

Al Gore's – The Future

By Jeff Graubart

The Future, a recent work by Al Gore, touches on many of the themes tackled by AFFEERCE. This section is not a book review, per se, but rather a contrast between Gore's solutions and those offered by AFFEERCE. In that regard, the section comes off as excessively critical, when, in fact, his book is groundbreaking, his research exhaustive, and his grasp of the problems, insightful. *The Future* should be required reading for AFFEERCIANADOS.

Gore handles the dialectics of six areas of the future toward which we are rapidly hurdling. Each of them is well argued in terms of their thesis, antithesis, and like the AFFEERCE dialectics, the dreaded synthesis of barbarism. Unlike AFFEERCE, Gore gives few solutions, and where he does, they tend to be the same tried and failed answers from the left.

His first argument, Earth Inc. looks at the contradiction between the great productivity gains from outsourcing and robosourcing (replacing jobs with robots), and the resulting massive loss of unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. He tells us that 50% of the capital gains from this productivity go to the top one thousandth of one percent, who in turn, invests the money not in U.S. jobs, but in more robots, and to employ additional low-wage workers in the developing nations^{FN7.1}. Correctly, Gore recognizes that robosourcing is the real issue, not outsourcing^{FN7.11}. Even in such labor intensive work as coal or copper mining, productivity has increased many times over, as labor hours were cut in half^{FN7.12}. Unfortunately, the only solution Gore can conjure up to save us from the inevitable barbarism is increased hiring by the government for the "greater good."^{FN7.13} Never once does he mention universal entitlement; the right to nutritious meals, warm and safe shelter, quality medical care and unlimited free education. AFFEERCE families with a safety net of steel and unlimited free education at their finger-tips can and will compete with and even replace that top one thousandth of one percent. An army of low-paid government workers, on the other hand, is destined to remain in lower-class poverty forever.

The AFFEERCE entitlements, along with true free enterprise, will lay to rest most of Gore's concerns over machine intelligence and the finance industry^{FN7.14}. Banks will not be able to print money (i.e. steal money from the citizens) by loaning the same money out over and over again, under the protection of the Federal Reserve and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation. The bulk of savings, the child-bearing funds, will be kept at banks with a 50% reserve ratio paying a low 1% interest rate (which not so ironically is 100 times greater than what savers receive in today's government protected predator economy). In a truly competitive economy, prettying up the balance sheet for the quarter and paying executives more than they are worth, is a recipe for bankruptcy, with no government to bail you out. Indeed, AFFEERCE family businesses can only hope that current corporations continue to behave in this inefficient manner. With an AFFEERCE savings rate of over 40%, and a deflationary economy, the robotrades, and complex derivatives, indeed the entire finance industry, will dry up like a sand-dollar. AFFEERCE promises great wealth to innovators. Financial innovation, however, is usually nothing more

than government protected theft. In AFFEERCE, bankers and brokers will earn a good living, but not a killing.

Gore advocates “Sustainable Capitalism.”^{FN7.15} He wants to stop the obsession with short-term profits at the expense of long-term value. But who decides what is an obsession, and what is value, and if some benevolent tyrant could decide, how would they go about implementing “Sustainable Capitalism”? By talking nicely (that won’t work), or by carrying a big stick (certainly not)? Only in a completely free AFFEERCE society will both the objective and subjective conditions favor a sustainable capitalism.

In his second dialectic, the Global Mind, Gore discusses how the internet and increased connectivity will affect business, democracy, education, health care, culture, and so on.^{FN7.16} The antitheses: hacking, cybercrime and cyber-terror, power-failures, and of course, privacy infringement are discussed.^{FN7.16} AFFEERCE is built around the VIP and these concerns are of utmost importance. By minimizing the size of government, providing financial incentives to law enforcement, and structurally eliminating many of the root causes of malevolence, AFFEERCE provides a powerful basis for addressing these issues.

In Power in the Balance, Gore discusses the changing nature of governments in relation to their citizens and each other. He describes how corporations have virtual control of state legislatures and the United States Congress^{FN7.17}. His solution is to lessen the power of corporations, but the AFFEERCE solution is to lessen the power of legislatures. Corporations will instead have membership on VSG’s (volunteer standards groups), power shared with citizen volunteers, and the extent of that power is to demand disclosure on a VOS (violation of standards). Beyond the VOS, limitations on the right to property must be passed by a super-plurality of the citizenry or even a super-duper majority if no conflict of rights can be found. No legislative body has a right to infringe on the right to property. That also means corporations, engaged in some legal but nonetheless nasty business, such as improper dumping of waste, can no longer evade regulation with contributions to legislators. It is incumbent on them to convince over a third of the population that their actions are in the best interests of society. Gore spends much of the chapter striking out at conservatives who believe government should not have the power to tell corporations what to do^{FN7.18}. Although he speaks of the paralysis in Washington and tries to remain above the fray, some of his proposed solutions are at the root of the paralysis. In an interesting quote, Gore says, “Some political scientists have asserted that the influence of corporations on modern governance is now almost analogous to the influence of the medieval church during the era of feudalism^{FN7.19}.” Of course, history’s solution was not to legislate away the power of the medieval church, but to end feudalism.

In Outgrowth, Gore discusses the population crises and the effects of growth on our limited resources. He provides extensive evidence that our limited resources are being exhausted at an unsustainable rate^{FN7.20}. Those on the right who contend that innovation will stop our food and water supplies from running out are clearly playing a dangerous game of Russian roulette. They are protecting the “be fruitful and multiply” crowd, as well as growth at any cost corporations. AFFEERCE deals with the tragedy of the commons through the birth tax and various Pigovian measures.

Gore discusses the changing family, but doesn't realize how AFFEERCE entitlements can radically change the family and the importance of these families in truly sustainable capitalism. It is almost odd that Gore never advocates entitlement, since he discusses the positive effects of entitlement in mitigating both the underpopulation and overpopulation crises.^{FN7.21} Needless to say that although a strong advocate of freely available contraception, Gore never broaches the subject of a birth tax.

In the Reinvention of Life and Death, Gore gives good coverage to all the dialectics of genetic engineering. These issues are very important to the AFFEERCE alternative family. He laments that many of the ethical questions are being answered by a paralyzed Congress, who can only pass legislation favored by those corporations with the deepest pockets^{FN7.22}. In AFFEERCE, Congress does not have the authority to pass such laws. To the extent that the right to property could be curtailed, for instance, the creation of animal clones, those regulations must be passed by a super-plurality of a community, state or the nation. While the creation of human clones could be outlawed by a community, the AFFEERCE constitution mandates that if human cloning is allowed, the right to life of the child be fully protected and the child-bearing account fully funded.

Gore talks about the very dangerous practice of using antibiotics in livestock^{FN7.23}. This is one example where a VSG would likely require product labeling for full disclosure, while the bought and paid-for U.S. Congress does not.

Somehow, in Gore's discussion of eugenics, all of his prejudices in favor of scientific materialism come to the fore. He tries to distance Darwinism from social Darwinism and its strong eugenics component, and almost inexplicably lays eugenics at the feet of Jean-Baptiste Lamarck, who Gore calls a crackpot^{FN7.24}. The argument is absurd. For one thing, if eugenics is wrong because Lamarck's ideas of adaptation were wrong the implication is that eugenics is correct for all traits that can truly be inherited. For another, not only did Darwin consider himself a Lamarckian, but much to the consternation of the Neo-Darwinists and others who insist that life is a random accident, epigenetics research in the last 20 years has shown many of Lamarck's ideas to be correct^{FN7.241}. With all the global warming deniers, it is understandable that Gore would ally himself with the hard-core scientific materialists. This is apparent in The Global Mind when he refers to machines as intelligent without quotes or the adjective artificial^{FN7.25}. Unfortunately, he fails to see the dangerous agenda of the hard-core materialists who insist that life is a random accident, the universe has no purpose, we have no free will and hence no moral responsibility, and that we are merely biological machines, no different than computers, except in degree. In molecular, and cellular biology, and in genetics, the scientific materialists are finally being seriously challenged in their claims of physical reductionism. Perhaps the biggest threat comes from the ideas of Lamarck. It is too bad Gore has elected to do their dirty work.

In The Edge, Gore talks about his area of extensive expertise, Global Warming. His arguments are very persuasive, and it is hard to deny that there is a ruthless and successful campaign to not only control Congress, but the media as well.^{FN7.26} Big oil, which has the most to lose from recognition of the problem, is spending billions to create confusion^{FN7.27}. Is this an argument against a free society? Actually, quite the contrary.

First of all, people must be free to decide their own fate. To the extent that global warming is a life or death threat, remedies that restrict the right to property must be in the hands of the people, not a legislative body.

How can big oil afford to pay off so many? For one thing they receive huge government subsidies (4 billion a year ^{FN7.28}). In a free society, no corporation would ever receive any subsidies. Furthermore, the United States has even gone to war to protect the interests of big oil ^{FN7.281}. In a free society, foreign wars must be approved by the citizens (non UN approved imperialist wars by a super-plurality), and must be privately financed.

Because it is harder to control the citizens than it is to bribe legislators, a free society fosters a free and open discussion of the issues.

Although scientific materialists are often willing to ascribe consciousness to machines, they would never allow that an ecosystem or the Earth, itself, could have conscious purpose. Can the Earth adapt to global warming in a way that doesn't involve getting rid of people? Gore gives an interesting account of how the creation of dead zones in the oceans by our polluted rivers was actually lessened due to the severe drought of 2012 ^{FN7.29}. I believe that nature will do what it can to protect itself, but we might not like what it does.

There could be a few good reasons for doing nothing about global warming or for waiting on more research, but to even entertain such ideas requires an atmosphere of honesty and a willingness to solve the problems that emerge. The situation that Gore describes is so full of corruption and the potential for disaster so great, that we cannot afford such a luxury.

In AFFEERCE, the Gore's Pigovian tax on carbon emissions, as well as cap and trade, or something similar, would likely be approved by a super-plurality. By implementing this worldwide through treaty or tariff, no business would be at a disadvantage except those businesses where carbon competed with other sources of energy.

Despite a few tired solutions, most of the book is fact-filled and highly informative. All told, Al Gore has written an important handbook for the future and an important resource for those of us designing an AFFEERCE nation.

FN7.1 The Future, Al Gore P9

FN7.11 The Future, Al Gore P12

FN7.12 The Future, Al Gore P24,25

FN7.13 The Future, Al Gore P41

FN7.14 The Future, Al Gore P36

FN7.15 The Future, Al Gore P35

FN7.16 The Future, Al Gore P49-89

FN7.17 The Future, Al Gore P104-117

FN7.18 The Future, Al Gore P118-124

FN7.19 The Future, Al Gore P125

FN7.20 The Future, Al Gore P142-201

FN7.21 The Future, Al Gore P172-174

FN7.22 The Future, Al Gore P209

FN7.23 The Future, Al Gore P225-228

FN7.24 The Future, Al Gore P230

FN7.241 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lamarckism>

FN7.25 The Future, Al Gore P46

FN7.26 The Future, Al Gore P317-321

FN7.27 The Future, Al Gore P325-328

FN7.28 The Future, Al Gore P342

FN7.281 <http://www.cnn.com/2013/03/19/opinion/iraq-war-oil-juhasz>

FN7.29 The Future, Al Gore P302