passed today legalize, or even mandate, financial support for the hijackers. Every time there is a crisis where it is important to fund a valid purpose, provisions are tacked onto laws that sidetrack money for parasitical purposes or give an unfair advantage to one party against another in the market.

The Corona virus pandemic, like the Civil War or the Great Depression, has plunged everyone into an abyss. The new CBS mantra "we are all in this together" is a truism. However, while established social viruses might try to milk the crisis and gain more control through fear, many of our social institutions have been so severely compromised that this is also an opportunity for citizens to study and improve their social institutions. For example, we discovered that the head of the World Health Organization was not a medical doctor with infectious disease knowledge, but a political functionary who could not perform his task when the crisis emerged. We learned that the government of China, whose purpose should be to protect its citizens, hiding information because it was more concerned with its own survival. We heard corporate media that earn lots of revenue from pharmaceutical advertising condemn President Trump's suggestion we examine the use of generics like hydroxychloroquine, revealing serious conflicts of interest with truthful reporting.

While these subjects would take many books to cover in an detail, in the remainder of this paper I will try to highlight some of the topics for exploration that the Coronavirus pandemic can help shed light upon.