Exiting Technocracy

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Based on the book *How to Opt-Out of the Technocratic State,* by Derrick Broze

Introduction   As humanity enters the third decade of the 21st century, we find our selves at the precipice of a Technocratic Age where Artificial Intelligence (AI), Smart Technology, and the Internet of Things are becoming a part of everyday life. This technology provides benefits but comes at a cost—corporations, governments, law enforcement, and hackers are all capable of peering into our lives at any moment. Corporations and governments are even learning to use technology in a way that allows them to be the "social engineers" of society. The concept of social credit is also becoming increasingly popular, and the likelihood that citizens will face negative consequences for choosing to speak about controversial topics or criticizing authorities is only going to increase.

This shift toward a world where digital technology is the solution for all things is being driven by the tech sector—specifically the institutions often referred to as Big Wireless and Big Tech. The CEOs of transnational corporations and their partners in

government have worked to cement digital technology into every aspect of humanity. The world they envision is one where scientists and technologists are the elite class who decide the future of society. While the digital technology of these industries has only emerged in the last few decades, the philosophy which guides many of the leading figures in industry and government is nearly a century old.

This philosophy of a rule by technological experts and scientists is known as *Technocracy.* As we will see in the coming chapters, the ideas which underpin this school of thought have quietly been influencing world leaders for decades. **Is this obscure political theory from the 20th century the guiding force behind the move towards a digital dystopia? What are the implications for a world that is always plugged in and on "the grid"? How can one maintain privacy and liberty in a society that is based on mass surveillance, technological control, and the loss of individuality?**

I believe the answers to these questions lie in the writings of political philosopher Samuel Edward Konkin III. Konkin was an activist during the 1960s when talk of revolution in America was at its peak. He believed that using violence to overthrow the State would only result in another leader stepping in and continuing the charade. Konkin also rejected voting, seeing it as participating in an immoral system as well as an inadequate strategy for achieving lasting change. Rather than voting or violence, Konkin proposed a third path for the freedom seeker which he termed Counter-Economics, and more specifically, Agorism. We will explore his work in detail in the coming chapters.

Whether Konkin's vision of freeing the people from the chains of the State becomes reality completely depends on the

consciousness of the people. After enough people have been educated about the dangers of the Technocratic Era, there must also be an understanding of the power of non-compliance. If a mass of people find ways to avoid the digital corporate-state we can leverage our numbers and the power of the counter-economy. We can create more freedom and opportunity to live the lives of abundance we desire.

The window is short, but we have the opportunity to remove ourselves from the State's matrix of control. The current social credit system employed in China will soon make its way to the United States and the rest of the "civilized world." It has already become nearly impossible to live a life that is not monitored and analyzed from cradle to grave. If we plan to survive this quickly approaching technocratic corporate-state control grid, I believe we must embrace the solutions first identified by Samuel E. Konkin III. It's time to recognize that Agorism and Counter-Economics are the answer to our problems.

One final note: As I type these words in December 2019, I do so with the full awareness that digital technology is evolving at an exponential rate. The invasive technology of today might appear quaint or even archaic to someone reading this in 2025. I will admit that even the solutions contained within this book may end up outdated in less than a decade depending on the direction our technological world takes. However, no matter what the future looks like **my message to you is never surrender**. Find ways to adapt. Build communities with other like-minded people. Keep the flames of liberty alive in your heart and minds. As long as the human spirit desires to be free, we can and will find a way to overcome all hardship. No matter what year you discover this book, please use it as inspiration and a foundation upon which to build. **Humanity's future in**

in your hands.
  Derrick Broze, January 2020

Chapter 1

Technocracy, Counter-Economics, and the Future of Freedom

The following chapters offer a brief introduction to several concepts including Technocracy, Counter-Economics, and Agorism. In the interest of getting to the "how to" aspect of this presentation we are only going to give an overview of these ideas. For those who want to understand the larger implications of the technocratic movement I recommend author Patrick Wood. If you are interested in a more robust understanding of Counter-Economics and Agorism, I recommend my own book *Manifesto of The Free Humans,*[1] as well as Samuel Konkin's books. I also highly recommend reading Konkin's final unfinished book *Counter-Economics,* which is included in Part 3 of *How to Opt-Out of the Technocratic State*[2].

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[1]`https://theConsciousResistance.com/books,`
[2]`https://theConsciousResistance.com/howto`

What is a Technocracy?   In the early 20th century, a movement began to develop around a political theory known as Technocracy, a system where management of governments is handled by technical experts, often involving technology-focused solutions. The proponents of Technocracy claimed the concept would lead to better management of resources and protection of the planet. However, this system of governance by technological experts and their technology would also involve a loss of privacy, centralization, and management of all human behavior. Although the term appears to have been largely forgotten, the technocratic philosophy and influence can be seen everywhere in our modern digital world.

One of the most influential proponents of Technocracy was a man named Howard Scott, a writer who founded the Technical Alliance in New York City in 1919. Scott believed business owners lacked the necessary skills and data to reform their industries and thus control should be handed over to engineers. In 1932, Scott and fellow technocrat Walter Rautenstrauch formed the "Committee on Technocracy" at Columbia University. The group would eventually splinter, with Scott leading Technocracy Incorporated and technocrat Harold Loeb in charge of the Continental Committee on Technocracy.

In 1938, Technocracy Incorporated released a publication which outlined their vision for a Technocracy (emphasis mine):

> **Technocracy is the science of social engineering, the scientific operation of the entire social mechanism to produce and distribute goods and services to the entire population of this continent**. For the first time in human history it will be done as a scientific, technical, engineering problem. There will be no place for Politics or Politi-

cians, Finance or Financiers, Rackets or Racketeers. Technocracy states that this method of operating the social mechanism of the North American Continent is now mandatory because we have passed from a state of actual scarcity into the present status of potential abundance in which we are now held to an artificial scarcity forced upon us in order to continue a Price System which can distribute goods only by means of a medium of exchange.

Technocracy states that price and abundance are incompatible; the greater the abundance the smaller the price. In a real abundance there can be no price at all. **Only by abandoning the interfering price control and substituting a scientific method of production and distribution can an abundance be achieved. Technocracy will distribute by means of a certificate of distribution available to every citizen from birth to death**. The Technate will encompass the entire American Continent from Panama to the North Pole because the natural resources and the natural boundary of this area make it an independent, selfsustaining geographical unit.

Technocrats publicized their vision of a centrally planned world with books, speeches, clubs, and political parties. This resulted in a brief period of popularity in the U.S. and Canada in the years following the Great Depression of 1929. As politicians and economists searched for a solution to the financial calamity, the technocrats imagined a world where politicians and business owners were replaced with scientists, engineers,

and other technical experts to manage the economy.

However, in the 1940s mainstream interest in the Technocracy movement seemed to dissipate. Some researchers attribute this to a lack of a coherent political theory for achieving change, while others say President Roosevelt and the New Deal provided an alternative solution to financial hardship. Regardless, Technocracy ceased to be a topic of mainstream political discourse even as the industrial revolution spurred on new technologies and previously unseen wealth for those in control of said technology.

The ideas that underpinned the technocratic vision received a notable endorsement in 1970 when political scientist Zbigniew Brzezinski released his book *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era.* (Entre Dos Eras: El Rol de EEUU en la Era Tecnotrónica). Brzezinski will be familiar to long time researchers of the ruling elite. Until his death in 2018, Brzezinski was a diplomat who ran in the same circles as former Secretary of State and accused war criminal Henry Kissinger and David Rockefeller. Brzezinski served as advisor to several presidents—from Jimmy Carter to Barack Obama. Brzezinski was also a member of the Atlantic Council, the National Endowment for Democracy, and the Council on Foreign Relations.

Brzezinski's *Between Two Ages* may have changed the term from "Technocracy" to "Technetronic," but the depiction of the future is the same: a world in which the scientific and technological elite centrally plan the lives of all humanity. Essentially, a technologically advanced authoritarian-collectivism where individual liberties are subordinate to the apparent needs of the collective. Brezinski explains Technetronic in the following way:

> "The post-industrial society is becoming a "tech-

netronic" society: a society that is shaped culturally, psychologically, socially, and economically by the impact of technology and electronics—particularly in the area of computers and communications. The industrial process is no longer the principal determinant of social change, altering the mores, the social structure, and the values of society..."

In the Technetronic society scientific and technical knowledge, in addition to enhancing production capabilities, quickly spills over to affect almost all aspects of life directly. Accordingly, both the growing capacity for the instant calculation of the most complex interactions and **the increasing availability of biochemical means of human control augment the potential scope of consciously chosen direction, and thereby also the pressures to direct, to choose, and to change**."

Here are a few more choice quotes from *Between Two Ages: America's Role in the Technetronic Era* which make it clear that the goal is to build a global Technocracy:

"Another threat, less overt but no less basic, confronts liberal democracy. More directly linked to the impact of technology, it involves the gradual appearance of a more controlled and directed society. Such a society would be dominated by an elite whose claim to political power would rest on allegedly superior scientific knowhow. Unhindered by the restraints of traditional liberal values, this

elite would not hesitate to achieve its political ends by using the latest modern techniques for influencing public behavior and keeping society under close surveillance and control. Under such circumstances, the scientific and technological momentum of the country would not be reversed but would actually feed on the situation it exploits."

"Persisting social crisis, the emergence of a charismatic personality, and the exploitation of mass media to obtain public confidence would be the steppingstones in the piecemeal transformation of the United States into a highly controlled society."

"Today we are witnessing the emergence of transnational elites, but now they are composed of international businessmen, scholars and public officials. The ties of these new elites cut across national boundaries, their perspectives are not confined by national traditions, and their interests are more functional than national. Increasingly, intellectual elites tend to think in terms of global problems: the need to overcome backwardness, to eliminate poverty, prevent overpopulation, to develop effective peace-keeping machinery. The concern with ideology is yielding to preoccupation with ecology, pollution, overpopulation and the control of disease, drugs, and weather. There is a widespread consensus that functional planning is desirable and that it is the only way to cope with various ecological threats."

"The fiction of sovereignty is clearly no longer

compatible with reality. The time has come for a common effort to shape a new framework for international politics. There is already widespread agreement on developing international peacekeeping forces. Emerging global consciousness is forcing the abandonment of preoccupations with national supremacy and accentuating global interdependence."

Brzezinski's vision of the future was not mere speculation or guesswork. He was a member of the ruling class who spent his life using nation states—and the people within them—as pawns in a chess game in which most of the players are dangerously oblivious to the reality unfolding around them. I believe Brzezinski's book describes the world that is unfolding in the early 2020s. I highly recommend diving deep into his work for other fascinating insights into where we are and where we might be headed.

Now that we understand a bit of history of Technocracy and some of the ideas that it proposed we need to examine the world of today to note the Technocratic (or *Technetronic* if you prefer) influence.

Let's start by looking at the most wealthy companies and most influential CEOs. These individuals are running companies which have amassed large amounts of financial wealth as well as unfathomable amounts of digital data on all of their customers. From Jeff Bezos at Amazon, Bill Gates of Microsoft, Mark Zuckerberg at Facebook, Elon Musk of Tesla, and lesser known names at Google, Apple, and others, these are the technocrats of the early 2020s. Interestingly enough, Musk appears to be walking a path similar to his grandfather, Joshua Haldeman, who was a research director for the Technocracy Incor-

porated of Canada and national chairman of the Social Credit Party.

These men and their colleagues in various technological industries wield immense power through their companies, wealth, and cultural influence. These individuals have enough money, resources, and connections to shape elections, geoengineer the climate, and cause dips in the stock market, to name a few examples. They are the technocrat class of today.

I want to remind the potential reader of the future that these names might not mean anything to you at this point— they may indeed be relics of a long dead past. Whatever the names of the corporations, CEOs, and governments filling this role the concerns and possible solutions remain the same. If technology continues to advance exponentially, then it is likely that the trend towards surveillance will also continue and with the decrease in privacy, a decrease in overall liberties. *This is what we seek to overcome.*

Another example of the Technocratic world involves the growing use of surveillance tools like facial recognition, voice detection, 24-7 closed-circuit TV cameras, Artificial Intelligence, algorithmic manipulation, cell phone surveillance, social media monitoring, location tracking, digital eavesdropping via smart devices, and the overall push towards a Smart Grid powered by 5G. Of course, these technologies are not promoted as surveillance tools but rather tools for safety, convenience, education, and profit. However, the result is the same: individuals and companies promoting technological solutions to the world's ills, resulting in a loss of individual freedoms and more centralized control.

Of course, selling society on the need for a completely interconnected digital world where technologists and scientific

experts organize our lives can be helped along with a healthy dose of propaganda from the State's favorite partner in crime, the corporate media. Brzezinski's Between Two Ages provides more insight into the Technocratic plan:

> "In the Technetronic society the trend seems to be toward **aggregating the individual support of millions of unorganized citizens, who are easily within the reach of magnetic and attractive personalities, and effectively exploiting the latest communication techniques to manipulate emotion and control reason.**"

Together the technocrats (aka Big Tech), their obedient friends in media, and their partners in government are becoming what I call the Technocratic State. The rest of this work is dedicated to poking holes in this Technocratic State and exploiting its weaknesses. As mentioned in the introduction, **those who want to maintain privacy and liberty must be willing to adapt to constantly emerging technologies with the potential to liberate or imprison our hearts and minds**. I believe the key to resisting the Technocracy can be found in the work of Samuel Konkin III and his theory of Counter-Economics.

Counter-Economics and Agorism

Note: *Before we get to the "how to" of living a life outside the confines of the increasingly omniscient Technocratic State, we must understand the history and philosophy of Counter-Economics. This chapter includes a run down of the counter-economic strategy, including various definitions offered by Samuel Konkin III. The third chapter further breaks down the philosophy of Agorism. Both chapters were originally published*

in my third book, Manifesto of the Free Humans, but have been updated to better reflect the specific nature of this book. I include them here as a brief introduction to the concepts of Counter-Economics and Agorism.

It is my hope that this distillation of Samuel Konkin's work will help readers understand that these strategies can be employed in your life—regardless of age, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, political affiliation, socioeconomic status, or any other division of the human species. Quite simply, Counter-Economics is a strategy that can be practiced by anyone anywhere in the world. For readers who are new to this field of research, I recommend checking out Konkin's New Libertarian Manifesto *and* An Agorist Primer.

In 1979, anarchist, activist, and writer Samuel E. Konkin III (SEK3) released *The New Libertarian Manifesto,* presenting his case for a strain of libertarianism that he called "New Libertarianism." The philosophy behind the New Libertarian Movement was Agorism, named after the *agora,* the Greek word for marketplace. We will elaborate on Agorism in a moment, but essentially it's a radical philosophy that seeks to create a society free of coercion and force by encouraging people to opt-out of the corporate-state control grid. Konkin believed if a movement of people pulled their money, time, and support from corporate and state power, it would siphon away enough resources to collapse the State. As the State collapsed the agorists would help build systems that are not based on violence and coercion.

Konkin called on individuals to exit the mainstream economic system because he was one of the first modern thinkers to recognize that the unregulated market is the largest market in the world. Sometimes known as system-d, alternative, or informal economy, the value of this untaxed and unregulated market has a market value in the trillions of dollars. Throughout history,

when a government or king has tried to enforce prohibition—be that drugs, alcohol, gambling, sex, or books—they inadvertently cause a growth in the underground economy or, as Konkin called it, the counter-economy. Upon recognizing that the State has been incapable to slow the growth of the counter-economy Konkin saw an opportunity to disempower the State and preserve liberty for the people.

Konkin termed this strategy "Counter-Economics," which he defined as the "theory and practice of all human action neither accepted by the State nor involving any initiatory violence or threat of violence." Throughout the years, Konkin continuously refined his understanding and writing on the topic, and in doing so he offered several definitions and background on Counter-Economics:

> "An explanation of how people keep their wealth and property from the State is then Counter-Establishment economics, or Counter- Economics for short. The actual practice of human actions that evade, avoid and defy the State is counter-economic activity, but in the same sloppy way "economics" refers to both the science and what it studies, Counter- Economics will undoubtedly be used. Since this writing is Counter-Economic theory itself, what will be referred to as Counter-Economics is the practice."

> *(The New Libertarian Manifesto)*

> "A Counter-Economist is (1) anyone practicing a counter-economic act; (2) one who studies such acts. Counter-Economics is the (1) practice (2) study of counter-economic acts."

An Agorist Primer

"Counter-Economics is doing what you want, when you want, for your own good reasons."

Counter-Economics

"Counter-Economics sounds like counter-culture; indeed, the term was chosen with that in mind. Where the Counterculture rejected an Establishment "culture" and its values in the 1960s, the counter-economists reject the Establishment economics as just as corrupt. Much of the counter-culture was counter-economic, much of it was not. Anti-economics is not Counter-Economics; in fact, Counter-Economics as theory was developed from what could be called an orthodox revolt against an heretical, impure, Establishment economics."

Counter-Economics

I have always seen Counter-Economics as a method of aligning your actions with your stated goals and principles. If you don't support illegal wars of aggression, then find ways to avoid paying taxes or donate your taxes to a charity (see: War Tax Resistance). If you're tired of central banks manipulating the State's currency and enslaving you via funny money, then avoid the State's money, use alternative currency, barter, reduce your need for money, etc.

Counter-Economics suggests that moral people break bad laws by choosing to consciously opt out of systems that do not align with their values. As Konkin wrote in the unfinished *Counter-Economics:*

> "Counter-economic activity is any human action that takes place without the approval of the State. And since laws cover almost every human endeavor, often prohibiting both the action and its corresponding inaction, everyone to at least some small degree must bend or break laws simply to exist."

Being a counter-economist means that when you run into a roadblock to your liberty and health you find a way around it. This can include using or creating alternative currencies, community gardening efforts which provide an opportunity to be free of big corporate grocery stores, tax resistance, operating a business without licenses so your hard-earned money doesn't go to the State, and more. Counter-Economics also extends to the creation of alternative education programs, free schools or skill shares, and independent media ventures that counter the establishment narratives.

The reality is that the counter-economy is all around you. Every time someone pays a neighbor in cash to mow the lawn or do handiwork, they are participating in the counter-economy. The transaction does not involve taxes going to the State and the cash makes it a non-digital, untraceable transaction. If you have ever shopped at a garage sale, flea market, or pop up shop and not paid taxes—or perhaps even paid with an alternative currency—you have been a countereconomist. Of course, most of the public who participate in the counter/underground/alternative economy do not realize the potential and likely have never heard of Konkin or Counter-Economics. He believed a raising in the consciousness and awareness of the power of the counter-economy could create a mass movement of people exiting the system and building

new ways outside of the Technocratic State.

For a deeper understanding of Konkin's work let's take a look at his writing on Agorism. It is important to note that one need not self-identify as a new libertarian, libertarian, agorist, or anarchist to appreciate and make use of Counter-Economics. Simply put, one can practice Counter-Economics for the benefits it offers in escaping the Technocracy while not completely agreeing with Konkin's theories. However, I share this research because I believe his ideas offer a viable path forward.

Understanding Agorism   In the *New Libertarian Manifesto,* SEK3 outlines his vision for a more free and just world by first describing society's present condition: Statism. Statism is the tendency for citizens of a nation to view the State as the mechanism for which change can be brought about. Thus, a statist is someone who blindly trusts in the authority of the State and always reaches to the State as the solution to society's ills.

Konkin briefly outlines the path of human thinking, from slavery to the discovery of libertarian thought, and emphasizes the importance of consistency between means and ends. Indeed, Konkin believes that exposing Statist inconsistencies is **"the most crucial activity of the libertarian theorist**.". From here, Konkin describes the goal of Agorism and the counter-economic means necessary to achieve this goal.

In order to paint a clear picture of the agorist struggle for a more free world, Konkin explains the four stages from Statism to Agorism as well as various actions that a consciously practicing agorist might seize upon in order to advance agorist propaganda and counter-economic activity. By understanding Konkin's vision of progress it is possible to create a diagram to outline how far society as a whole has come and where we,

as individuals, fit within these steps. After the steps have been mapped it will be possible to pinpoint strategies that can help the new libertarian move from one stage to the next.

Konkin begins in "Phase Zero: Zero-Density Agorist Society." Phase Zero is the time when agorists did not exist and libertarian thought was scattered and unorganized, which Konkin says has been "most of human history." Once libertarians became aware of the philosophy of Agorism, counter-economic activity began and we moved into "Phase 1: Low-Density Agorist Society."

In this phase, the first counter-economic libertarians appear. Konkin believed that this was a dangerous time for activists who would be tempted by "Get-LibertyQuick" schemes. Konkin also reminds agorists not to be tempted by political campaigns. *"All will fail if for no other reason than Liberty grows individual by individual. Mass conversion is impossible,"* he wrote.

Phase 1 is presented at a time where the main goal of the few practicing countereconomists is recruitment and creation of "radical caucuses"—or what I call Freedom Cells. Konkin also notes that the majority of society is acting *"with little understanding of any theory but who are induced by material gain to evade, avoid, or defy the State. Surely they are a hopeful potential?"*

In order to achieve the free society Konkin again emphasizes the need for education and *"consciousness-raising of countereconomists to libertarian understanding and mutual supportiveness."* SEK3 also called for the creation of a movement which may grow strong enough in influence and numbers in the latter stages of Phase 1 to be able to *"block marginal actions by the State."* The ability to block actions by the State has abso-

lutely increased in recent years with the explosion of decentralized, peer-to-peer networks via the Internet that allow for rapid sharing of information and calls to organize. There is a growing number of videos on the Internet showing communities banding together to oppose unjust arrests by agents of the State.

For example, the websites and apps FreedomCells.org, NextDoor.com, and GetCell411.com offer tools that can be used to strengthen our communities, grow the counter-economy, and push back against the State. By using the Freedom Cell Network, one can locate other freedom-minded individuals within their city, state, or country with the specific goal of organizing in the real world and bypassing the need for government.

In 2016, we launched FreedomCells.org as an online platform for building mutual aid groups known as Freedom Cells which we will explore in detail in the next chapter. NextDoor also allows the user to connect with the local community, both digitally and in the real world. The app has the added benefit of being focused on a specific neighborhood. This allows individuals to post important safety information, lost and found items, or counter-economic business opportunities directly to those who live near them. Finally, Cell411 describes itself as a "real time, free emergency management platform." This means it allows you to create "cells" or groups to which you can send out direct alerts in the case of a flat tire, car accident, violence from an agent of the State, or some other emergency. The app also allows for truly agorist ridesharing where a third party does not dictate the price of the trip or the currency that must be used.

Note: *Once again, to the potential reader of the future, if these apps and websites have been made irrelevant due to time and technological advances, it is important to ensure we as free people*

have alternatives to the State and corporations.

Each of these tools are a part of the technology of the counter-economy which have the potential to render government intervention and regulation completely useless. If we seize the moment we can grow the black and grey markets using these emerging peer-to-peer platforms. This is exactly what Konkin believed would help society progress from Phase 1 to Phase 2.

As we move to "Phase 2: Mid-Density, Small Condensation Agorist Society," the statists take notice of Agorism. Is it in this phase that Konkin believes the counter-economy will grow and agorists will begin to represent *"an ever-larger agorist sub-society embedded in the statist society."* Although the majority of agorists are still living within the State's claimed territories we begin to see a *"mspectrum of the degree of agorism in most individuals."* This includes benefactors of the State who are *"highly statist"* and *"a few fully conscious of the agorist alternative,"* however the majority of society is still engaged in the Statist Economy.

From here, Konkin suggests that agorists may want to start condensing into districts, ghettos, islands, or space colonies. We are in fact beginning to see the creation of agorist minded communities, seasteaders, eco-villages, co-ops, and underground spaces which emphasize counter-economic activity and the creation of counter-institutions to the State. Konkin believed these agorist communities might be able to count on the sympathy of mainstream society to prevent an attack from the State.

This is the moment where the question of community protection and defense comes into play. We have seen the creation of community protection alternatives to the police state monopoly (see the Threat Management Center in Detroit and

the Autodefensas in Mexico), but thus far nothing completely agorist has come into existence. It is the creation of these syndicates of community protection which will ultimately allow the agora to flourish. However, for this to happen *"the entire society has been contaminated by agorism to a degree,"* llevando a la posible creación de un movimiento como el que Konkin llamó Alianza de Neo-Libertarios (ANL). La ANL simplemente actúa como cara visible de la ágora y usa *"every chance to publicize the superiority of agorist living to statist inhabiting and perhaps argue for tolerance of those with 'different ways'".*

This brings us to "Phase 3: High-Density, Large Condensation, Agorist Society," which is described as the point when the State has moved into a terminal crisis period due in part to *"the sapping of the State's resources and corrosion of its authority by the growth of the Counter-Economy."* As the agora grows in influence the State's stranglehold also dissipates because of unsustainable economic practices. Konkin again warns that the statists will attempt to win over new libertarians with *"anti-principles",* and calls for maintaining *"vigilance and purity of thought."* Highly motivated new libertarians move into R&D to help create the first agorist protection and arbitration agencies that will compete with the State. At this point, government exists in pockets with the State mostly concentrated in one geographic territory. Those living under statism are very aware of the freedom being experienced by their agorist counterparts. The State has become weak enough that *"large syndicates of market protection agencies"* can contain the State and defend new libertarians who sign up for protectioninsurance. This, Konkin believed, was *"the final step before the achievement of a libertarian society."* Society is divided between the larger agorist areas and the isolated statist centers.

The transition from Phase 3 to Phase 4 brings about *"the last unleashing of violence by the ruling class of the state."* Konkin said that once the State's intellectuals recognize that their authority is no longer respected, they will choose to attack. Defense against the State will be managed after the counter-economy has generated the syndicates of protection agencies large enough to defend against the remaining statists. The NLA should work to prevent the State from recognizing its weaknesses until the agorist movement has completely infected the statist society. Once the agorist communities have successfully resisted the State's attack, the agorist revolution will be complete. As we move from Phase 3 to 4, Konkin notes that the first three changes *"are actually rather artificial divisions; no abrupt change occurs from first to second to third".* However, he envisions the change from the third to the fourth phases to be *"quite sudden".*

In Phase 4, "Agorist Society with Statist Impurities", the State has gasped its dying breath and the counter-economy becomes the freed market where exchanges are free of coercion. Konkin predicts that *"division of labor and selfrespect of each worker-capitalist-entrepreneur will probably eliminate the traditional business organization—especially the corporate hierarchy, an imitation of the State and not the Market".* He imagines companies as associations of independent contractors, consultants, and entrepreneurs. After the remnants of the State are apprehended and brought to justice, freedom becomes the basis of ordinary life and *"we tackle the other problems facing mankind".*

Whether the totality of Konkin's vision becomes realized, the world has at the very least made some slight progress through the phases predicted in the *New Libertarian Manifesto.* All signs point to the counter-economy and consciously practicing

agorist movement to be somewhere at the tail end of Phase 1 and merging into Phase 2. As mentioned above, the Internet (and technology as a whole) has greatly increased the chances for success of the Konkian revolution. While humanity is being exposed to the value of a life free of coercion, they have not yet been properly exposed to the tools with which to create such a world. If the agorist movement and counter-economy continue to expand in equal rates to the violence and theft of the State, it will only be a matter of time before we see protection agencies with the capacity to defend the people. Konkin believed that once the people recognize the State is weakened and in decline, they will naturally gravitate towards the counter-economy, leading his agorist vision to become reality.

Clearly the people of the world have a desire to exchange their goods and services without oppressive, elitist barriers to entry in the marketplace. The people desire to voluntarily associate and exchange without interference or intervention. This desire will always lead to the creation of counter-economic activity in the black and grey markets as long as the "mainstream" statist economy is subject to the whims of the current puppets in control. However, seeking to escape the State's regulation is not the only goal to our agorist and counter-economic strategy. The endgame is a stateless society where free people are not bound by the force and coercion of the parasitic state and corporate class.

Though it is rarely discussed in public schools or the mainstream media, there are several examples of stateless societies and communities existing throughout history. For those interested in studying past stateless societies, I recommend studying James Scott's *he Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia; A Century of Anarchy: Neutral Mores-*

net Through the Revisionist Lens; A Century of Anarchy: Neutral Moresnet Through the Revisionist Lens; and Pierre Clastres' *Society Against the State.*

Vertical and Horizontal Agorism

"As more people reject the State's mystifications—nationalism, pseudoEconomics, false threats, and betrayed political promises—the Counter-Economy grows both vertically and horizontally. Horizontally, it involves more and more people who turn more and more of their activities toward the counter-economic; vertically, it means new structures (businesses and services) grow specifically to serve the Counter- Economy (safe communication links, arbitrators, insurance for specifically "illegal" activities, early forms of protection technology, and even guards and protectors). Eventually, the "underground" breaks into the overground where most people are agorists, few are statists, and the nearest State enforcement cannot effectively crush them."

SEK III, Applied Agorism, An Agorist Primer

We are going to take a look at two different types of counter-economic action that are applicable to a variety of individuals in a range of living situations. I refer to these strategies as Vertical and Horizontal Agorism. We are working with two complementary definitions of horizontal and vertical that further explain the "how to" of agorist philosophy. These definitions are taken from the above quote from Samuel Konkin III and from Swedish Austrian economist Per Bylund and his 2006 essay *A Strategy for Forcing the State Back.* Let's compare the

definitions and see how they can provide a path for the curious countereconomist.

Konkin starts by describing the counter-economy as growing horizontally in the sense of an increasing portion of the mainstream population turning their activities towards the non-statist economy. Vertical growth, in the Konkian sense, involves the actual creation of counter-institutions to the statist counterparts. This means building alternatives not only to the economic power centers via alternative currencies but alternatives to the deadstream corporate media, the corporate food production systems, the compliant academic centers, and the growing non-profit industrial complex.

Per Bylund describes his vision of vertical Agorism as the "introvert" strategy based on the work and ideas of radical libertarian Karl Hess. Hess was an extremely eloquent speaker and speechwriter who grew from conservative to libertarian anarchist to a more left-leaning community organizer and activist. During the 1960s, he was heavily involved in organizing on campus during the rise of the new left and anti-war student movements. Hess worked with Murray Rothbard, Konkin, Carl Ogelsby of the Students for a Democratic Society, and several others in an attempt to forge alliances between the emerging new left and libertarian movements. He was also one of the few people to have 100 percent of his wages stolen by the IRS for challenging the income tax.

In the 1970s, Hess shifted the focus of his activism to experiment in community building within the low income neighborhood of Adams-Morgan in Washington D.C. In his books *Community Technology* and *Neighborhood Power* Hess outlines how he worked with the local neighborhood to build an empowered community focused on sustainability—or what they

termed "appropriate technology." Hess describes a neighbor-
hood with aquaponic gardening in basements, rooftop gardens,
and community services meant to replace the State options. He
was adamant that tools and technology directly contribute to
freedom. By being able to share tools with your community
members you can share access to the means of production and
encourage entrepreneurship.

It is this focus on community empowerment that Per Bylund
refers to as the vertical or introvert strategy. These actions can
be considered agorist in the sense that they are aimed at build-
ing self and community reliance rather than dependence on ex-
ternal forces, but they are not explicitly counter-economic be-
cause they do not involve black and grey markets. Still, these
vertical actions are extremely valuable and necessary.

Vertical Agorism includes participating in and creating com-
munity exchange networks, urban farming, backyard gar-
dening, farmers markets, supporting alternatives to the po-
lice, and supporting peer-to-peer decentralized technologies.
While these vertical steps could potentially involve the use
of the State's currency (and therefore not completely counter-
economic), they are still significant for challenging the depen-
dency on the State and corporate classes. Other vertical steps
may not directly involve exchanging currency but still work
against dependency. This could include both moral support and
promotion of technologies that disrupt the status quo and foster
stronger relationships among community members.

One very pronounced example of vertical Agorism is seen in
the growing alternative media which has been made possible
by the Internet. Less than one generation ago, the mainstream
media, owned by mega-corporations and tightly regulated by
government, controlled all of the information that filtered down

to society. The distribution of information in society came from the top down making it very easy to brainwash and propagandize the population. However, with the rise of the Internet activists and freedom-seeking individuals discovered they could use this new medium to create their own media, become journalists themselves, and fight back against the propaganda of the State. In just a few short years, the alternative media quickly upset the monopoly of the mainstream media, taking up large portions of their once exclusive market share. The surge of independent media provides an excellent example in our study of how alternative systems and institutions can be created to compete with existing State monopolies. (Unfortunately, the Corporate-State nexus has permeated social media as well and censorship of independent voices is now pervasive as of 2019.)

The goal is to question and challenge the mechanisms of power that seek to influence and rule over our lives. This includes the State as well as other institutions that attempt to exert control and influence. For example, by choosing to grow your own food or support local farmers, you are taking a vertical step away from the biotechnology corporations that promote the heavy use of pesticides and a potentially hazardous technology. You are also not supporting the transportation of food products from thousands of miles away. Instead, you walk to your backyard or the local market for your produce. This greatly increases your independence while terminating support for an unsustainable industry. These vertical steps are also the easiest ways to begin living in line with your principles. Once again, we can see the value of consistency of words and actions.

Per Bylund describes the horizontal, or extrovert strategy, as more directly related to Konkin's ideas. The extrovert label is related to the bold choice to pursue actions the State considers

to be illegal or immoral. By venturing into this territory you are joining the ranks of the bootlegger, the moonshiner, the cannabis dealer, the guerrilla gardener, the weapons dealer, the crypto-anarchist, and the unlicensed lawn mower, food vendor, or barber. When one combines the vertical and horizontal agorist strategy an image comes into view that illustrates the steps a wide range of people can take in a variety of living situations and environments.

In the bottom left corner we have Statism and in the top right corner we have Agorism. We can plot vertical actions that help lift the individual up from dependency. Perhaps your situation is better suited to vertical actions such as growing your own food, using encrypted messaging, hosting community skill shares at your house, practicing peaceful parenting tactics, providing alternatives to State welfare by crowdfunding money for community projects and feeding the homeless, or simply cleaning up the neighborhood. Each of these steps moves the individual (and in the long-term, the community) vertically towards consistency and independence. For those who are ready

to become counter-economists and take on the risks of grey and black market activity we plot their actions both vertically and horizontally. An agorist practicing horizontally and vertically would move up and away from Statism and dependency to the top right position of Agorism. This means that for every garden built, alternative currency used, tax avoided, skill shared, business practiced without a license, and illegal substance sold the individual can plot their progress moving from dependency to selfreliance and from Statism to Agorism.

When Konkin first espoused the concept of Agorism the consciously practicing counter-economy may have only involved a few radical libertarians. But since that time the opportunities for black and grey market exchanges have grown immensely. As the State's weaknesses become apparent it will become safer for the masses to begin exiting the former economy and joining the countereconomy. This is the truly freed market or agora of which Konkin spoke.

Remember we cannot defeat the Technocratic State by using their technology blindly as this will only serve to empower them. We must create and support alternatives to the State's monopolies whenever and wherever possible. It will take brave counter-economists venturing into uncharted territories, making mistakes, occasionally falling victim to the State's laws, and learning how to better our approach. We need these pioneers to lay the groundwork so that others will not have to face the same difficulties in the future. As these trail blazers light the way. we also expect to see a growth of free communities and freedom networks around the world.

I have a vision of thousands of interlocking autonomous communities comprised of empowered individuals with a variety of unique ideas and expressions of the human experience. These

communities are voluntarily trading and sharing skills without the violence inherent to our current paradigm and without the constant invasions of privacy. I believe this world can be achieved with an organized effort to spread agorist philosophy and increase participation in the countereconomy via Vertical and Horizontal Agorism and the concept of Freedom Cells which we will cover in Chapter 2.

The Drawbacks (And Solutions) to Living the Counter-Economic Lifestyle The reasons one chooses to opt-out of "traditional" institutions and societal expectations vary from person to person, but generally people are looking to stop supporting systems they do not agree with. Whether we are talking financially (to avoid taxation) or philosophically (on moral grounds), many of us who live outside of the mainstream system do so because we disagree with the people running these systems—and in some cases, the system altogether.

We do not want to fund these governments by complying with taxation. We do not want to support the monopolized banking system and the banks that rob the people. We do not want to violate our moral compass or principles by participating in these charades. Instead, we take steps to begin removing ourselves from these systems as quickly (and safely) as possible. We each have a different goal and different perspectives on how far to push the effort to opt-out and vacate these systems that promote authoritarianism and financial theft. However, what unites us is our belief that **people should be free to organize their own affairs without the interference of centralized authority in the form of government or monarchs**. Put simply, we acknowledge that every individual owns themselves and should be able to live free of interference, extortion,

threats of violence, and forced compassion.

When I came to these conclusions, I had an internal shift that was so profound and simple: *I will no longer participate in systems I do not support.* First, I stopped using banks because I saw the results of the 2008 financial crisis and I learned about the many economic crises created by banksters throughout history. Second, I refused to use a credit card and never attempted to establish a credit line through these banks. I also stopped driving because I didn't want to get a State ID and instead only use a passport. By the end of 2010, I came to understand the nature of war and violence being perpetuated by the American Empire and decided I would no longer pay an income tax. I stopped filing and have made efforts to keep my income below the Poverty Line. I also stopped working jobs which compensated me in the form of a check.

Since that time I have started a couple of businesses of my own (without filing paperwork for city licenses) and only accepted cash, silver, or cryptocurrency. All of my income has been in metals, cash, digital payments, or bartering. Obviously, I am still paying a sales tax when I am not shopping at a farmers market or buying directly from a gray market entrepreneur, but the goal is to take steps towards completely opting-out. It doesn't happen overnight and it doesn't come without struggle. Let's take a moment to look at some of these struggles and their potential solutions.

First, what are the potential downsides to not using a bank? Before we answer that question we should note that there are alternatives to the big banks, including local credit unions and co-ops. These institutions are typically more connected to the local community and not involved in economic theft. However, do your research and use these alternatives at your own risk.

One criticism of going bankfree is a fear of lack of security when not storing funds in a traditional banking institution. The fact is, you can put your trust in a banking institution and the U.S. government, or you can choose to take personal responsibility and store your money under the mattress, in a safe, in a private bank, or anywhere else you please so as long as you are taking proper security measures.

Beyond the security risks, there are also financial downsides to not using banks. I recently received payment in the form of a check for a media gig. Not only was I forced to visit a bank to cash the check (Bank of America, no less), but I was taxed $8 by the bank to cash my check for not opening a bank account. Now, this problem is easily remedied by ongoing education about the value of not using banks (or government backed money) and the power of alternative currencies. Unfortunately, we are still at a point where too few people know and understand these values, resulting in limited options in the market. The company that sent me the check is an old media company whose employees are ignorant to agorist philosophy, Counter-Economics, and digital payment options. The likelihood of my convincing them to pay me in silver or crypto is not high. This is important to remember because until we have built a completely parallel system that offers an alternative to the current paradigm – in every area of our lives – we will occasionally have to conduct business with people who are still filing taxes and therefore keep a record of every financial transaction.

Another recent issue I have encountered involves the renting or purchasing of property. In my case, I was attempting to rent an apartment in a big city, but these obstacles apply elsewhere as well. Because I have rented through different people for years, it has become increasingly difficult to do so on my

own as I have less and less records to show to potential land-lords or Realtors. In the most recent case I found several potential properties, contacted the property owners, and attempted to negotiate my way into a new home. I have no problem paying rent on time, but my lack of check stubs causes issues with individuals looking for traditional forms of payment.

Again, when I attempt to explain that I receive money from supporters via Patreon, money via this crazy thing called cryptocurrency, and some money in cash, they usually look at me with a confused expression on their face. I explain that I can show them payments received via Paypal but that does not seem to satisfy either. From there, property owners tend to ask to see a bank statement. When I say no, they are baffled and then ask for a tax record. When I tell them I don't have that either, they look at me as though I have personally disrespected their mother. By the end of these conversations I am being told they cannot rent to me because I have no way to verify my income.

So what is the solution to these problems? The most obvious solution is education. Those of us who value the idea that all moral people should opt-out of immoral systems and create new ones, ought to spend our time and energy educating others about the value of such actions. The more people who understand this concept, the more entrepreneurs there are opting-out and creating value in the counter-economy. Now as far as the banking situation, cryptocurrencies are showing the world what digital decentralized banking looks like. The more energy we put into supporting (or creating) alternative currencies – digital or otherwise – the less power the centralized banking monopolies have.

As far as solutions for renting an apartment when you live

mostly outside of the system, I believe blockchain technology offers hope. Blockchain is the peer-topeer, digital ledger technology behind Bitcoin and other cryptos. To understand how blockchain can help, we have to think about why Realtors and property owners want to see documentation from a bank or a government. Trust. Security. Due to the massive amount of propaganda promoted in public schooling, most people grow up believing these institutions to be an essential part of life, if not a benevolent force in our lives. We are taught to trust and cooperate with these institutions. The average person does not trust or believe someone is authentic or valuable or rent-worthy if they do not possess such documentation.

So imagine if every week when I am paid for the articles I write, I take a screenshot of the digital payment (or a picture of someone paying me cash for a job well done) and post it on a blockchain. The blockchain is decentralized, meaning posts cannot be altered or deleted. If I continue to post my weekly income statements on a blockchain, I would have a decentralized and transparent record of my history or any other documents I chose to place on the blockchain. In fact, this could already happen by making posts on a website like Steemit. If the Realtor or property owner understands blockchain or is willing to learn, they can feel secure because there is a record of my pay. We could even sign a contract together on the blockchain. This would allow for transparency and security on both sides.

I believe solutions like this are the future and we are starting to see this unfold. For the moment there are difficulties as we agorist pioneers lay the groundwork for the counter-economy and the next stage of human evolution. Do your part to create the future by educating yourself and others about Agorism and CounterEconomics.

(This essay was originally published in the Counter-Markets Newsletter)

Chapter 2

Counter-Economics as a Solution to Technocracy

The following essays are my original writing combined with SEK3's notes for his final unwritten chapters. I chose not to finish all of his unfinished chapters and instead focused on the areas which I feel have the most potential to educate the reader about counter-economics. I am indebted to SEK3 for his notes and inspiration.

- Derrick Broze

Counter-Economics for the Digital Age

Up to this point we have shared the history of Technocracy, the strategy of Counter-Economics, and Agorism. We also explored how the counter-economic path has the potential to be the solution to our digital dystopia. Now we will discuss the solutions to living a life as free from the grip of the Technocratic State as possible.

In addition to being an anarchist philosopher, Konkin was also a fan of science fiction. These two interests merged with his "discovery" of Counter-Economics, for it was his appreciation of the sci-fi genre which lead him to propose that technology could play a role in freeing the people from the chains of bondage and expand the counter-economy. Konkin died in 2004, shortly before social media, cryptocurrency, and digital encryption became mainstream. Long before bitcoin or cryptocurrency emerged, Konkin was discussing similar concepts and predicting that new computer technology would facilitate counter-economic activity. However, Konkin was not a fool. He realized that the authorities would use the emerging digital technology to expand state control.

As someone who has spent the last seven years promoting Konkin's ideas, I recognize that the Technocratic State threatens to remove the ability to safely opt out of the corporate-state system. We are in desperate need for solutions to maintain the anonymity and privacy needed to safely navigate the countereconomy under the digital dystopian world we are now living in. It is not clear if Konkin could see the direction in which the world was headed when he left this planet, but I have found myself contemplating this issue. Which brings us to the following conversation.

What does it mean to be a counter-economist in the Age of the Surveillance State? How can one participate in the underground economy when Big Brother is always watching? Will it be possible to starve the State once social credit scores become mandatory?

Let's start by examining the current landscape of the world concerning digital surveillance and overall privacy. As of 2020 the majority of the "developed" world has adopted the use of some type of digital technology including cell phones, tablets,

laptops, desktops, or wearable digital tech. The middle class and higher are falling in line with the latest fad of smart everything, surrounding themselves with technology that can listen, record, and/or watch their daily lives. From door bell cameras to home assistants and TVs that are always listening, the masses are voluntarily abandoning privacy in the name of entertainment and convenience.

Simultaneously, law enforcement and government agencies continue to claim they need all manner of high tech gadgets to prevent terrorism and violent crime. Cell phone surveillance tools, license plate cameras, facial recognition cameras, radars that can see through walls, secret surveillance planes, social media monitoring, DNA collection, gait detection, voice detection, and threat scores – these tools are increasingly available to departments willing to pay up. There are also semi-private mega corporations buying up every bit of data they can find on potential consumers. This data is used to sell us things we don't need, monitor our daily habits, and will eventually pressure every individual to be obedient to the Technocratic State under threat of punishment and exclusion from the digital world.

In 2019, consumer tech organization Comparitech found that the United States, China, Malaysia, Pakistan, India, Indonesia, Phillipines, and Taiwan were the worst offenders when it came to protecting the privacy of people's biometric data. Comparitech said that these nations use biometric data to a *"severe and invasive extent."* Indeed, the Technocracy is a growing problem around the world.

In the U.S., the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) has been fighting for years to keep secret a database containing hundreds of millions of "face prints" from American citizens and non-citizens alike. It is important to note that facial recognition

technology is not just about scanning someone's face. Newer software is also learning to evaluate (and predict) your emotions and state of mind. The FBI has also been waging a war against encryption, fearing that the people might develop an unbreakable code and thus maintain some level of privacy.

The U.S. Transportation Safety Agency (TSA) has begun testing facial recognition technology at select airports for international travelers with plans to expand the program in 2021 and 2023. The U.S. government has expressed interest in expanding the program to all travelers. The plans for this type of biometric control grid in the U.S. were set into motion by the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996 and expanded after the attacks of September 11, 2001. However, there has been some successful push back against the Technocracy. As of December 2019, three different U.S. cities have banned or regulated facial recognition software pending further study.

In November 2019, France became the first European country to use facial recognition technology as part of a nationwide digital identity for citizens. The new government app is operated by using facial recognition and will give users access to around 500 government websites. Those who choose not to participate would theoretically be locked out of accessing these government websites.

Citizens of India are already finding themselves locked out of the Aadhaar biometric ID program. Under this system reports have begun to emerge detailing instances of citizens being refused access to services due to Aadhaar glitches and ultimately dying of starvation as a result. The program launched in 2009 with the goal of giving every single Indian citizens a unique, biometrically verified identification number. By the

end of 2019, an estimated 1.2 billion Indians were enrolled in the program. Users have their iris and/or finger prints scanned and then receive a unique 12-digit number linked to their biometric and demographic data. They will then use this identification number when getting married, setting up a bank account, paying taxes, signing up for a cell phone contract, or even when starting a digital wallet. Again, it appears obvious that those who find a way to avoid the system will be locked out of mainstream society.

China is perhaps the best current example of an advanced authoritarian Technocratic State and likely the model for the rest of the world. Another 2019 study from Comparitech reported that eight of the top ten most-surveilled cities in the world can be found in China. By 2022 China is projected to have one public closed-circuit television (CCTV) camera for every two people. The estimated 200 million CCTV cameras are part of a "Skynet" network active across China. The Chinese government has also started collecting citizen's DNA to build a DNA database. The government has come under fire for detention centers built for Uyghurs, a Muslim minority population which has been forced to install a spyware app on their phones and submit to biometric recognition. However, the Chinese government claims that the detention centers are voluntary vocational training centers. In December 2019, the Chinese government implemented a new rule requiring China's 854 million Internet users to use facial identification in order to apply for new Internet or mobile services.

Equally disturbing is the ongoing rollout of the nationwide social credit system. Starting in 2009, the Chinese government began testing a national reputation system based on a citizen's economic and social reputation or "social credit." This social

credit score can be used to reward or punish certain behaviors. By late 2019 Chinese citizens were losing points on their score for dishonest and fraudulent financial behavior, playing loud music, eating on public transportation, jaywalking, running red lights, failing to appear at doctor appointments, missing job interviews or hotel reservation without canceling, and incorrectly sorting waste. To raise one's social credit score a Chinese citizen can donate blood, donate to an approved charity, volunteer for community service, and other activities approved by the government. The Chinese government has begun to deny millions of people the ability to purchase plane and high-speed rail tickets due to low social credit scores and being labeled "untrustworthy."

This is the world of the early 21st century. If we assume technology will continue to advance exponentially then it is probably a safe bet that the surveillance and privacy concerns are here to stay. Unless there is some sort of resistance to these dangers privacy will be completely eroded within a decade. For the moment these technologies are mostly voluntary. For example you don't have to buy the latest digital home assistant device and you don't have to carry a cell phone with you everywhere you go. This means you have the power to decide what type of products and companies you support with your purchases and how you interact with technology. We don't have to blindly submit and opt-in to every latest tech update or advancement.

The more immediate and threatening element of the Technocracy is the State. While corporations are gathering massive amounts of data from individuals who have chosen to purchase or use certain products, the government is able to leverage their perceived legitimate authority to force the populations to sub-

mit to biometric technology. History is rife with examples of masses of people being propagandized to work against their own interests. While the collective population may be easily swayed, there will always be individuals who hold out.

We as individuals can choose to opt out of mandatory biometrics and social credit schemes. But if everyone around us is still opting-in it is likely they will choose not to associate with those who have a low social credit scores. Some people will do this out of fear that their own score will decrease for hanging out with "untrustworthy" types. I can hear it now: "You know I love you, man, but if my score drops any lower I won't be able to take the family out of the country for vacation." Or "I won't be able to get that loan, buy that car, or visit public parks"–the list goes on. **This is the real power of social engineering**.

As we outlined above the Technocratic State is growing around the world. This means at some point in the near future YOU will have to make a choice. *Will you submit to mandatory facial recognition in order to travel? Will you submit to biometrics in exchange for continued access to government services? What will you do when the 5G Smart Grid is everywhere from big city to countryside? Will you give your car insurance company access to your location for a discounted rate? Are you already using your fingerprints or your face to unlock your cell phone or your home?*

The answer to these questions will determine your future. I am operating under the assumption that if you found your way to this book you are at the very least curious about what it takes to live a thriving life that is not under the thumb of the Technocratic State. If that is your goal then you have a few options:

1. Hold Down the Fort: This option is for the person that has no interest or ability to leave home for some other (potentially better) option. If you are committed to your home or have

no other option then this would be you. You can either waste away and march with the rest of the sheep to the slaughter or you can try to create change. Find ways to reach others and educate them about the dangers. This might involve fighting for political change on the local level, passing out flyers, phone banking, or social media campaigns. I understand we cannot all be full-time activists, but each of us can find a way to contribute to the goal of creating a community of people who voluntarily choose to opt-out of the Technocratic State. Of course, the closer you are to a big city and "civilization" the harder it will be to avoid the growing Technocracy.

2. **Exit and Build**: This involves leaving your base of operations behind and moving to a location with less invasive practices and less technocratic corporatestate influence. If you have decided you are living in an area that has no hope and would rather start fresh then you should exit and build something that reflects your values. This could be done solo, as a couple, with family, and even with friends. Perhaps you purchase land, share living space, or live adjacent to each other in a neighborhood. No matter what the living situation the intention here is to build a community that would provide some level of safety and privacy for those who opt out of the mainstream technocratic world. I want to stress that this option is not necessarily about bailing on your home. As I will outline in the chapter on the Counter-Economic Underground Railroad, choosing to exit and build before the shit hits the fan might help your close friends and family down the line when it really matters. More on that later.

3. **Apathy is Death**: Of course, you are always free to do nothing. Perhaps you see what's on the horizon and decide that A) it's too late to stop the Technocracy, B) it's too much

work to make an effort, or C) you are just trying to take care of your own family and live a peaceful life. I could go on, but you likely get the point. It's your life and you are not obligated to take any action upon learning of the Technocracy and the digital dystopia being built. However, I would warn that apathy today will only make life more difficult for the generations of the future. If we want to preserve and expand liberty and privacy for all people we are going to have to take action in realistic and tangible ways.

Of course we could brainstorm a dozen more options, but generally I believe all plans can be sorted into one of these three categories. For those choosing Option 1 it is important to understand that deciding to stay put while attempting to optout of the Technocracy will involve breaking the law at some point. As the State continues the push for mandatory biometrics (retina, fingerprint, and face scanning) and social credit systems are adopted widely, it will become increasingly difficult to operate your life without directly violating the Technocratic State's orders. The trick is to determine the potential risk vs the potential benefit.

As Konkin once wrote, *"trade risk for profit."* With the understanding that every decision we make is economic (whether it relates to money or not), Konkin recognized that choosing to violate the commands of the State was a risk that could result in a profit in the form of an increase in liberty in one form or another. So when you choose not to report all of your income on your taxes in order to save money for your family you are trading a risk for a benefit. In a similar way if or when the State issues mandatory vaccination orders, mandatory retina scanning, mandatory micro chipping, or any other mandatory program you will have a choice. You can submit to these pro-

grams out of fear of punishment or damage to reputation, or you can consciously choose to opt-out of these systems. There will be risks and there will be benefits. It is up to you to decide what is best for you and your family.

In his unfinished book *Counter-Economics,* Samuel Konkin described what he calls Low-Profile and High-Profile Counter-Economics, two different tactics available to those who seek to opt-out of invasive systems. While Low-Profile Counter-Economics involves discreetly opting-out of the Technocracy, HighProfile is more in your face.

> "High-Profile Counter-Economics deals with a particular area of State coercion by calling attention to his or her victimization. The more noise, the better. The famed Chicago 8 used publicity to keep themselves out of prison for years—even after their convictions."

> "Civil disobedients trust public pressure to keep them out of jail or to minimize their penalties. Indeed, the State's enforcers are wary of creating martyrs. The very concept of martyr exhibits the power of Information; what is a martyr but a corpse with a good story?"

> "High-Profile Counter-Economists have higher risks because they are so easy to detect. They gain the advantage of additional information flow—from themselves to the rest of the market. To the extent they succeed, they become inspirational."

Konkin said those who pursued both Low- and High-Profile simultaneously could do so through a third category: The

Counter-Economic Community. Konkin notes the benefits of having allies who are also participating in the counter-economy and opting-out of the Technocracy. This is why it is going to be important to form some level of a community as a mutual support network that allows for a life "off the grid." Konkin wrote:

> "One may pursue any degree of notoriety (or, to put it another way, freely advertise one's services) within the community of fellow counter-economists while not informing the State, its agents, and, of course, its informers. To do that, one needs to control the flow of information about oneself."

One of the great insights outlined by Konkin in Counter-Economics is the importance of controlling the flow of information about yourself, *"in particular, the information flow from you to the State."* Konkin says the two obvious ways to escape the State's notice is to not exist and *"if you do exist, don't tell anyone about it."* The goal then is to reduce interaction with the State and/or private companies who want to scan your face, record your life, and force you to submit.

There are many ways to approach this goal. For example, Konkin noted that some aspiring counter-economists have chosen to *"cut themselves off from contact with anyone who might get to know them, get and stay off all mailing lists, operate through cash and never use banks, and even avoid legal residences, living in trailers as nomads or on neglected land in caves or makeshift structures."* While this may sound extreme to some, for a brief period in the 1960s these individuals promoted the philosophy of Vonu, or invulnerability toward coercion, and attempted to avoid all contact with the State. Tom Marshall, aka

Ryo, was the main proponent of Vonu and often wrote about finding his version of freedom by completely opting out of society and living solitary in the wilderness or in his RV. Some of those who choose Option 2 may be interested in Vonu, but in my experience most people seem interested in living with their family or in a community of like-minded people who do not want to submit to the digital prison rather than alone. If any lesson is learned from the proponents of Vonu it is that opting-out is absolutely possible whether in a high-profile counter-economic manner or an extreme low-profile Vonu lifestyle. (For those interested in a deeper look at Vonu I recommend checking out *Vonu: A Strategy for Self-Liberation* by Shane Radliff.)

Both Konkin and Ryo warned of the difficulties facing those seeking liberation and privacy within the city. However, in the increasingly interconnected digital world in which we live privacy can be difficult even in rural areas. Whether you choose to Hold Down The Fort and build community in the city or town you live or Exit and Build your community in a new location, the goal is to limit interaction with the Technocratic State. This is where we can learn from the Vonu enthusiasts who talked about "interfacing" with the rest of society on a selective basis.

Konkin says one way to interface with the "overground or establishment economy" (or mainstream world in general) is to create a fictitious identity who takes the risks. In this case you can drop this identity at a moment's notice if necessary. In the digital world it is easy to create an alternative persona online, but it is more difficult to be truly disconnected from your online identity. In my journalism career I have seen governments track people with phones, cameras, computers and GPS and even crack encryption. As Konkin notes, *"if the State's agents are closing in on this alter-ego, as long as you wear the*

guise they are closing in on you." Additionally, anything you gained while using the false identity—accounts, contacts, and property—would be lost.

Konkin viewed false personalities as valuable, but ultimately he believed it was necessary to categorize your information flow into a system of layers. For example, at one layer you must reveal some information in order to interact with the rest of the world. This information can include *"that you have a product or service, how much it will cost, what you will accept in payment, how you can be contacted, and when are you or it available. If there are multiple payments, credit arrangements, repeat business, and post-sale follow-up involved, still more information must flow from you."*

When purchasing or selling a product, working for an employer, or traveling you will leave a digital paper trail and also are more likely to face the biometric tools of the Technocracy. Again, if you live in a major city (or even a small city) and choose Option 1 these are challenges you will have to face. In the U.S., China, UK, France, Australia, India, etc., CCTV cameras connected to 24-hour "Real Time Crime Centers" and "Fusion Centers" keep civilians in most major cities under heavy surveillance. Increasingly these cameras are being outfitted with facial recognition software. To combat this threat there are two main strategies that I call "Be Invisible" and "Seek & Destroy."

Be Invisible

If your goal is to remain low-profile and Be Invisible there are few actions you can take immediately:

- Stop carrying cell phones everywhere you go
- Stop using GPS
- Delete social media accounts and apps that track you

- Stop using credit and debit cards
- Cancel your bank account (use a credit union if you need to store your funds)
- Stop working jobs in the mainstream economy
- Stop paying taxes

Now, obviously some of these options are going to be extreme for some people. It's all about the level of information flow you are willing to accept. Some people can't quit their day jobs or cancel their bank accounts or delete their social media accounts. I get it. This means there will be some level of information about you available to those with the money and the desire to buy it. There's nothing inherently wrong with this. Perhaps your major concern is simply making sure the cell phones and home assistants are not listening to you all the time. So you choose not to buy an Alexa, Echo, etc. and you choose to only turn your cell phone on when you need it. These are personal choices and they will differ with every individual. The point is that you are in control of the data flowing out from you.

When it comes to the digital world there is still an incredible value to understanding how to use encryption. The number of digital devices you use directly correlates with your level of privacy and liberty. If your wifi, phone, laptop, tablet, etc. are all operating without any type of encryption you are at the mercy of all manner of bad actors. There is also the matter of off the shelf computers being built with backdoors which allow government and private companies to access your data without a problem[1]. Of course, using VPN's (Virtual Private Networks) is valuable but documents leaked by Edward Snowden proved that the U.S. NSA can crack these as well. One tool discussed by Konkin that is still valuable is public-key cryptography. We

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[1]An example of this is the Intel Management Engine. N. del T.

don't have the space here to elaborate further, but I recommend learning more about cryptographic privacy and Pretty Good Privacy (PGP) encryption.

I will add one final caveat about digital communication: assume someone can see it. Even if you are using encrypted messenger apps that promise to destroy your messages instantly it is a safe assumption that the American and Chinese governments can access it if they so choose. All digital communications can be collected, stored, and analyzed if someone wants it done. Always operate as if someone else can see what you are sending. If something sensitive needs to be communicated then say it in person in a room without computers, phones, smart devices, or digital home assistants.

There are also some practical ways to fight back. In 2019 there were several stories reporting that activists had found ways to fight back against the surveillance grid. In Chile, activists pointed lasers at drones observing their behavior from the skies during massive anti-government protests. Hundreds of lasers pointing directly at the drone caused it to malfunction and fall to the floor with a thunderous applause and cheers from the people. In Hong Kong, protesters also used lasers to fight against surveillance. To fight against facial recognition cameras the activists began using high-powered lasers aimed at cameras and police. As the corporate-state advances it is likely they will discover how to avoid falling prey to simple lasers, so it is important that the people are always looking for (or creating) advances in technology that can counter the State.

Some companies and designers have recently begun advertising clothing, face paint, glasses, and even certain hair styles that might be able to bypass facial recognition. Berlin-based artists Adam Harvey has launched two different projects

seeking to overwhelm and confuse facial recognition systems. His Hyperface project involves printing clothing with eyes, mouths, and other facial features in an attempt to deceive the software. Harvey also worked on the CV Dazzle project which sought to use makeup and hairstyle to interfere with the machines. Other artists have suggested that clothing that is shiny, reflective, and can bounce light as well as military style camo could disrupt the facial recognition nightmare and render you invisible.

Of course the most practical way to protect your face is to cover it. There are several options available for those interested including paper masks, the infamous Guy Fawkes ("Anonymous") mask, and 3D printed faces designed to give you another identity altogether. However, in China the State has made masks illegal and seeks to punish anyone who would obscure their identity. This has not stopped intrepid activists from continuing to use facial covers, but again the point is that if you want to protect your privacy it will likely involve breaking the law. If a law violates our right to liberty or privacy, then it is the law itself which is unjust and it should be ignored. However, it should be noted that in a world full of facial recognition cameras someone with a mask will surely stand out and be detected within moments. The less attention you bring to yourself the better.

Seek & Destroy

Before we go any further please note that this information is for educational and research purposes. You are fully responsible for your actions. Now for those who are dissatisfied with simply avoiding the invasive technology and playing a digital game of cat and mouse the Seek & Destroy option might better suit your needs.

We can look to Hong Kong again for another example. In August 2019, activists targeted "smart lamps" that the local government says are used to collect data on traffic, weather, and air quality. Activists feared the smart street lights had been equipped with facial recognition software so they tied ropes around the poles and pulled them down to the ground. There are about 50 smart lampposts installed around Hong Kong, all of which have cameras and sensors. These are the same kind of smart lamps being installed in "Smart Cities" around the world.

Again, I recognize this might sound extreme to some, but I have met a diverse crowd of people who have expressed that if the technology comes to their neighborhoods they will tear it down. This brings us to the topic of monkeywrenching, a form of direct action originally popularized by elements of the radical environmental movement, specifically Earth First! and the Earth Liberation Front (ELF). Dave Foreman co-founder of Earth First! outlined the tactics of monkeywrenching in his book *Ecodefense: A Field Guide to Monkeywrenching.* Foreman's book itself was inspired by Edward Abey's book *The Monkey Wrench Gang,* which tells the story of four individuals who used sabotage to protest environmental damage in the Southwestern United States. Between 1992 and 2007, the Earth Liberation Front began sabotaging construction projects that threatened wild lands and forests. Their tactics included tree sitting, non-violent blockades, civil disobedience, and disrupting machinery. One need not agree with the philosophy or even the cause of the ELF and Earth First! to recognize that monkeywrenching can be applied to a number of different causes. I would say what the Hong Kong protesters did to the smart lamps was monkeywrenching in defense of privacy and liberty. As always, you decide the risks vs the potential benefits. To those who are un-

comfortable with the idea of destruction, **remember that every ending breathes a new beginning**. We can build a world that respects privacy and individual liberty on top of the ashes of the Technocratic State's facial recognition cameras.

These are just a handful of suggestions on strategy and tactics for maintaining some level of privacy and liberty. As Konkin correctly noted the fight for privacy is a *"dynamic, evolving system. It is a non-violent form of an arms race where one side cracks the code and the other develops a new system to top the old one."*

Digital technology is a tool and like every tool it can be used for good or for harm. In the hands of the technocrats digital tech is used for control, spying, social engineering, manipulation, censorship, and propaganda. In the hands of free people technology can be used to heal, empower, educate, and build a better world. However, this better world will not happen without a conscious effort to build it. We also need a healthy skepticism towards emerging technologies which are sold as the panacea to humanity's turmoil. Whether you choose to stay put and build in your town or vacate the State and build elsewhere, it will be necessary to participate in some level of community if only for survival. Our best chance for survival is to band together with others who choose to opt out of the digital future and form new communities which respect privacy and liberty.

The Counter-Economic Community: Freedom Cells Unfortunately, Konkin never wrote Part 2 or elaborated on the community angle. The reality is that whether you choose to Hold Down the Fort or Exit and Build community is going to be necessary to survive the Technocracy. I have spent the last few years developing the concept of Freedom Cells, which I believe lines up perfectly

with the counter-economic vision. Freedom Cells are peer-to-peer groups made up of seven to nine people (with eight being ideal) organizing themselves in a decentralized manner with the collective goal of asserting the sovereignty of group members through peaceful resistance and the creation of alternative institutions. Freedom Cells (FCs) can be seen as a very specific type of mutual aid group where Agorism and Counter-Economics play a key role. The name comes as a response to State propaganda around "Terror Cells." I am consciously choosing to reclaim the language and build cells that spread freedom. Also, FCs act like cells in a body that are performing important tasks individually while also serving the goals of the larger organism. From this view, every FC is playing a vital role in spreading counter-economic activity while also forming a part of the larger network that will foster exchange of ideas and products between different cells.

The number of eight participants is drawn from the research of Bob Podolsky and his book *Flourish! An Alternative to Government and Other Hierarchies.* Podolsky is the protege of researcher John David Garcia who spent twenty years researching how to maximize the creativity of a group of people working together on a joint project. After performing hundreds of experiments, he came up with an optimized model based on groups of eight, which he called an octet or octologue. The idea is that a shortage of individuals would leave the group limited in capability, but with too many people the group is bogged down with disorganization and a lack of focus. Podolsky recommends forming octologues made up of four men and four women guided by specific ethical tenets. Although Freedom Cells are also promoted as groups of eight individuals collaborating together, they differ from octologues in that they are

heavily focused on decentralization. While Bob Podolsky has outlined a detailed vision of how an octologue should operate, I hope to provide examples of applications for FCs without telling other FCs how to operate. The needs of each community will naturally differ. Beyond a general agreement to respect each other's right to be free of coercion I believe FCs should not be monopolized by the vision of a single cell. I caution the reader to remember that these ideas are a guide and not the final word on the literally limitless possibilities.

In the beginning, individuals can work together to accomplish goals such as every group member having three months' worth of storable food, encrypted communication, a bug out (or Exit and Build) plan, and ensuring participants have access to firearms (or some form of self-defense) and know how to use them safely and proficiently. All the while cell members make themselves readily available to render mutual aid to their cell in whatever form that may be necessary. After you have established seven - nine people within a FC each individual should be encouraged to then go on their own and start another FC, especially if the original members are not living in close proximity to one another. Living reasonably close to each other will allow for a quick response time in emergency situations. Once again, every member of the FCs should be encouraged to start additional cells.

Eventually the original cell would be connected to seven or nine additional cells through individual members for a total of 70-90 people. Imagine the strength and influence these cells could exert once connected in the digital world via FreedomCells.org and in the physical world where possible. The creation of the Freedom Cell Network also serves as a social network for travelers looking to do business in the counter-

economy with other like-minded people. Through building and supporting alternatives such as local food networks, health services, mutual defense groups, and peer-to-peer economies and communication networks, FCs will be better able to disconnect and decouple themselves from the Technocratic State. Once groups become large enough in numbers it becomes quite possible for participants to opt-out en masse and to secure their liberty.

This is the model we followed within The Houston Free Thinkers activist community and *The Houston Free Thinkers* community space. We began by building gardens and selling the crops via the Nextdoor community. We also sold juice and kombucha tea made using fruits harvested from trees of neighbors who understood our goals. We started with a small group of about three to four people meeting and discussing the goals and themes of our cell. The goal is to have skills and knowledge diffused throughout the group. This way if one person leaves the group the knowledge is not taken from the cell. For example, knowing that every cell member can perform CPR, use encrypted communications, shoot a gun, or communicate the counter-economic message may be important for your cell. Obviously, certain individuals will be more skilled or knowledgeable in some areas, but there are foundational skills and information that should be common among all cell members.

Our group also used the structure to educate each other on specific topics of interest. Perhaps your FC meets and agrees to learn everything available on permaculture or a particular philosophical concept. You can then choose to divide the topic up among your cell and return two weeks later to educate each other. Perhaps your cell joins the Cell411 app and responds to emergency alerts in your community. Several cells could join

together to cop watch or actively resist and disarm violent police or other agents of the State. A Freedom Cell could connect with other cells for a covertly organized guerrilla gardening action. With the constant barrage of fake news coming from the establishment media a FC could quickly research and debunk incoming propaganda. FCs can organize alternative exchange networks that encourage local artisans and entrepreneurs to sell their unregulated crafts and accept alternative currencies. In a "Shit Hits the Fan" scenario, FCs could have prearranged bug out locations stocked with supplies. If several FCs were equally prepared, you now find yourself with a small community of empowered individuals as opposed to being forced to defend yourself alone.

When it comes to dealing with the Technocracy, FC members can make commitments to limit the amount of information which is communicated via digital technology, saving important conversations for face-to-face. Additionally, members can share tips for evading the watchful eyes of the State. However, the real value of using Freedom Cells to build the counter-economic community is strength in numbers. If your decision not to adopt the mandatory biometrics or social credit goes from frowned upon to illegal you will face punishment for choosing not to participate. As we noted earlier, the goal of social credit schemes is to socially engineer society to be blind, dumb, and obedient followers of the Technocracy. The State is going to use the Technocracy to promote the idea that anyone who chooses to opt-out is the problem. Even the most strident individualist will find it hard to survive "off the grid" once the Technocracy is complete. Of course, the social credit score will also discourage friends and family from associating with those who have been blacklisted.

The solution is to collaborate with other individuals and families who choose not to submit. The reasons for opting out will vary from person to person—some may opt-out to avoid mandatory vaccinations, others to practice their religious beliefs in peace, while still others will exit to protect the privacy of their future progeny. Frankly, if the choice is mandatory obedience to the Smart Grid or a life "outside" of mainstream society, it will take a coordinated effort by many determined individuals to create a world of networked communities where individuals can thrive, raise their families, conduct business, and trade while still living free. I believe the concept of FCs can help those of us who will do anything to be free from the web of the Technocracy.

In conclusion, I offer these "12 Tips For Building Freedom Cells" as a starting point for launching your group. Please adapt these to the specific needs of your community:

1. Understand Your Motivation: I find it valuable for every person considering starting a cell/circle/hub to know why they are pursuing such a goal. What are your motivations and interests? Knowing this before you start a group will save you time. Finding ways to opt-out of the Technocracy is an obvious goal, but what else drives you?

2. Identify Potential Candidates: Are they mentally, physically, spiritually sound for your goals?

3. Discuss Common Themes: What are the driving forces bringing the group together?

4. Identify Strengths and Weaknesses: Take an honest look at the strengths and weaknesses of each individual as well as the group as a whole.

5. Evaluate Desired Level of Freedom vs Security: Every individual may have a different desired level of freedom and as

such will have different aims and acceptability of risks. When it comes to the Technocracy this is especially important to remember. How free do you really want to be? How much privacy do you want to keep? What will you do to attain such a goal?

6. **Set Short Term and Long Term Goals**: What can your cell accomplish in three months? Six months? A year? Set goals as a group and hold each other accountable.

7. **Mindfulness Training**: Incorporate practices like Nonviolent Communication Training and group meditation into your cell.

8. **Accomplish Goals**: Document each goal successfully met by the cell or individual members.

9. **Ongoing Group Education**, **Communication**: Continuously expand your cell's knowledge, skills, and supplies.

10. **Promote/Market Goals and Accomplishments**: Use the power of social media (when safe) and marketing to let the world know how much more prosperous you are in the counter-economy.

11. **Identify Strategies For Creating Income/Independence**: Leverage the power and number of your cell to create counter-economic income that cannot be taxed by the State.

12. **Network with Other Cells**: The key to opting-out of the Technocratic State is building the counter-economic community. This means not only your immediate community of allies but the larger network of cells in your city, state/province, nation, and the global community. It is up to you to make an effort to network with other activists and free thinkers.

The Counter-Economic Underground Railroad For the last two years, I have focused on developing potential solutions for liberating hearts and minds from the grip of the Technocracy. I have come to the conclusion that whichever path you choose to take proper precautions and emergency plans are necessary. The cliche *hope for the best, prepare for the worst.* applies here. While I have offered suggestions to those who choose to Hold Down the Fort, it is imperative that some individuals choose to Exit and Build in the event that the "fort" collapses. These forward thinking individuals may choose to move out of major cities to rural areas with less invasive practices or move to a nearby region with relatively more liberty and privacy. The goal is to establish a network of free communities that could serve as safe havens for refugees of the Technocratic State. This is what I call the "Counter-Economic Underground Railroad," or simply the Underground Railroad.

This Counter-Economic Underground Railroad is modeled after the original "Underground Railroad" of the American colonial era. In the late 1700s, former slaves, abolitionists, and sympathetic civilians formed a decentralized network of safe houses that allowed slaves to escape from bondage. Most of the freed slaves made their way north to Canada but there were also safe houses helping people escape south to Mexico. It has been estimated that as many as 1,000 slaves escaped per year between 1850 and 1860. The Underground Railroad was inherently counter-economic because under the Fugitive Slave Act of 1793 law enforcement in free states were required to help slaveholders recapture runaway slaves. Fortunately, many officials had the good sense to ignore the unjust law and help former slaves make their way to freedom. This was a conscious

decision to violate the State's demands and trade risk for a perceived benefit.

In the notes to his unfinished chapters "Smuggling Counter-Economics" and "Human Counter-Economics," SEK3 mentions the Underground Railroad as an example of people smuggling. In "Smuggling Counter-Economics" he writes, *""Smuggling 'people' is introduced, to be used in the 'Human Counter-Economics' Chapter, **with underground railway of the Civil War period**."*

It is important to note there is a difference between smuggling a person voluntarily and involuntary human trafficking done under the threat of violence. Smuggling typically involves choosing to transport goods which the State has deemed illegal or avoiding taxes on the transportation of said goods. People or human smuggling involves one individual paying another to be smuggled across international borders. While smuggling typically involves some form of contractual agreement that ends upon arrival to the destination, human trafficking involves the use of force, abduction, fraud, or coercion. This is often used to induce forced labor or sexual exploitation. Simply put, smuggling becomes trafficking when the element of force or coercion is introduced. Under Konkin's counter-economic theory, human smuggling is legitimate because it does not involve the initiation of violence or coercion. In "Human Counter-Economics" SEK3 provides a little more detail of his vision:

> "Underground Railway slaves moved counter-economically, variants of it still in use; Refugees covers Counter-Economics of freeing people from greater tyranny, Minority groups are covered here first, how they survive in hostile societies, and the sub- societies they form, usually overwhelmingly

counter-economic..."

Although we don't have the finished work, it is interesting that Konkin mentions minority groups and *"how they survive in hostile societies, and the sub-societies they form."* In the age of the Technocratic State those choosing to opt-out will be the minority groups surviving in hostile societies. The sub-societies we form could be the free communities which keep the flame of liberty burning into the future. Imagine the Freedom Cell Network expanding to both urban and rural environments around the world. Those who stay in the cities do what they can to combat the Technocracy and educate others of the dangers. Those who exit build communities which opt-out of various levels of invasive technology (based on their preferences) and also educate others about the benefits of unplugging. The two strategies work together to pull as many minds out of the technocratic matrix as possible.

Regardless of whether you see value to counter-economic theory there are practical lessons to be learned from the Underground Railroad. The individuals who chose to open their homes to runaway slaves made a conscious decision to risk arrest and imprisonment so they could help a fellow human being. The police and government officials who disobeyed the State joined the counter-economy when they realized that doing what was right was more important than doing what was legal. The allies who smuggled former slaves across international borders also risked their freedom for a just cause. These are the same decisions I believe many of us will face in the coming years as the Technocratic State continues to grow.

The individuals who choose to Exit and Build now can purchase land, build housing, and lay the foundation of a more free society. While this will initially serve to provide for their own

families, if the shit hits the fan the Underground Railroad will help slaves of the Technocracy escape to these communities. This is the role I am choosing to take. I do not believe my place of birth (the United States) is salvageable. I do not see this as abandoning ship or giving up hope but rather I am consciously choosing to build the future I desire with the understanding that others may need help in the near future. I believe by exiting the city, moving to a less invasive region of the world, and building on land I will find my inner peace and have an opportunity to help others. This might not be the particular role you choose, but there are other ways we can each be of service.

As in the original Underground Railroad we will need sympathetic individuals within the hostile society who are willing to house and transport those seeking safety. We will need low-level employees of the State willing to take a bribe or simply turn a blind eye to the Counter-Economic Underground Railroad. We will need "white hat" hackers willing to create technological tools to combat the omnipresent eyes and ears of the smart grid. We will need individuals who leave behind comfort to develop the network of free communities that might soon house refugees of the Technocracy. Finally, we will need organizers who can help connect each of these individuals in as decentralized a manner as possible. I do not claim to know exactly how this Counter-Economic Underground Railroad will develop. The only thing I know is that it must develop as soon as possible. If we choose to sit by idly while the Technocratic State comes into view we are abandoning future generations of our human family. If you are reading these words you have the opportunity to be a part of the solution. **The only way we will make it through the digital dystopia is to put aside minor differences and build the world we know is possible**. La

única forma de dejar atrás esta distopía digital es hacer a un lado nuestras pequeñas diferencias y construir el mundo que sabemos es posible.

Final Thoughts on Surviving the Digital Dystopia   In late 2009 I began questioning the world around me and wondering who was running the show. I consumed as much material as I could find on the history of government, banks, the ruling class, and power. For a moment I was convinced that the end of the world, a government collapse, a police state, or something of that sort was coming. Over time my fears receded as I took a more reasoned look at the world around me and also took note of the many positive advances unfolding in that world. Unfortunately, as I write these words my fears of an impending doom have returned. Only now I see the impending threat coming from what I am calling the Technocratic State.

This State is unlike any other previously seen in humanity's history. There is an elitist, totalitarian ruling class made up of the technocrats and mad scientists combined with digital technology not available to past totalitarian regimes. This does not bode well for the future of liberty for all people. The modern conception of liberty is barely 300 years old itself and it appears as if humanity may have trouble maintaining and expanding such a necessary principle. Apparently humanity is still deciding whether concepts like privacy and liberty will continue to thrive.

Will liberty expand to all lands of the Earth or will the tyrants continue to reign? I don't pretend to know exactly how the future is going to turn out, but I do know the outcome will be determined by those who choose to step up and take action. The direction will depend on the values and the principles of

those who get engaged and seek solutions. Those who sit on the sidelines will merely be cogs in someone else's machine. The time for passivity has come to an end. **If you do not want to lose privacy and eventually all liberty you must act to protect yourself and your loved ones**.

The Technocracy is coming into full view and everyday it becomes more clear that the masses will swallow the poison without hesitation. Opting-out of the conveniences and pleasures of the smart grid will not be a popular choice. Saying no to mandatory biometric systems will involve some level of risk. However, it may soon be necessary to make these decisions to preserve your privacy and liberty. I have attempted to outline why I believe Samuel E. Konkin's theory of Counter-Economics can be applied to the battle against the totalitarian surveillance state. Counter-Economics provides a philosophical foundation to the simple act of saying "no" to immoral or unjust state rules and doing what you must to thrive.

The facts are all there: when the State moves to prohibit an activity or a substance they create a counter-economy of people who will voluntarily choose to violate the State's demands and do what they feel is necessary to survive and thrive. This counter-economy is one of the largest economies in the world and none of it is controlled by a centralized authority. The power of CounterEconomics lies in recognizing the potential of a mass opting-out of systems that do not align with our values and are inherently immoral. Just as in the original Underground Railroad I am calling for the creation of safe houses, the transporting of refugees, and the conscious objection to laws which try to criminalize those who help runaways. The "conductors" of the original Underground Railroad did what they knew was right because it mattered more than blindly follow-

ing words on pieces of paper.

We should take inspiration from this example of counter-economic activity and consciously opt-out of the technocratic control grid. If we form Freedom Cells which promote counter-economic activity and encourage skepticism towards the Technocracy we may have a chance to form a competing society of free communities that choose to reject various levels of invasive digital technology. **We cannot face this monumental task alone**. **It is of extreme importance that we find a way to form alliances and coalitions in the interest of saving our collective liberty**.

I believe opting-out of the Technocratic State should go hand in hand with opting-out of the military-industrial complex (MIC), the central banking system, the school system, the corporate-media complex, and the pharmaceutical complex. This will not be easy or even possible for all people in all situations. **Do what you can, where you can**. Refer back to Vertical and Horizontal Agorism when you need ideas for opting-out of a wide range of institutions and organizations that do not represent your interests. I also recommend spending time going over my explanations of the Hold Down the Fort and Exit and Build strategies to see where you think your path may lead you.

It is ultimately up to each individual to decide their future and the totality of each of our choices will set the path for all of humanity. I have attempted to understand how to motivate others to take action and I have found that leading by example is the best way to inspire others. We need not all take the exact same route to achieve success. In fact, the more diverse the field of individuals employing the counter-economic ethic the better off we will be. Each of us will be inspired and motivated by different stimuli, and we will each reach and inspire different

people.

Not only are we all motivated differently but our habits and lifestyles will also shape our ability to be free from the Technocratic State. The level of privacy and liberty you maintain in the coming years will be decided by your willingness to change, adapt, and abandon habits which weaken your ability to be free of systems of oppression.This struggle between what you want (liberty) and your actions (a variable dependent on you) decides whether your desires become reality or remain a fantasy.

Level of Freedom Desired + Willingness to Change = Your Actual Experience of Freedom

I call this the Freedom Formula—a simple equation in which your level of freedom desired plus your willingness to change and adapt equals your experience of liberty and privacy. To determine the best path for yourself it is important to understand what your goals are and what your ideal vision of liberty and privacy looks like. This is part one of the formula. Only after you clearly identify what you want and what you do not want can you begin to ask what you are willing to do to achieve this goal. While some might call this a sacrifice, the reality is we have long been trading our invaluable privacy and liberty for convenience and pleasure. Do you value the convenience of skipping the line at the airport in exchange for your faceprint more than you value privacy? Is it worth losing privacy just so you can download the latest apps and trends?

As you imagine the answers to these questions I humbly request that you take a moment to consider the consequences of apathy and complacency. Future generations have never been more dependent on those living today to correct the course of humanity. We have reached the point where children are growing up without any sense of a world without the Inter-

net, without smart phones, and without a smart grid. These generations will likely lack a true understanding of the value and importance of privacy because they are being raised in a culture and time where privacy is hardly a concern. As Artificial Intelligence improves, the 5G Smart Grid goes live, and the Internet of Things springs into existence we are going to face difficult decisions regarding privacy. If we choose to be the ones who planned ahead, opted out, and formed free communities we can leave future generations a world that respects the principles of liberty and privacy. While my optimism is lacking as of late, I do believe there is still time to lay the foundation for the Counter-Economic Underground Railroad and build the better world we know is possible.

Chapter 3

About Derrick Broze

Derrick Broze is an author, journalist, documentary film-maker, and activist based in Houston, Texas. In 2010, Derrick founded the activist alliance *The Houston Free Thinkers,* organizing protests, music festivals, community gardens, skillshares, and other community events. In 2011, he began broadcasting his radio show *Free Thinker Radio,* which continues to air on 90.1 KPFT in Houston. In 2013, he founded *The Conscious Resistance Network,* a site dedicated to multimedia journalism that exposes corporate and governmental corruption while highlighting solutions. Derrick has been producing videos, essays, and articles since 2011. In 2015, he began writing books and has released one every year since. He co-authored The Conscious Resistance trilogy with John Vibes and authored *The Holistic Self-Assessment.* Derrick started writing and producing documentaries in 2015. Since 2013, he has spoken in the United States, Europe, and Central America. His goal is to create a conscious agora of free humans who desire to be free of force, coercion, and violence.

Chapter 4

About this edition

This book is based on the book *How to Opt-Out of the Technocratic State,* edited by Derrick Broze. The original book consists of around 200 pages; the first 50 (or so) of which are the ones featured in this edition, reproduced almost verbatim; while the remaining 150 pages consist of a more detailed exploration of the ideas of Samuel Konkin, by means of publishing some chapters of his unfinished book *Counter-Economics,* and notes for the unwritten chapters of that book.

If you're interested in reading further, visit the website `theConsciousResistance.com/howto` where you'll find a free ebook version of the full *How to Opt Out* book and you'll be able to purchase physical copies in English and other languages. This shorter edition you're reading right now is available for free download in English at `thePhilosophersLibrary.neocities.org` and in Spanish at `laBibliotecaFilosofal.neocities.org`. In those websites you will also find the newer and improved editions of this book, as they come out.

For more books written or co-written by Derrick Broze, visit theConsciousResistance.com/books, and keep exploring the website to find documentaries, articles, podcasts and video reports.

Thanks for reading!