

How Anarchism Works

NonCompete

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Part One: How would anarchism actually work in real life?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oUv-An1mSc>

So, how would anarchism actually work? That's the first question most people have about anarchism. It was certainly my first question. Without government, wouldn't society just descend into chaos? How would anything get done? How would resources be distributed? And how would we make sure that people stay safe? Now, before I explain how I personally think anarchist society might function, let me first admit that nobody really knows for sure how anarchism would work out in the real world. At this point, it's all pretty theoretical, since there's just never been a large-scale and sustained anarchist society during peacetime. Now, that does not mean that anarchism is just a silly, fantastic pipe dream just because it's never been implemented. When the United States was founded, it was considered a great experiment by the framers of its constitution, and it took over a century and a catastrophic civil war before it settled into anything resembling a stable regime. Anarchism would require similar experimentation. Even among anarchists, there's a wide range of opinion about how best to organize society and design democracy, and for people who are exploring anarchism for the first time, it can be really difficult to wrap your head around basic questions like, who will take out the garbage? And how would we stay safe without police? Especially when the blanket answers to such simple, concrete questions as to Google Murray Book Channel or read the Bread Book. I agree that there is a wealth of great information buried in classic anarchist literature, but asking people to read complex tomes to find the answers to basic questions is maybe a little unreasonable, and it's probably already scared a lot of people away who might otherwise have become anarchists. So all that being said, what I'm going to present in this video is my personal take on how an anarchist society might work in practice. I hope that this will inspire other anarchist writers and YouTubers to share their ideas for how stateless socialist societies might take shape, so that we can give people better and more digestible resources when they ask that question, So, how would anarchism actually work? Consensus and Consent. The most fundamental idea of anarchism, in my mind, is that of consent. Anarchists believe that all human interactions must be consensual in nature. The opposite of consent, of course, is coercion. Anarchists seek to dissolve the state and capitalism because

these social systems are held together through coercive forces. Capitalist republics like the United States of America may carry all the trappings of freedom and liberty, but beneath the veneer of democracy is a political structure that's fundamentally coercive in nature. And when you want to take over, use military equipment, they were saying you couldn't do it. You know what I said? That was my first day. You can do it. As a citizen of the United States, I am forced to pay taxes that go to unjust wars and violent political actions. I was forced to register for the Selective Service, which means that the state can force me into the military service at any time. I am forced to literally buy into a system that exploits, abuses, and unjustly ends the lives of millions of people every day. I'm involuntarily complicit in a regime that locks up innocent working-class people and separates them from their children and forces them to live in uncertainty and terror in indefinite detention. Then there's the complete lack of democracy in the workplace. The profits that are produced by workers are siphoned up and seized by wealthy capitalists, and workers can be laid off or have their salaries and benefits cut at any time for virtually any reason. And what can we do to change these unjust and harmful aspects of society? Not much, it turns out. The representative democracies of capitalist states can scarcely be described as truly democratic. What we have instead are plutocracies, where the very wealthy and powerful have almost complete authority over the legal system. In the USA, it's been found that politicians are really only influenced by the demands and opinions of the wealthy elite. The capitalist class has a massively disproportionate measure of power in our governments, and input of the working class is woefully indirect, especially when you take into consideration things like super PACs, the electoral college, poorly designed and implemented voting systems, and so on. And some people, like undocumented immigrants, former prisoners, the severely disabled, and millions of people who are still incarcerated for victimless crimes will never be able to cast a ballot to protect their own interests. An anarchist society would seek consent and consensus of every member of society as the top priority for any system of government that we might put into practice. We must develop voting methods and representation models that count the needs and opinions of every single citizen with equal weight and consideration. In a previous video, I talked about how the Borda count ranked voting system and liquid democracy might lead to better for voters. Other systems that anarchists may consider implementing include consensus democracy, which seeks to weigh as broad a range of opinions as possible. There is no. There is no. There is no. Hierarchy. Hierarchy. Hierarchy. And sortition, which is literally just random selection of representatives from the population at large. Now, I don't think there's any one single magic bullet solution that will just automatically give us the best possible democracy. It's going to be a work in progress. We'll have to try to find the best systems for each application and make improvements along the way, with the goal in mind at all times of improving representation and giving voters more input into our democratic systems. When you want to show support to something that you're hearing, you twinkle.

Chapter 2: Hierarchy

For all the lip service capitalists like to give to individual liberty and social mobility, the system they advocate is, in reality, based on rigid hierarchy. State hierarchies ensure that a privileged class of lawmakers, lobbyists, lawyers, law enforcement agents, military officials, and state executives have power over the rest of us. Economic hierarchies give capitalists far-reaching power over those of us with less money. Workplace hierarchies give the owners of companies tyrannical authority over workers. Social hierarchies give disproportionate power and privilege to people of certain races, genders, religions, and so on, these hierarchies extend internationally as capitalists from wealthy, powerful states impose upon smaller, poorer countries through military intervention and capitalist imperialism. Anarchist societies would seek to eliminate all hierarchies unless they're proven to be absolutely justified and necessary. An example of a hierarchy that's perhaps justified and necessary might be the crew of a ship. Sailing is a complicated and dangerous endeavor after all, and out in the high seas it probably does make sense for the less experienced sailors to follow the directions of their more experienced shipmates for the purposes of safety and pragmatism. An example of a hierarchy that is unjust and unnecessary would be the way most coffee shops are run. At a cafe, there's no imminent danger. Nothing that happens at Starbucks is so pressing that the workers couldn't organize and run the business themselves through democratic processes. Even in situations where hierarchies are perhaps justified, anarchists would seek to flatten hierarchies and make things as democratic as pragmatically possible. In our ship example, perhaps the crew could elect the captain and officers, and the less savory work chores could be rotated around to make things as fair as possible. It worked for pirates. It's a hook. The Commune Under capitalism, society is fundamentally organized around the nation-state. The state has ultimate authority over the way laws are written and designed and enforced, and the state apparatus uses its monopoly on violence to ruthlessly enforce established power structures. This is why anarchists seek to abolish states entirely. We don't want someone's class or any other social category to give them that kind of violent and oppressive power and authority over anyone else. So how do anarchists plan to organize society? Well, again, this depends on your brand of anarchism. But in my mind, the primary unit of social organization would probably be the anarchist commune. The size of a commune could be pretty flexible, but it should probably be small enough that everyone who lives in the commune could have functional and local input into the commune's government and organization. Communes might take a variety of forms, depending on geography, population density, and other factors. So a commune might be a collection of rural farmsteads, or a single small town, or a specific bureau or district of a larger city. It'll ultimately be up to the people who live there to decide how big or small a commune should be and where to draw the borders, but as a rule of thumb, I think a commune should probably never include more than around 10,000 people. Where did I get this number? From this guy, Robert Dunbar. He's an anthropologist who studied the or-

ganization of a wide variety of human societies, and he's determined that the largest number of people that can functionally work together as a team is about 150 people. Any more than that, and important human social elements such as trust, familiarity, and a sense of belonging begin to break down.

Why is it limited at 150? The answer is twofold, actually. Partly, it's a cognitive challenge just to keep track of more people. The other side of it is it's just a time budgeting problem. You just don't have time in everyday life to invest in each of those people to the extent where you can have a real relationship with them.

So a commune of 10,000 people could be split up into about 60 or 70 smaller communities, we can call those wards, and each ward could have two representatives that they send to the commune's governing council. Through the power of basic arithmetic, we can see that this commune council would have about 150 people, Dunbar's number. These numbers are a bit flexible, and following them exactly is not really necessary. What's important is that we develop our societies using a methodology that centers on maximizing the potential participation and input for every voter. Within a ward of 150 people, direct democracy can be practiced. It'd be a simple matter for ward members to vote directly on any major decisions, and a council of about 10 ward members could oversee the day-to-day affairs of the neighborhood. And how would ward council members be chosen? Well, I think this is probably a good use case for sortition, random selection. Council members would be chosen at random, say every three months or so. This would allow every adult member of the community to serve on the ward council once every three or four years or so. in summary, the basic idea of the system is this. Individuals self-organize into small wards of about 150 people. The wards will then self-organize into communes of about 10,000 people, and these communes could in turn organize into larger unions of communes that could have millions, even billions of people. But essential sovereignty would be pushed as far down that structure as possible to the commune, ward, and even individual level. Local government will allow for the most consensus and will allow us to prevent coercion that occurs when large, centralized states have power over sprawling populations. But how would individuals and communes be able to self-organize? Well, the same way corporations do it today: by contract. We'll discuss contracts as well as rights and responsibilities of individuals and security and military defense issues in part two of this series, which should come out in about a week or two. So click subscribe and keep an eye out.

Part Two: Contracts and Mutual Aid

Hello, welcome back to Non-Compeat. I'm American Johnson, and this is part two of an ongoing series on how anarchism might work in real life. If you haven't seen part one yet, you'll probably want to start there. There's a link in the description. Otherwise, let's just jump right into...

Chapter Four: The Contract

Contracts are amazingly flexible and powerful instruments. Under capitalism today, corporations use them to organize and complete incredibly complex projects without the need for any sort of authoritarian hierarchy. They do this through the principles of mutual aid. Mutual aid is a simple concept, but it's pretty powerful. It basically just means that two parties are able to exchange resources and services on equal footing in such a way that both benefit. In a relationship of mutual aid, neither party is seen as superior. Both parties meet as equals and both benefit without taking advantage of one another. Mutual aid exchanges occur every day under capitalism. Corporations are able to act autonomously and fully self-directed while fostering alliances and undertaking collaborations without strict hierarchies. The instrument they use for these mutual aid exchanges is the contract. There are countless examples of huge corporations collaborating together on massive projects by way of contract. HP and Disney have maintained an international technology alliance since 2003. Starbucks and Barnes and Noble have been partnering together successfully for many years. And other examples of successful corporate alliances include Ford and Eddie Bauer, Spotify and Uber, and Google and Luxottica. All of these collaborations are made possible through the instrument of the contract and the principles of mutual aid. Now, let's take a look at how contracts could be used to organize an anarchist society. At the individual level, as soon as someone joins a commune, the first thing they'll do is put together a contract with their commune. This contract will stipulate what the commune agrees to provide to the new member (food, clothing, shelter, and so on) and will outline the responsibilities the new commune member agrees to take on for the commune. For most people, responsibilities will include some kind of labor contribution. The individual will contribute to the commune by performing vital labor that is required to keep society functioning. Stuff like making food, dealing with garbage, working in factories that

produce important goods, and so on. This kind of labor will be rotated frequently in order to prevent boredom and fatigue and to make sure everyone shares the burden of the less desirable jobs. Communes would have similar contracts with other communes to meet the various needs of society. Say there's a small town consisting of about 10 communes, roughly 100,000 people. Let's call it Breadtown. The communes of Breadtown could work out a cooperative contract to build and maintain a bus system, for example. Each commune would provide certain resources or personnel in exchange for enjoying access to the bus lines. Note that using this system, there's simply no need for money. Money would be totally obsolete in a contract-based anarchist economy. So how would Breadtown obtain its buses? Simple. by way of contract and in-kind mutual aid. Say there's a city a few hundred miles away that manufactures buses, we'll call it Loaf City. Breadtown would simply negotiate a contract with Loaf City and trade some of their valuable resources for a certain number of buses. In this case, Breadtown has a factory that makes really nice vacuum cleaners and washing machines that they can trade in-kind, along with some other spare resources they have lying around. These kinds of contracts can overlap and interlock so that communes are able to trade for and receive required resources among each other in ways make sense and are mutually equitable. Organizations and confederations of communes could naturally form, in the same way that corporations naturally and organically work together to develop huge projects together in our current capitalist society. The key difference is that under capitalism, the sole motivating force is building profits for the capitalist class. In our anarcho-communist society, mutual aid agreement would be developed with the motivation of improving society and creating goods and services that benefit the lives of every member of society.

Chapter Five: The individual

Every individual should be granted the basic civil liberties We're already familiar with you know stuff like free speech freedom of the press free assembly and so forth as long as their actions Don't exploit endanger or impinge on the safety and well-being of their fellow citizens in addition to these traditional human rights anarchist societies would also guarantee positive rights Basically every human being in an anarchistic society will have a right to having all of their material needs met in full Material needs include all of the basic requirements of human and comfort, food, clothing, shelter, electricity, running water, internet and health care, and so on. In exchange for having their needs met, individuals must agree to a reasonable contribution to the commune. It's important to note that what constitutes a reasonable contribution will vary from individual to individual. Most people will be able to contribute some labor, as well as participation in managing and governing the commune. Ideally, for most folks, this would look something like a 15- to 20-hour workweek that includes labor performed for the commune. Over time, as technology and automation and other efficiency improve-

ments are developed, the workweek can be gradually shortened. Commune residents will also be expected and encouraged to participate in the government of the commune to the greatest extent possible. This will include an obligation for consenting members to serve as a delegate on the ward council at determined intervals, say, a three-month term once every four years. They'll also be required to attend ward meetings, perhaps on a weekly or monthly basis, and to vote on important matters as they arise. Of course, there will be exceptions to these requirements. Some individuals might be restricted in what they can offer due to physical and mental disabilities, learning disabilities, social anxiety issues, temporary or permanent injuries, or mental trauma, and other personal circumstances. The commune will work with these individuals to negotiate contracts that suit their needs. A person with disabilities might be granted reduced or modified contribution requirements, or may not be required to contribute anything at all, depending on the severity of their individual situation. Wards and communes will have a responsibility to ensure that vulnerable people are able to participate in society without being exploited, neglected, or abused by their neighbors, even inadvertently. Working in exchange for resources in this manner may sound similar to what we already have under capitalism, but under capitalism such arrangements are weighed heavily in favor of the capitalist class. Workers have their labor value robbed from them without consent in the form of profit, and the direction of each capitalist enterprise is similarly focused solely on maximizing profits for capitalists without consideration for social welfare. In addition, our anarchist commune actively seeks consensus, consent, and participation from every member of society, rather than giving all of the power and decision-making ability to a small regime of wealthy, ruling elites. Now, you may be asking, what if an individual simply refuses to participate? What if someone simply doesn't want to work, and they'd rather sit around playing video games all day, living off of the labor of other people while shirking their own responsibilities? First of all, I don't think this would happen nearly as often as capitalist propaganda would imply. After all, one of the biggest lies in capitalism is that hard work gets rewarded. Under capitalism, it's just a fact that those who work the hardest get the least, while those who work the least, the capitalist elite, reap the most rewards. In an anarcho-communist society, every individual has a real stake in the work of building the society. Since hierarchies are stripped away, we can all participate in shaping and molding our community. The work we do, being inherently self-directed and consensual, will be much more rewarding than the standard capitalist arrangement of wage slavery. All that being said, on the rare occasion that a member of the commune is, for lack of a better term, too lazy to work, there would be mechanisms for community intervention. The first step would probably be to determine if the individual isn't suffering from some kind of undiagnosed physical or mental illness. If the individual is found to be of sound mind and body, and they really are simply refusing to work out of mere idleness, they'd be granted basic material needs and simply written off as a loss. That's it. Again, in reality, these kinds of lazy, parasitic individuals would be extremely rare in a society where everyone has access to legitimate and meaningful participation. At

the very least, we could be assured that there will be far fewer lazy and unproductive workers under socialism than there are lazy and unproductive capitalists under capitalism. Specialization The vast majority of work that is vital for society to function could be performed on a part-time basis. In his book, *The Conquest of Bread*, Pyotr Kropotkin estimated that a productive workweek would be something like 20 hours, though it's likely that with our modern technology we could get that number down to 10 or 15 hours per week without sacrificing productivity and output. This would... free up our day for activities that are more personally rewarding, such as leisure, art, and scientific pursuits. How would this be possible? Well, for starters, we would eliminate the thousands of jobs that are essentially little more than busy work and capitalist servitude. These kinds of ***** jobs are a mainstay of modern capitalism, and they're a tremendous waste of human energy. In our anarcho-communist society, we would root out and eliminate jobs that are unnecessary and wasteful of our time and energy. On the other hand, there are some vital jobs that require longer work weeks and more training and specialization. Medicine, emergency response, and other such jobs may require extensive and continuous training and longer workdays than most other jobs. How would we deal with them? With common sense. Let's take doctors as an example. Capitalists and even some socialists have argued that medical doctors need to be paid substantially more than other workers because the training is so extensive and expensive. While it is true that the training required to become an MD is intense, I don't think it would be difficult at all to find, train, and employ good doctors in an egalitarian anarchist society. To begin with, there are many benefits of being a doctor that go beyond monetary compensation. Doctors receive social recognition and rewards that elevate them to a higher status in our society. After all, medical professionals help people and save lives. They therefore justly receive intrinsic benefits of helping other human beings. This is kind of a social capital, and it's already a huge motivation for doing hard but vital social service-oriented work, even under capitalism. Look at the hundreds of thousands of people who become nurses, EMTs, firefighters, and teachers, all of which are difficult, stressful, time-consuming jobs that come with relatively little pay under capitalism. People don't choose these jobs to get rich. They choose them out of an intrinsic desire to serve humanity and make a positive impact on the world, and to net some of the social benefits of doing work that's seen as highly valuable to society. I question the motivation of any doctor who only practices medicine simply because they want to make more money. In a socialist society where medical school is free, we would have better doctors who do the work because they are passionate about the practice of healing people. Imagine how many great medical minds never even had the chance to become doctors because they were born in poverty. Socialist society would widen the field of potential medical professionals and allow for a larger pool of medical school candidates, since more people would have access to quality education. Finally, we could, of course, find other ways to balance out the workload of people who select these specializations. Perhaps people who work longer weeks would be granted longer vacation times. Even in our current capitalist society, doctors aren't

exactly known for lacking when it comes to taking time off for vacations and golf. How would individuals become trained and educated for specialized fields? At the outset, every citizen should have the option to attend a two- or four-year vocational school or university through a student contract that's designed with the principles of mutual aid. While attending higher education, students will still be required to perform vital labor for their community, but because a standard workweek is already so short to begin with, it wouldn't really infringe on their studies. And ideally, their labor would be aligned with the subject of their studies so that their work and their studies can reinforce one another and further benefit both the student and the community. The shorter workweek of an anarchist society allow anyone to go back to school at any point in their lives to further specialize or change career paths. All of this could be easily managed and negotiated via contract with the commune. Now, I really wanted to talk about police and military issues in this part of the series, but there's just way too much to go over, so I'm extending the series a little bit, and we'll talk about security and defense issues in part three.

Part 3: How do Anarchist police and military work?

Hello and welcome back to Non-Compete. I'm American Johnson. This is part three of my continuing series on how anarchism might work in real life. If you're just joining us, you might want to go back and start with Episode 1. There's a link in the description. Otherwise, let's march forward to...

Chapter 7: Capitalism Causes Criminality

What about the real troublemakers, the abusive or criminal elements who are actively harmful to the safety of the community? What about reactionaries who want to restore the old systems of capitalistic exploitation? Clearly, we will need solutions to deal with these kinds of people. But before we can answer these questions, we have to address a more fundamental question. Why does crime occur within society to begin with? What are the root causes of these harmful behaviors? Under capitalism, most crimes are symptomatic of the abuse and harm of capitalistic processes. Drugs are a major source of social harm under capitalism. People marginalized by the capitalist system are rarely afforded access to proper health care and often turn to drugs as a form of self-medication. With heavy sentences for drug use, these same people end up in prison, destroying what livelihood they may have had. The heavy-handed criminalization of drugs creates an atmosphere of danger and illegality that positively reinforces violent activities and mindsets. The hellish world of the drug trade, of assault, retributive murder, and other acts of violence, are all results of the criminalization of narcotics. Property crimes almost always occur because of material scarcity and because people who live in poor communities have few other avenues for making a living, and they are to desperation. Capitalistic exploitation and social neglect destroy countless lives every day and cause incalculable collateral damage to our communities. Drug addiction and material scarcity are at the very root of the vast majority of property crimes. Addicts become increasingly desperate without any form of social support. This leads to desperation, further increasing the demand for drugs, and making drug dealing and property crime seem like viable survival strategies when there are so few other opportunities. If all drugs are completely decriminalized and drug addiction is treated as a medical condition rather than as criminal behavior, if every member of our society is guaranteed to have all of their material needs met, and if the capitalist class is

prevented from sucking the wealth from these poorest communities and distributing it to themselves, then we can eliminate these social ills that create and sustain criminal trades. Capitalism hurts workers and traps people in desperate circumstances, whether it's drug addiction, prison, or just good old-fashioned poverty. As long as capitalism is in place, and people are allowed to be exploited and oppressed in such vicious ways, how can we ever hope to eliminate crime from our society?

Chapter 8: Police Abolition

Most anarchists are police abolitionists, and that makes a lot of people uncomfortable. I have to admit, this was one of the aspects of anarchism that was the most difficult for me to understand when I was first looking into this ideology. As a white, middle-class American, I was raised from a very early age to see the police as protectors and heroes. This propaganda still has a lingering effect in my psyche, even now. But what is the real role of police in a capitalist society? Above all else, the police serve as enforcers of the capitalist class. As state actors, they are given special status and protections, privileges that give them power over the rest of us, including the authority to kill. Under capitalism, the police aren't really expected by the state to protect working-class people. Poor and working-class people aren't a priority for the police. If you're working-class and you've been a crime victim, then you know that the police hardly concern themselves with our needs, I've had my home broken into several times, and I've also been mugged. Each time, the police only took a report and let me know that really there was nothing else that could be done. Now, back when I was a capitalist, I had my business broken into once, and the police came in force. They took fingerprints, launched a full investigation, and that's because they regard crimes against capitalism as a priority, unlike crimes against the working class. This is because the police exist to protect the interests and well-being of capitalists. Steal a car from a cashier and the cops might file a report, then forget about it. But rob a bank? Rob an Apple store? Steal from a billionaire? Your *** is going on the evening news until you get caught. And look at the way the police treat wealthy, capital-class criminals. When's the last time you heard of a white-collar crime suspect being beaten or murdered by the police while in custody? Hell, most corporate criminals never face charges to begin with. Bankers didn't go to prison for causing the financial collapse of 2008, even though many of them demonstrably performed criminal acts that disrupted our entire global society. For another example, look at the 2013 explosion of the West Fertilizer plant near Waco, Texas. OSHA inspectors found that the plant was overworked and undermanned, which led directly to the explosion. A nearby nursing home was destroyed and 15 people died, but none of the capitalists who owned the factory ever faced any charges. I could go on and on, because under capitalism, the wealthy elite interact with our criminal justice system much differently than we do. To be clear, the police exist to protect capitalists at expense of the working poor. In short,

capitalist democracy-style police forces are a terrible model for security and defense. So how do we ensure safety and security for our communities? In my mind, community safety and well-being come down to these factors— harm prevention, emergency response, forensics, and rehabilitation, not revenge. Harm prevention. The best case scenario is for harmful activity to be prevented before it happens. The best way to make sure petty crimes never occur is to build strong communities that meet the needs of every individual member of society. This includes not just material needs, but social, emotional, and psychological needs as well. Rather than having armed police roaming the streets with guns looking for people to punish, anarchist societies would deploy highly trained and compassionate social workers. These specialists would get to know everyone in their community, address their needs, and see that those needs are met. They would be trained in counseling, sociology, and peer mediation to best ensure the safety of their communities. Since a ward size would be limited to about 150 people, a couple of social workers would truly be able to know every member of their community on a personal level. And in seeing to their needs, they'd be able to prevent most problems before they start. Emergency response. Since all crimes would be tremendously reduced in such an anarchist society, it follows that violent crime would be similarly reduced. Check out these startling results from an FBI study on the causes of violence in the USA. Income inequality alone explains 74% of the variance in murder rates and half of the aggravated assaults. However, social capital had an even stronger association and, by itself, accounted for 82% of homicides and 61% of assaults. These may be cyclical, as the strain theory suggests that when poorer people perceive inequality, internalize fewer social norms, and come to view crime as more acceptable. A robust and well-organized network of social workers would reduce this, but even as society becomes more fair and equal and moves away from these hierarchies and inequities which promote such violence, there will still be resonating social effects from millennia of oppression and exploitation that'll take a long time to heal, and there will likely be circumstances which result in violence. As such, every commune will need to be prepared to dispatch a response team to deal with sudden unpredicted violence. These needs would be met by our voluntary civil defense force, AKA the military. We'll explore the military more in just a bit, but for now, suffice to say that our commune's military detachment would be equipped and trained to work efficiently and humanely with strict protocols to prevent the escalation of force and brutality. Forensics. Criminal forensics is a highly technical field of science. Collecting and analyzing DNA evidence requires a great deal of technical proficiency, and so communes would want to contract with teams of forensic investigators who could find perpetrators of heinous crimes like murder and sexual assault. This would be a professional specialization, similar to the fire department or medical fields, as we discussed in part 2 of this series. Rehabilitation, not revenge. According to the Sentencing Project, 2.2 million Americans are in prison or jail. More than half of federal prisoners were incarcerated for drug crimes in 2010, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, and that number has only just dipped below 50% in 2011. Aside from abolishing the police, prisons will also be abolished in

an anarcho-communist society. In the words of Pyotr Kropotkin, prisons are little more than universities of crime, which make criminals even more capable of committing violence whenever they are finally released. In our capitalist society, crime is treated with vengeance and punishment. This toxic stance makes society worse at the individual and community level. Rather than treat crime as a personal moral failure that must be met with traumatic retribution, crime in an anarchist society would be seen as treatable, a social problem that would be corrected with rehabilitative measures that are tailored to each individual's circumstances. Rather than having barbarous prisons where people are caged like animals or tortured in solitary confinement, most crimes would be addressed through counseling, education, and other such communal interventions designed to heal the individual and the community. If an individual's harmful behavior stems not just from social problems, but from some biological or neurological condition, then they would be committed to a special circumstances hospital, which would cater specifically to those needs. Doctors, therapists, counselors, social workers, and their family and friends and other visitors would be able to work with them to try and help them reach a breakthrough. Please note, I'm not being ableist here. I know that not all mentally ill people engage in harmful behavior, and I know that not all quote-unquote criminals are mentally ill. But the fact is that it's been estimated that more than half of all prison and jail inmates have some form of mental health problem. To ignore this fact and simply imprison people whose medical needs harm themselves or others is truly criminal negligence. In an anarchist society, the number of people who make it to adulthood and commit violent acts based on undiagnosed or untreated mental illness will be substantially lower. It's a sad fact that some violent or predatory individuals may never be capable of entering back into society, but rather than abandoning these people, we must do our best to give them the best possible chance at recovery and reform with the hopes of eventually re-entering society. In situations where re-entry does seem impossible, care must be taken to monitor and assist these reformed individuals, to preempt relapse or deception, and to ensure that the patient successfully merges back into wider society. Reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries would be treated in a very similar manner. How we deal with former capitalists, fascists, and other such oppressors will be one of the great tests of anarchist society. Great care must be taken to treat them compassionately and humanely, giving them every opportunity to join our society as active and productive comrades, starting by treating them like any other comrade with special circumstances. Rather than ship deposed class enemies off to inhumane gulags or otherwise seek out revenge, they should be placed in reform centers where they are able to live in comfort and benefit from counseling and education, teaching them about the benefits of our new society. Some may never be willing to give up their abuses, and these die-hard oppressors would need to be secluded, perhaps indefinitely. But capitalists and reactionaries who demonstrate a willingness to re-enter society on equal footing should be given every opportunity to learn, grow, and eventually rejoin our community in peace.

Chapter 9: The Military

The military in an anarchist society would be a volunteer force that is funded collectively by networks of communes. Every individual will be given the opportunity to volunteer in the security forces, but no individual will ever be drafted or compelled to serve in such capacity. The military will be adequately supplied by communes with equipment, supplies, and personnel via joint contract, with each commune making direct or indirect contributions to civil defense. In the military, some hierarchy will be required to ensure that the military is properly organized, but the hierarchy will be aligned with anarchical principles. Officers will be chosen democratically by their units, and higher commands will be rotated often to prevent any one individual from accumulating too much power and influence. Unlike most capitalist state military forces, officers in our military would not have the power to abuse or exploit those that they outrank. On the contrary, they would be directly accountable to their subordinates and to the communities that they serve. Present-day United States military members often commit acts of violence, such as sexual assault in the communities they are supposed to protect, both domestically and abroad. Not just in war, but in peacetime as well, as so often occurs in places like Japan and South Korea. This is a direct result of the way young warfighters are callously recruited at an immature age. Recruiters in the United States tend to prey on the poor, coaxing teenagers in with the lure of signing bonuses and a college education they might otherwise never have access to. These young people are then put through intense behavioral conditioning in environments that can most charitably be described as toxic. As they mature in the armed forces, their experiences harden them and normalize abusive and toxic behaviors and strict hierarchical cycles of abuse and domination. By integrating the military with the community and minimizing hierarchies, we can prevent many of the social ills that come part and parcel with our current hegemonic military structure. George Orwell described an anarchist military structure in his memoir of the Spanish Civil War, *Homage to Catalonia*. Here's how he describes the organization of the leftist militias. The essential point of the system was social equality between officers and men. Everyone from general to private drew the same pay, ate the same food, wore the same clothes, and mingled on terms of complete equality. If you wanted to slap the general commanding the division on the back and ask him for a cigarette, you could do so, and no one thought it curious. In theory, at any rate, each militia was a democracy and not a hierarchy. It was understood that orders had to be obeyed, but it was also understood that when you gave an order, as a comrade to comrade and not as superior to inferior. There were officers and NCOs, but there was no military rank in the ordinary sense. No titles, no badges, no heel-clicking and saluting. They had attempted to produce within the militias a sort of temporary working model of the classless society. Of course, there was no perfect equality, but there was a nearer approach to it than I had ever seen or that I would ever have thought conceivable in time of war. Orwell goes on to explain that this system worked well and that these anarchist militias fought quite effectively despite severe

material disadvantages. There are many other such organizations we can learn from that have proven to be quite effective while being integrated into the community with relatively flat hierarchies, including the Black Panther Party, the American Indian Movement, the Freedom Fighters of Rojava, the Brazilian firing groups described in the mini-manual of the Urban Guerrilla, and many others.

Chapter 7 through 9: TLDR, it's all about the community

I'd like to reiterate here that anarchist security, community defense, and military operations must all be integrated fully into the wider community, and I stress the word integrated. We want the people who help during crises to be with us and among us in good times and in bad without becoming dominant over our lives. Basically, we want a system that looks a lot less like a police force or an army barracks and a lot more like a firehouse. Firefighters don't roam the streets looking for fires. They don't stop and harass people checking for flammable materials. They don't have special rights and privileges that give them them power over their neighbors, and they don't isolate themselves from the rest of the community as some kind of special protected class. Firefighters do spend time training together, whether they're part-time volunteers or full-time professionals, but they are integrated into the community in a much more healthy way than police officers. When there's fire, they deal with it quickly and efficiently, and then they wrap up the hoses, go back to the firehouse, and, you know, maybe collect some money for charity in their boots or whatever. Our anarchist emergency response force would be trained to deal with fires, violence and medical emergencies, natural disasters, and yes, even war. But they would not be a special segregated class, and they would not have unjust authority. They would be a part of the community, and they would have to answer to their neighbors directly. When they aren't training or drilling or actively responding to crises, they'll be living normal lives and engaging in normal, healthy, productive activities until the next time they have to put on their helmets, much like the Army Reserves or the National Guard or voluntary firefighters. So now we have a pretty solid understanding of how we could defend ourselves and our communities under anarchism.

Part 4: How capitalism KILLS art and science!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q37cTw-GZKs>

Hello, and welcome back to Part 4 of How Anarchism Works. Now, if you're new to the series, you'll probably want to go back and start with Part 1. There's a link in the description. Otherwise, let's talk about how art and science might work in an anarchist society.

Chapter 10: Dull Conformity.

A common refrain of capitalist propaganda is that life would become dull, gray, and conformist under any form of communism. Reactionaries love to point to the popular conception of Soviet-style uniformity and social stagnation when discussing socialism, making the claim that capitalism, through the motive of profit, leads to far more and better creative outcome. Now I can totally see why people might think that. After all, a capitalist society isn't dull and conformist in the least. I mean, in the USA, every town is vibrant and rich with unique local culture. Okay, enough sarcasm. I just think it's fair to say that capitalism itself leads to increasingly bland conformity as it advances. Strip malls, Starbucks, and subways overtake our towns and cities as national corporations bulldoze local culture and replace it with cookie cutter big box stores. We all know the story. We see it happening all around us every time. But there are deeper and more troubling issues when it comes to capitalistic domination of the arts and sciences.

Chapter 11: Subjective Needs

The ideas we've discussed so far in this series have all been concerned with material needs. That is to say, meeting the conditions required for survival. Food, shelter, healthcare, personal safety, and so on. But what about the higher callings of humanity? I'm talking about creative and intellectual expression and innovation. Art and science and building and collaborating. The human animal craves this kind of constructive

activity. I think we can generally agree that most of us need art and entertainment, as well as the fruits and benefits of scientific innovation in order to be truly happy. Abraham Maslow, the famous mid-20th century psychologist, referred to these as self-actualization needs. What a person can be, they must be, is the general idea. We all want to achieve our true potential in life, and any decent society should give us all the opportunity to self-actualize. In her fantastic video on Dadaism, which you should totally watch, by the way, Angie of Angie Speaks describes these higher needs as subjective needs.

Art serves a higher purpose that fulfills the abstract spiritual needs within human nature that cannot be quantified by its material merits.

I think I'll stick with that because it's a lot less of a mouthful than self-actualization needs, but no matter what you call them, these are needs that go beyond mere survival. On a certain level, all humans have the desire to create, to socialize, to relax, to enjoy life, and to build things. And make no mistake, subjective needs are incredibly important. To give you an idea of what life would be like with all material needs met, but no subjective needs met, think of a prisoner in solitary confinement. They're given clothing, food, a bed to sleep in. If they get really sick, they might even be allowed to see a doctor. if they're lucky. But beyond that, they're completely cut off from every opportunity for self-expression, intellectual activity, or creative outlet. In conditions like these, human beings will quickly develop severe mental illness. Even domesticated animals like dogs and chickens and pigs will suffer tremendously if none of their subjective needs, such as socialization and enjoying the outdoors, are met. So it's pretty clear that subjective needs are incredibly important and must be a high priority for any anarchist society. But before we can address how we'll deal with the arts and sciences under anarchism, let's take a look at how capitalism deals with our subjective needs.

Chapter 12: Creative commodification and gatekeeping under capitalism

In our current capitalist society, the state and capitalists have a stranglehold on artistic and scientific development. In order for an individual to engage in art or science, they must either be wealthy and fortunate enough to have copious amounts of money and free time to create, or they must allow their creative output to be commodified by capitalism. or arbitrated by the state. Let's take a look at the art world first. Now I'm an artist myself, so this is a bit personal for me. I know very well the struggles a working class artist faces under capitalism, and to understand these struggles, we must first understand the artist. And artists are simply human beings who have a strong desire to express themselves and create things that other human beings can enjoy and consider and appreciate. Now I happen to believe that there's an artist inside each of

us and that art can take many different forms. But under capitalism, art as expression in and of itself has no value. It's only art as a commodity, that is art that can be bought and sold and monetized, that's considered worthy.

Do me a favor, grab my ****.

Artists are driven to create, whether we receive monetary compensation or not. There's certainly some cynical artists who are more concerned with trying to bank on their art than they are with expressing themselves, but for the most part, under capitalism, the opposite is true. The majority of artists are forced to commoditize our art for the market. Visual artists must become graphic designers for marketing firms. Filmmakers must produce 30-second commercials for corporate brands. Even comedians and musicians must make compromises on their material to meet market demands.

I will not bow to any sponsor.

If I want to create art as expression instead of art as a commodity, I must have the free time and other resources to create, which is very hard to come by when you have to work a full-time job just to survive. This means that the capitalist class and the super wealthy have much greater opportunity to create art as expression, while working-class artists have strict limitations placed on our subjective needs. In my past, I've been heavily involved in liberal-led attempts to solve these problems under capitalism. I've volunteered on arts councils and art business incubators, and I've talked to hundreds of artists about these issues. The liberal solution is to develop the business skills of artists and to teach them ways to make the art they produce marketable. In other words, we're told to transform our art as expression into art as a commodity. We're asked to compromise our subjective needs to serve the agenda of the capitalist class. Writers and musicians and painters are told to do market research and to find ways to monetize our output and to spend time marketing ourselves and finding buyers. for our works. Of course, liberals will typically advocate for the state to step in and assist in supporting artists. Subsidies and state grants should help artists who have few other opportunities to express themselves, right? But see, the state serves the interests of capitalists. I've been on selection boards for art grants before, and I know that these programs always serve the capitalist agenda. Artists are typically selected based on how their art will benefit businesses and elected officials in some way, and hierarchies quickly become established in art communities. These serve to gatekeep artists who won't serve these interests from ever being able to participate or benefit from such programs. Artists who are able to navigate and leverage these hierarchies might manage to survive, even thrive under these conditions. But the vast majority of artists I've talked to share a common refrain. This is not fulfilling. Having to package and promote our art as a product is devastating for the artists and severely limits artistic expression. It's just not the way humans want to create. It's not good for the art, nor for the artists, nor for those of us who enjoy consuming art. The only people who benefit from this situation are the capitalists who shape the system which they profit from. The situation for science might seem very different from that of art, on the surface. After all, capitalism

depends on scientific innovation, doesn't it? Corporations invest heavily in research and development, and technology has advanced rapidly under capitalist society, correct? Well, let's take a closer look. A lot of people would argue that competition is great for innovation since so many companies have to fight it out to bring newer and better products to the market. But remember, under capitalism, the only definition of better that really matters is more profitable. Of course, with science, just as with art, there are government research grants that go towards things like vaccines and medicines and other innovations that benefit society. But these grants always serve the capitalist agenda as corporations are allowed to profit from the fruits of this taxpayer finance research. Pharmaceutical companies only research medicine that will bring profits. Tech companies force their engineers to fixate on problems of profitability with emphasis placed on driving down production costs and driving up revenues. Considerations like end-user satisfaction, environmental impact, and product durability are secondary to making more money for the capitalists who own the company. In fact, products are often made to be more destructive to the environment and less durable and functional for the end-user simply because it will make the capitalists who own the company a higher profit margin. Scientists and engineers are limited in what projects they can pursue by the capitalist class.

We have scientists. We need to change the world. You've got the best scientific equipment money can buy. You employ 3,000 research staff. We've created 521 patents. This is the finest laboratoire in the Western Hemisphere, surely! You can change the world with Garnier body cocoon and soft curl cream.

Even the public sector universities are increasingly becoming tainted by capital. And there are cases where capitalists have simply bought out the public sector altogether, such as when Uber stole 50 people from one of the top robotics labs at Carnegie Mellon, completely gutting the program to build self-driving cars that will profit the capitalists who own the company, all with the ambition, of course, of eventually laying off the 2 million drivers they currently employ.

Chapter 13: Creative Alienation Under capitalism

The vast majority of creators are alienated from their own creations. If you're writing music or designing a machine while employed by a corporation, you will not own the product of your own labor. The songs you write or the patents you file will belong to the corporation you work for. Even if you try to become an independent producer, you will still be alienated from your creative output because you must compromise your vision to meet market demands if you want any hope of keeping a roof over your head while you create. In addition, capitalism puts me in a position where other artists are my competition. We must vie against each other in a marketplace of art, which often precludes collaboration and alienates us from one another in many ways. Corporate secrecy, patents, and anti-competition regulations prevent the scientific community from

sharing data and discoveries openly with one another. Two scientists who are studying the same phenomenon or two engineers who are trying to solve the same problem are banned from sharing notes and working together because they work for different companies. And in such an environment where teams of scientists and engineers are set against each other by their employers, scientific collaboration stagnates. And then there are all the barriers to participating in scientific and technological innovation under capitalism. Before you can have a career in science and technology, you first have to obtain an expensive and time-consuming education that's just beyond the reach of most workers. And then you have to commit to wage servitude in order to obtain access to the equipment and other resources needed to engage in scientific discovery. Who knows what kinds of important breakthroughs have been prevented because of these tragic artificial barriers? Who knows how many talented individuals were never able to blossom into the brilliant artists and engineers and scientific researchers that they could have been simply because they were born into poverty and blocked from participation by capitalism, racism, and other forms of gatekeeping and oppression. As Stephen Jay Gould said, I am somehow less interested in the weight and convolutions of Einstein's brain than in the near certainty that people of equal talent have lived and died in cotton fields and sweatshops. What gives me some small hope as a creator is the anarchist spirit of creativity that manages to survive even in this oppressive environment of capitalism. There are artists who are still able to create brilliant works of independent art, and there are amateur scientists and engineers who still manage to build incredible inventions in the garages and makerspaces of the world against these overwhelming odds. Imagine what we could accomplish if the greed-fueled gatekeeping of capitalism were done away with entirely.

Chapter 14: Time is currently money.

As Peter Coffin says in his book, *Custom Reality and You*, under capitalism, everything is labor.

In our current societal perspective, if you're doing work because you want to do work, it's not viewed as work, it's viewed as a hobby. And I think a lot of the things that we do right now that we consider hobbies, that we consider not real work, are ultimately actually kind of work. It's just that the perspective we exist in is so utterly co-opted by capitalism. There is a realism that everything has to be done in a manner that serves to create profit.

In the United States, the first question we usually ask a stranger is... What do you do? And what we mean, of course, is what do you do for money? Because in capitalist society, value is so tied up with money, and so much of our time is spent earning money to survive, that we're brainwashed into believing that the work we do for money somehow defines us as individuals. In my second life, I was also a paper salesman. And I was also named White. The fact is we are all, every one of us in the

working class, so much more than the jobs we do to benefit the capitalist class. We all have deeper capacity and potential to contribute to this species, to our culture, and to our communities. Ironically, it tends to be what we do for money that holds us back more than anything else from doing what we really want to do. Almost all of us in the working class wish desperately that we had more time each day to do things that we care about much more than work. Whether it's spending time with our families, creating art, or enjoying our hobbies, time is a vital resource, our most important resource. And under capitalism, we're forced to sacrifice more than half of our time on this planet, serving the profit needs of our capitalist employers.

Chapter 15, after the bread has been secured.

I've talked about Pyotr Kropotkin a lot on this channel. He's one of my favorite political philosophers, and his book, *The Conquest of Bread*, is an incredibly forward-thinking template for how anarchist society might function. If you dig this video series, you should really check it out. It's free, and it's all over the place on the internet. I'll put a link in the description. Kropotkin was well aware of the importance of subjective needs. He was a scientist himself, and he wrote, We see that the worker, compelled to struggle painfully for bare existence, is reduced to ignorance of these higher delights, the highest within man's reach of science, and especially of scientific discovery, of art, and especially of artistic creation. It is in order to obtain these joys for all, which are now reserved to a few, in order to give leisure and the possibility of developing intellectual capacities, that the social revolution must guarantee daily bread to all. After bread has been secured, leisure is the supreme aim. When Kropotkin talks about leisure, he isn't talking about just sitting around the couch and watching *Better Call Saul*, though that's certainly a component of leisure. He's talking about subjective needs. Kropotkin loved the arts and the sciences, and he believes strongly that every human being on Earth should have access to the tools, time, and space needed to create. Kropotkin envisioned creator-owned and operated associations to fulfill our subjective needs. Then we shall see art associations. He who wishes for a grand piano will enter the association of musical instrument makers, and by giving the association part of his half-day's leisure, he will soon possess the piano of his dreams. If he is passionately fond of astronomical studies, he will join the Association of Astronomers, and he will have the telescope he desires by taking his share of the associated work. Kropotkin knew that the key to developing such art associations is time. He knew that capitalists robbed workers of precious free time by forcing us to toil long hours for little pay, stripping away the value of our labor in the form of profits, so that what little free time we have left at the end of the work week must be spent resting and recouping energy so that we can begin work again the next week. Kropotkin believed that in an anarchist society, having more free time would allow for more people to engage in creative expression within the arts and the sciences. In short, the five or seven hours a

day which each will have at his disposal after having consecrated several hours to the production of necessities, will amply suffice to satisfy all longings for luxury, however varied. Thousands of associations would undertake to supply them. What is now the privilege of an insignificant minority would be accessible to all. pay close attention to the words Kropotkin uses. In his mind, concepts of art and science and luxury and leisure are all extensions of one core idea. We can call them subjective needs. And Kropotkin believed that if the oppressive systems of capitalism were dismantled, then we would all have far more free time and energy to pour into our passions, which would create a boundless atmosphere of creative activity, along with more fulfilling lives of leisure and activity with our families and with our friends. There's a lot more to be said for how anarchism would allow us to live these fulfilling lives, but I'm afraid this is all the time we have for now. In the next part of this series, we'll talk about how we can build institutions that will allow us to enjoy not just artistic and scientific pursuits, but leisure activities as well. And hell, maybe we'll even have room for a little luxury after the bread has been secured. Subscribe now so you don't miss it. I'm Emeric Johnson. This is Non-Compete. Thanks for watching.

So anyway, this guy John Billington was a Separatist. Now we know a few things about him. We know that he offended Miles Standish, who was a mercenary who the Separatists met in Holland. if you'll recall they were in Holland and they hired him to be their military commander now Miles Standish was considered by William Bradford who was like the dungeon master of the colony he was considered to be a good guy by the pilgrims but the strangers but here's the deal actually Miles Standish was brutally oppressive and every time they encountered Indians he would send over a military party to intimidate them so in this context Let me introduce you to a man named John Billington.

Part 5: How do Anarchists LUXURY?

... If exploitation could be taken out of the equation, everyone could have a lot more fun. If we weren't living so precariously close to financial ruin, we would all have much better faculties and much higher expectations for enjoying life. ...

The Ted K Archive

NonCompete
How Anarchism Works

<www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLCcemL_x8RtdtFuib1Wl6VwyuYOEDb5Wv>

www.thetedkarchive.com