

A humanistic philosophical exploration of an open source society

why sharing matters

Dmitri Schrama

Student nr. 80083

theopensourcesociety@gmail.com

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	4
Freedom.....	5
Control.....	6
Synopsis.....	7
Research question.....	9
Method.....	9
Overview.....	10
Humanistic.....	14
On being human.....	14
Needs.....	15
Motivation.....	16
Intrinsic motivation.....	16
Stories.....	18
The other.....	19
Responsibility.....	20
Dialogue.....	21
Who we are.....	22
Society.....	24
Socialism.....	24
Capitalism.....	26
Altruism and long-term interests.....	28
Equality.....	29
Revolution.....	29
Chaos and Complexity Living on the edge.....	31
Open source.....	33
The idea.....	33
Property.....	34
Examples.....	36
Intellectual Property.....	36
Science.....	38
Ecology.....	39
Food.....	40
Economics.....	41
Business.....	42
Means of production.....	42
Computing.....	43
Hackers.....	44
Politics.....	45
Github in Politics.....	46
Possibilities.....	48
The open source society.....	48
Framework.....	48
Foundation.....	48
Transparency.....	49
Responsibility.....	50
Leaders and followers.....	50
Function and being.....	51
Equality and otherness.....	52
Making money.....	53
Einstein's refrigerator.....	54
From scarcity to abundance.....	56
Conclusion.....	57
p.s.....	60
Sources.....	61

Introduction

Society today is in turmoil. As it has been many times before, or maybe as it still is. As a species we are on a constant quest to find the right balance between **freedom**¹ and **control**². We humans *want* to be free; it's one of the driving forces of our species. According to Paul Ricoeur freedom is the basis for morality³ (Visscher, 1995 p.24). But there are some forms of control that we cannot escape like gravity. In our history we've been searching for a balance between the two and I presume it's safe to say that we have not yet found that *balance*. For if we had, we would not be in the situation we find ourselves in today. A positive *balance* would be a humane society where there is a maximum amount of freedom with the necessary amount of control.

Now I am not going to write about how bad things are, there is enough of that already. My aim is to highlight the changes that are going on in society and to describe a possible path out of our predicament. I understand how that sounds, and I cannot promise I will succeed. But as Henry Ford said: "whether you think you can, or you can't. Either way you are right." My point is this. If you believe you are doomed and there is nothing you can do about it then you will not do anything about it and thus you are doomed.

There is a calling for new stories we could strive for. This writing is heeding that call. This is not an attempt to prove anything. It is, at the least, an addition to the global dialogue or, at the most, the start of a new dialogue. There is no wrong or right when trying to build a story to better humanity. If there is a reference to someone you do not agree with, do not denounce this entire writing but try to see the meaning behind the use of the thought. For example: it is not wise to denounce Heidegger because he was a nazi, with that you would denounce a very influential philosophic idea. Try to see the bigger picture, read between the lines. Judge not lest thy be judged. No one person holds the entire truth, it is together that we can weave the story of our present and future.

As it stands, most people believe there are but two options for society. In black and white terms: you either live in a capitalist or a socialist society. Neither of which actually exist in its pure form today. In the first there is private ownership in the second there is not.

1 **Freedom, n.** - I. The state or fact of being free from servitude, constraint, inhibition, etc.; liberty. 1. a. Exemption or release from slavery or imprisonment; =liberty n.1 1b.

2 **Control, n.** 1. a. The fact of controlling, or of checking and directing action; the function or power of directing and regulating; domination, command, sway

3 **Morality n.** - 5 b. The branch of knowledge concerned with right and wrong conduct, duty, responsibility, etc.; moral philosophy, ethics.

Freedom

n. - I. The state or fact of being free from servitude, constraint, inhibition, etc.; liberty. 1. a. Exemption or release from slavery or imprisonment; =liberty n.1 1b.

According to Ricoeur freedom is the source of ethics⁴. “The startingpoint of ethics can only be found in the concept of freedom. (Visscher, 1995, p.25)” But it does not own itself, it can only be found in the works in which it objectifies itself.

I am not free, I can only affirm⁵ en understand myself as being free. I can only start from the notion that *I can*. “I am what I can en I can what I am. It is the initial consistence⁶ between a conviction and an action that could be the initial startingpoint of ethics. (ibid. p.26)”

Freedom is thus not a concrete fact but comes into being in our experience of freedom. And it is not captured in one action or experience. “*I can* must be acknowledged throughout the process of being. [...] **Ethics** is the road from the blind and naked belief in a primordial *I can* en the true history in which I this *I can* is acknowledged. [...] A second aspect of this starting-point is that the desire-to-be is expressed in a desire-to-act, this is the expression of being-able-to-act. The whole problem of ethics comes forth from the question: what does it mean for freedom to acknowledge itself? (ibid., p.27)”

Furthermore, how do we experience our freedom between all others? Since we are born human and grow up between other humans our ability-to-act is greatly influenced by others. (Heidegger, 1996 p.385) Freedom means having the ability to act in a way that is free. To be allowed to express the desire-to-act throughout a lifetime. And with that to allow others the same freedom. The freedom to build an own story of who we are, we need to be able to be authentic⁷ amongst everyone. But to organise this we need a certain amount of control.

4 Ethics – 2 a. (after Greek τὰ ἠθικά). The science of morals; the department of study concerned with the principles of human duty.

5 Affirm, v. 1. *trans.* To assert (something) strongly; to state as fact.

6 Consist, v. 1. a. *intr.* To have a settled existence, subsist, hold together, exist, be.

7 Authenticity, *n.* - The quality of being authentic, or entitled to acceptance, 2. as being in accordance with fact, as being true in substance.

Control

*“Who controls the food supply controls the people;
who controls the energy can control whole continents;
who controls money can control the world.”*

--- Henry Kissinger

Control n. - a. The fact of controlling, or of checking and directing action; the function or power of directing and regulating; domination, command, sway.

All control is, in essence, control over information⁸. 'Knowledge⁹ is power', and since knowledge is knowing certain information, information is power. When only you have knowledge of something you can have an advantage over others. If you choose to, you can withhold the information so only you are able to express the desire-to-act, and from that gain control over others. E.g. if you know how to grow food and you can keep others from knowing, you can control them by their dependence on your food, your knowledge. If you know how to harness, produce and/or distribute energy, apparently you can control continents. And so forth.

The point is that if you hold some knowledge, people are depended on you for whatever that knowledge yields. Then you can ask payment in exchange for the thing you know or its yields. With knowledge you can control others. If they want what you have, they'll have to give you what you ask for it. If you are a third party between two parties who want to make an exchange and you can convince them that they need to go through you, you have the ability to control the exchange. But only if you can keep your knowledge to yourself or your group. As soon as others know, you lose your advantage. And keeping knowledge a secret is becoming increasingly difficult in our age of information.

The world wide web has profound implications on society and the relationship between freedom and control. A good example of this is the recently leaked cables about the NSA's PRISM project, which showed us that America has been spying on it's citizens and European governments. It shows the need for some government agencies to control what happens on the web. But after Snowden did his revelations the world is seeing America in a different light.

With the advent of the Internet people were enabled to share information on a global scale. And, more importantly, the transaction became dialectic. Now people are not just mere consumers of information, they are able to share their own stories and add to the other stories as well. Now, for the first time in human history, everyone on the planet has the possibility of sharing their stories and have them read by everyone else. Almost everyone can get into direct dialogue with everyone else.

8 Information, n. - I. The imparting of knowledge in general. 1. a. The shaping of the mind or character; communication of instructive knowledge; education, training;

9 Knowledge, n. - II the fact or condition of knowing something.

According to ITU¹⁰ 1/3 of the entire world population is now on the Internet, and this number is growing every day. Information is becoming more and more distributed.

And again you see those in power trying to control the flow of information. In Europe there is the ACTA bill, in America there are the SOPA, PIPA and SISA bills. All of them propose regulation and control measurements. It would seem some people will not stop proposing bills until they get their control. The argument for these bills is that they would prevent illegal copying of proprietary goods, or 'intellectual property'. These bills would protect copyright owners, but after the PRISM scandal it is obvious (although not certain) that there is a deeper wish to be able to listen in on what is being communicated through the internet. The people in control want to stay in control.

So in essence, control means the ability to influence the flow of information. The closing of certain information gives the controlling faction a certain power over the freedom of others. If other people don't know they are free they will submit to control. The easiest way to control is to make sure the other does not have the information that tells them they are free.

Synopsis

A philosophical humanistic exploration into the open source society. What might you expect from such a title? In short I will try to explain what I mean by each of these words and what their meaning might mean for our species and our habitat. The problem with words is that they are often ambiguous. For example: what do I mean by a mean of a meaning? Mean has twelve entries in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED¹¹) and I mean v.9 – to mediate. My meaning (v.1 To intent) in this writing is to move your attention towards the society you live in, your place within it and what we can do with it. *Throughout this writing I will use the OED for defining ambiguous words to not spent too much time on explaining what I mean with certain words.* Please bear in mind that this is an attempt at philosophy and I realize that how one defines a word is of the utmost importance. But I must choose between volume, depth and width, For this writing I choose to touch on a wide variety of topics, which means I will lose some depth.

Our university is a normative scientific one, aimed at qualitative research. We study **humanism**, which means two things, one is meaning, as in OED n.2: The significance, purpose, underlying truth, etc., i.e. what makes a life meaningful? How do we give meaning to life? What is the meaning of life? Not just our own, but all life. The other question is that of humanity. What is it like to be human? And how do we treat others as humans? What is humane?

¹⁰ International Telecommunication Union

¹¹ To avoid any misunderstanding any ambiguous word shall have a definition as given by the OED

From this we get to **society, n.** which according to the OED means: I. Senses relating to connection, participation, or partnership. 1. the fact or condition of being connected; a connection. Since your world is always made up by a society, the smallest part of which is the single family eg. parents and child(ren). A society is always made up by rules, written-and unwritten ones. Which leads us to the word source.

Source, n. - a. The fountain-head or origin of a river or stream; the spring or place from which a flow of water takes its beginning. The source is the point of origin. From that point a story starts. And the story, from a humanistic perspective, is always about a *human being* interacting with its environment¹². From this environment we get certain restrictions. Some are natural i.e. we will never be able to fly without mechanical aid, others are man-made. Some are there to preventing us from hurting ourself¹³ and our¹⁴-self¹⁵, others are there that prevent you from hurting others.

So there is a source for rules, a point of origin for, what we call, government. These rules have a certain history, which in turn is a story of people. Some rules have been around for a long time, some are new, there are rules that should be made and others should be reexamined and if found out of date be disregarded. Rules are information, or as the OED says: The imparting of knowledge in general and all information has a source.

The word **Open** as related to source doesn't need much further introduction here, it means that the source of information is 'open', i.e. free. But, as the open source and free software people say: free as in freedom, not as in beer. You are free to access all information on what you need to make beer, but if you want someone else's beer, you'll have to clear up the restrictions impeded on you by the owner of the beer. Usually in the form of paying the person.

An Open Source Society then would be a society where information is shared freely. How is an Open Source Society, where information is shared freely, different from today's society and how would society be experienced if all knowledge is available? This is the research questions of this writing.

Now, before we start, there is one word left in the title which should not be overlooked. **A** means that this is my perspective. It is just **A** story backed up by conclusions that other people

12 The action of circumnavigating, encompassing, or surrounding something; the state of being encompassed or surrounded. Cf. *environ* v. 3, 2. *Obs.*

13 Emphatic and reflexive pronoun, corresponding to *we, us* (esp. with singular reference). See *ourselves* pron. Originally freq. a plural, but now almost exclusively singular, referring either collectively to people in general or to an individual normally referred to by *we* and *us*

14 1. The genitive case of the first person pronoun *we* (*we* pron., *n.*, and *adj.*): of *us*. In Old English chiefly and Middle English only as complement of another pronoun (or a numeral), e.g. *either, none, one*, etc., or with the genitive plural of *all* (see *alther* *adj.*). *Obs.*

15 that being that you call I

arrived at. So this story can't possibly be the whole truth and nothing but the truth, since it's only one in seven billion ([google.com/publicdata](https://www.google.com/publicdata)). I believe that only if we put all our truths together we can see our humanity as a whole, then we see humanity and thus ourselves. In our agreement we may find our collective story, in our disagreement we may perhaps find our authenticity. What do you see when you look at society. And what do you see if you see yourself in society? To me there is no right or wrong in what you see. I hold no judgment over peoples personal behavior, I don't even know what to think of my own, let alone that of others. I believe I am able to write philosophy, but I can not be the judge of that. In the end, you are, it is you dear reader who will value this writing for what it is.

Research question

In this writing we will explore the dichotomy¹⁶ between open- and closed-source. The question we will try to answer is: **How is an Open Source Society, where information is shared freely, different from today's society and how would society be experienced if all knowledge is available?**

To answer these question I will set up a philosophical framework in which I will describe a possible context of humanism. As I see it humanism means finding the right balance between freedom and control. And to understand this balance we will need a certain perspective on humans. From the philosophies of Ricoeur, Levinas, Klein and Zohar I attempt to show that human beings are social beings that have a need for comfort and social inclusiveness. To see the balance we are trying to achieve we look at society in an abstract way to depict the duality in the system. With these elements we will explore the idea of an open-source society.

Method

The form of this writing can be described as literary historical pragmatic philosophy. Literary because I add to what has already been written by philosophers before me. For the section on humanism I will use written sources. Historical pragmatic because I use sources from the internet that give us real life examples of open source initiatives, from the early beginnings to the current projects that are going on right now. Also it is pragmatic because this piece is aimed at shaping a practical framework from which an alternative societal system could be created. The philosophical currents that inspired me are post-structuralism, and historical materialism. It should be noted again that my aim is to write philosophy that aims to be an addition to your perspective. If the information contained in this document adds to your perspective it has been useful. As the stories I receive from

¹⁶ Dychotomy *n.* - 1. Division of a whole into two parts.

you are an addition to my perspective. The only way to see the bigger picture is to share all perspectives because our reality has become too complex to be overseen by one person.

This writing should be considered as an overview. This is but an exploration of something that is happening in society which has the potential to offer an alternative to the way we are living today. It will touch on a range of subjects without going into much detail. I do not claim to have any specific knowledge, this writing is more a catalog of findings with which I weave a specific story. Our university is aimed at normative qualitative studies, and so this writing might not adhere to the usual guidelines of scientific writing.

Overview

The chapter **Humanistic** is written from a hermeneutic perspective. In the chapter on being human we find *Edmund Husserl's* intentionality, with which I make the phenomenological argument that we can not think about the world without being in the world. After that we find *Abraham Maslow* who shows us that our being in the world creates certain **Needs**. After which I argue that if these needs are met we are comfortable. But in my section on **Motivation** we see through *Danah Zohar* that this comfort can never fully be achieved if we look at our-self from an atomistic (i.e. scientific) perspective. That it created a separation between us and the other, that we are disconnected from each other. And, according to *Brené Brown* this connection is needed for a meaningful life. Also Dan Pink shows us that working together on a creative problem, a problem where the answer is not clear cut and obvious, intrinsic motivation helps us to get autonomy, mastery and purpose. These are elements needed to work towards connection and are what builds our identity.

Dan P. McAddams shows us that **stories** are the way we build our identity. And that we are dependent on the stories of others to find our own. We have a need to belong to a bigger story, we want to be part of the human story. For this we need **The other**, who is the basis for morality according to *Emmanuel Levinas* who is credited for the fact that he took *Martin Heidegger's* step from an observer-perspective to a participatory-perspective (which was still atomistic) and showed us that to fully understand our being-human we must experience it together. This in turn gives us the **Responsibility** to take care of the others, not totalize them, and enjoy the experience of being in the world together. To truly understand the shared experience we will have to be in **Dialogue** with each other as explained by Atterton et. al. And thus we come to see **Who we are**. We are beings shaped by our environment. In part we create our identities from this environment. We have an intrinsic need to be connected. But are we?

The chapter about **society** is from a Historical Materialist perspective. And shows us the failure of our current system.

We are connected to each other in a system called **Society**. The most well-known systems are Capitalism and Socialism and the bottom line of these systems have to do with private ownership. **Socialism**, according to *Roland Axtmann* (2003), is a system of shared ownership but it has two mayor flaws. The first is that it has never been truly tried the second is that it creates the possibility for a disregard for authenticity.

In contrast **Capitalism** is about private ownership according to Andrew Bernstein. And it has grown into neo-liberal-capitalism, which is a system that glorifies egocentric behaviour. The system could work if the rights of every individual in the system would be respected but *Norton and Ariely* show us that this is not the case.

Another flaw, that applies to both systems is that they allow people to get control of the system which inevitably creates inequality. Today in the USA the gap between rich and poor is even wider than most people even think. But the fact that both systems exist shows us that there is a need for them. If there was no need for a socialist society, there would have not been attempts to create one. And the same goes for the capitalist system, there seems to be an inherent need for private ownership and individuality. We do not have to do away with Capitalism but it needs to shift it's focus towards **Altruism and Long-term interests** as suggested by *Rene Klein*. Capitalism today has created a great inequality between rich and poor and *Richard Wilkinson* tells us we have to reduce that gap to create **Equality**. For now, according to *Zohar*, globalization means the “colonization of the poor by the wealthy capitalist world.” This in turn will most likely result in **Revolution** as shown by *Jamie Johnson*. And if we do not find a way out of it we might destroy ourselves in the process according to *Michio Kaku*.

Now not every revolution is bad, in **Chaos and Complexity Living on the edge** we find *Zohar* explaining that complex adaptive systems poised at the edge of chaos will create a new order. To put it more simple: societies move between order and disorder, once a society moves to disorder there is a point where human beings are in a position to create new structures from the failing structure.

One of those new structures could come from the **Open Source** movement which is defined by *Bruce Perens* as “a way for people to collaborate on software without being encumbered by all of the problems of intellectual property.” It is a collaborative effort in which programmers improve upon the code and share the changes within the community. **The idea** of open source is that the

information on how goods are created is open to everyone. *Eric S. Raymond* explains how the different ways of working are like a cathedral and bazaar. The first is a top down approach, the second like a marketplace where ideas are shared freely. Open source is about **Property** not just who owns what, but as *Steven Weber* says, what it means to own something. It shifts the control from a private owner to the community. “Change the foundations of property, and you change the network of relationships that radiate outward from that which is owned, in fundamental and often unexpected ways.”

From this we get to the **Examples** of what this change has already created for: intellectual property (i.e. copyright), science, Ecology, Food, Economics, Business, means of production, computing, hacking and politics. It shows us the tools already created that could build the open source society.

The chapter on **The open source society** is a normative exploration of a **framework** that could be used to create a more balanced society. The **foundation** based on trust would allow for the ownership over freedom and control to shift from one owner to every individual. What is needed is a change in mind-set towards this trust. This change can be easy or hard depending on the person. But learning about the increasing control of society, our need for connection and the increasing dependence on others might motivate us to make that change. The hard part will be giving up part of our identity that is shaped by the current story. **Transparency** is an important factor to create trust. Also we must be willing to have greater responsibility for our own lives. Once we are no longer controlled by others we will have to learn to control ourselves. And we will have to accept **leaders and followers**. Leading sometimes will mean following, because as *Derek Sivers* explains, a first follower is a form of leadership in its own right. We will have to understand the need for equality because leading is no longer a matter of control but a function within an equal group. I propose a distinction between **function and being** so we can share our disagreement in function without fear of losing connection. We will have to learn that there is a difference between **equality and otherness**. Because of the fact that we are all unique we will have to learn to accept that we are not all the same. *Temple Grandin* teaches us that there are different minds who are capable of different things. The open source society thrives on diversity, so we will have to accept that we all have a different role to play in society. And each new generation should be able to explore their own authenticity.

Making money shows two companies, Red Hat and Sourcefabric, who found a way to make money from open source software, but what about a physical product? In **Einstein's refrigerator** we do a thought experiment about that.

The final chapter is **From scarcity to abundance** and is an optimistic view of how all the elements mentioned above could create a new form of abundance. We will most likely have to give up a lot of the stuff we have today. But in return we will get more time and a higher standard of living for more people. Time can be spent on connection, organization or building new technologies. And the promise of government by the people for the people will be fulfilled because of open government.

Humanistic

adj. - 2. of, relating to, or characteristic of *humanism*. Humanism, n. - 5 **a.** Any system of thought or ideology which places humans, or humanity as a whole, at its center, *esp.* one which is predominantly concerned with human interests and welfare, and stresses the inherent value and potential of human life. (...)

From this definition we learn that Humanistic philosophy originates from the human experience. Humanistic studies contain two fields. The first is meaning¹⁷, What makes a life meaningful? How do we give meaning to life? Not just our own, but all life. The other is the question of humanity. What is it like to be human? And how do we treat others as humans?

This idea of putting the human experience as the center of thought can be traced back to Protagoras¹⁸ who stated: man is the measure of all things. By which I believe he meant¹⁹ that everything we think we know about the world has its origin in man. We can not think about the world without *being in the world* as human beings and having a certain intentionality towards it.

The second field of study is that of humanity. What is it like to be human? And how do we treat others as humans? What is humane? Or, what does it mean to be a human being?

On being human

Husserl taught us that being a human-being means to have intentionality²⁰. “Much as a theory is correlated with a field of objects, so an *experience* or its content is correlated with a *field of phenomena* centered on the object intended where the intended object is surrounded by a horizon of possibilities for that object as it is experienced. (Woodruff, 2007. P.109)” According to Woodruff “Husserl coins the verb “to intend” (“intendieren,” in German), meaning that consciousness is aimed or directed at something in this way. We may say an act intends an object, or alternatively we say a subject intends an object in an experience (which intends that object). (ibid. p. 209)” We are to the world with intention²¹. Or in simpler terms²²: one aspect of being human that is certain, is that our experience of being human is facilitated by the world around us. Which means you will have to form some opinion about your environment and you will have to take a stance²³ towards it. But

17 Meaning, .n.2 - **1.** The significance, purpose, underlying truth, etc., of something. **c.** Of an action, condition, etc.: signification; intention; cause, purpose; motive, justification. Usu. in interrogative contexts, as a rhetorical question in protest at an action or behaviour (*esp.* in what is the meaning of —?)

18 <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protagoras>

19 OED: Meant, adj – intended, purposed; imbued with meaning.

20 Intentionality, n. - The quality or fact of being intentional.

Intentional, *adj.* And *n.* - **2.** Done on purpose, resulting from intention; intended. Rarely of an agent: Acting with intention.

21 Intention, *n.* - †**1.** The action of straining or directing the mind or attention to something; mental application or effort; attention, intent observation or regard; endeavour. *Obs.*

22 **I.** A limit in space, duration, etc.- **a.** That which limits the extent of anything; a limit, extremity, boundary, bound (e.g. of a territory, region, or space). Usually in *pl.* Limits, bounds, borders, confines. Now *rare* or *arch.*

23 Stance *n.*1 Dissension, dispute: = distance *n.* 1 withouten stance: without dispute, undoubtedly.

Stance *n.*2 **a.** A standing-place, station, position.

whatever your stance is it is always connected to something that exists within your world.

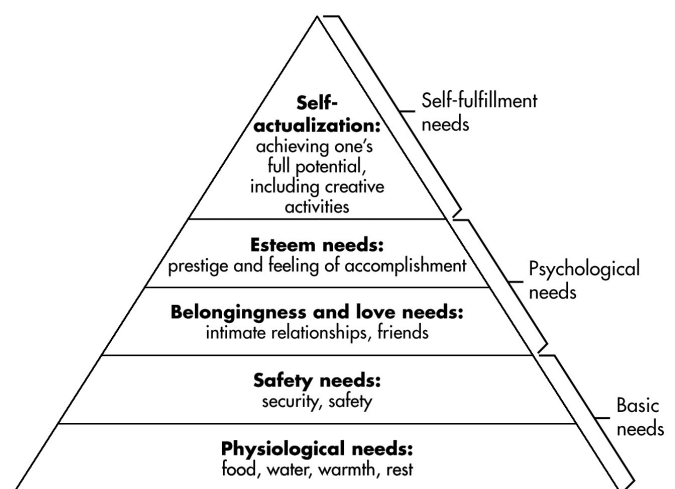
Heidegger (1996. p. 135) shows us, we should see our selves as being thrown into the world where there are a lot of things that were already there. And then you arrive and have to discover what was happening before you got here and what is happening now and what could happen in the future.

Being human means having the experience of a being in a human body in a world. It means being constantly connected to and shaped by that world. Like a human experience module we have to find a way to relate to the world we are 'thrown in'. We will have come to terms with our 'throwtness' which controls us and the freedom we have to create our own identity-stories.

Needs

So the first thing we have to come to terms with is our physical existence. As human beings we have certain basic **needs**,²⁴ as depicted in Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1943). According to Maslow these 'basics' are fundamental for a good development of a human being.

A good development then would mean that the needs are met. If all needs are met, if a human being feels it has the freedom to fulfill these needs, a certain *state of being* is met. For this *state* we will use the word *comfort*. If they are not met we call this *discomfort*. Now comfort is an ambiguous²⁵ word. A review²⁶ by Chappells & Shove “shows that there are many different ways of conceptualizing, defining and analyzing comfort. (2004 p.26)” Therefore the word comfort for this piece means: having the freedom to fulfill needs.



Technology is one of the things that stems from this desire for '*comfort*'. Our technological advance created *tools* which gave us an abundance of food, water, warmth and rest. We have much to thank to the scientific community for that. But the scientific influence on our comfort has not always proven desirable. Because in her endeavors she might have given humanity a self-image that is not desirable for achieving true comfort.

24 Need, v.2 – I. *Intr.* To be necessary **a. (it) needs:** it is needed or necessary.

25 Ambiguous, *adj.* - 2. *Of words or other significant indications: Admitting more than one interpretation, or explanation; of double meaning, or of several possible meanings; equivocal. (The commonest use.)*

26 Comfort : A review of philosophies and paradigms

Motivation

Dana Zohar, in her book *Spiritual capital: wealth we can live by*, makes the argument that with Newtonian science an atomistic worldview arose. “The basic building blocks of Newton's physical world were so many isolated and impenetrable atoms that bounce around in space and collide with on another like tiny billiard balls. (1994. p.26)” Science put forward a mechanistic worldview. And this “mechanism” became “the central paradigm of the modern world. (ibid.)”

“The idea of “Atomism denies the reality and importance of relationship, establishing a precedent for conflict and confrontation and the pursuit of limiting self-interest. [...] As a model, mechanism cannot account for why people ever act on behalf of other, or why there is any sort of social cohesion. And it's sharp separation between the mental and the physical encourages a division between ourselves and the natural world, setting us in opposition to the world of nature and to the natural within ourselves. (ibid. p.28)”

With the advent of the mechanistic worldview we started losing our connection to each-other. Our relationships became increasingly self-serving. We became disconnected because we believed the physical reality was one of disconnection. But “being disconnected from others, social isolation, has an impact on health comparable to the effect of high blood pressure, lack of exercise, obesity, or smoking. [...] the culprit behind these dire statistics is not usually being literally alone, but the subjective experience known as loneliness. [...] If you asked a zookeeper to create a proper enclosure for the species *Homo sapiens*, she would list at the top of her concerns "obligatorily gregarious, " meaning that you do not house a member of the human family in isolation, any more than you house a member of *Aptenodytes forsteri* (Emperor penguins) in hot desert sand. (Cacioppo, 2008. p.52)” People need each other on more than just on a mechanical level. In the mechanical model we are isolated from each other. Meaning is not derived from a mechanical interaction between us and the world. It needs a deeper connection. As Brené Brown put it: “[...] connection is why we are here. It is what gives purpose and meaning to our lives. (Brown, 2010.)”

Intrinsic motivation

But it's not only connection that motivates us to do things. A big part of our lives we have to do things. Things that improve our comfort. The most well known thing for this today is what we call work. Now many economists still believe that the monetary incentive in capitalism is the best motivator to get work done. But as Dan Pink shows us in his talk: the puzzle of motivation (Pink, 2009. Ted.com²⁷), the “carrot and the stick” do not work that well when it comes to creativity, what we need then is intrinsic motivation. He gives the example of the candle problem, a problem with a

²⁷ [ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html](https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation.html)

creative solution. There are two groups, one in which they want to see how fast people find a solution to the problem. The other one is the same but with a monetary incentive. The fastest one gets the most money, the second one a bit less and so on. Pink teaches us this is not true: “If you want people to perform better, you reward them. Right? Bonuses, commissions, their own reality show. Incentivize them. That's how business works. But that's not happening here. You've got an incentive designed to sharpen thinking and accelerate creativity, and it does just the opposite. It dulls thinking and blocks creativity. (ibid.)” And as it turns out, the new systems of production rely more and more on creativity.

“If-then rewards work really well for those sorts of tasks where there is a simple set of rules and a clear destination to go to. Rewards, by their very nature, narrow our focus, concentrate the mind; that's why they work in so many cases. And so, for tasks [with] a narrow focus, where you just see the goal right there, zoom straight ahead to it, they work really well. But for the real candle problem, you don't want to be looking like this. The solution is not over here. The solution is on the periphery. You want to be looking around. That reward actually narrows our focus and restricts our possibility. [...] As long as the task involved [is] only mechanical skill bonuses worked as they would be expected: the higher the pay, the better the performance. Okay? But one the task called for even rudimentary cognitive skill, a larger reward led to poorer performance. (ibid.)” And so we need a new way of motivating people.

“[T]he scientists who've been studying motivation have given us this new approach. It's an approach built much more around *intrinsic motivation*. *Around the desire to do things because they matter, because we like it, because they're interesting, because they are part of something important*. And to my mind, that *new operating system* for our businesses revolves around three elements: *autonomy, mastery and purpose*. Autonomy: the urge to direct our own lives. Mastery: the desire to get better and better at something that matters. Purpose: the yearning to do what we do in the service of something larger than ourselves. These are the building blocks of an entirely new operating system for our businesses. [...] Traditional notions of management are great if you want compliance. But if you want engagement, self-direction works better.

Intrinsic motivators versus extrinsic motivators. Autonomy, mastery and purpose, versus carrot and sticks. And who wins? Intrinsic motivation, autonomy, mastery and purpose, in a knockout. [...] The science confirms what we know in our hearts. So, if we repair this mismatch between what science knows and what business does, if we bring our motivation, notions of motivation into the 21st century, if we get past this lazy, dangerous, ideology of carrots and sticks, we can strengthen our businesses, we can solve a lot of those candle problems, and maybe, maybe, maybe we can

change the world. (Pink, 2009.)”

As science gave us the mechanistic worldview, now Zohar, Brown and Pink show us that science now seems to support the idea of connection and intrinsic motivation. We are motivated to work towards autonomy, mastery and purpose. And one of the most intrinsic purposes we have is the need to feel connected to others. So how do we create these things? What is the thing that combines these efforts into an I that has the freedom to express its *I can*? How does one create the identity of the *I* that can experience all these things?

Stories

Freedom to Live

Mastery leads to freedom from the fear of death, which in turn is the freedom to live. This is sometimes referred to as living in the moment, neither anticipating the future nor regretting the past.

Campbell: "The hero is the champion of things becoming, not of things become, because he is. 'Before Abraham was, I AM.' He does not mistake apparent changelessness in time for the permanence of Being, nor is he fearful of the next moment (or of the 'other thing'), as destroying the permanent with its change. 'Nothing retains its own form; but Nature, the greater renewer, ever makes up forms from forms. Be sure there's nothing perishes in the whole universe; it does but vary and renew its form.' Thus the next moment is permitted to come to pass." [18] (American Anthropologist, 92:4 (December 1990), p. 1104)

--- Joseph Campbell

“[...] *life* is not simply a biological phenomenon but symbolically mediated. And Ricoeur argues that human experience is already riddled with stories in a way that suggests a demand for narrative immanent to experience itself. Indeed, psychoanalysis suggests that we might think of lives in terms of untold or virtual stories; recounting a life would merely be articulating these, rather than imposing them on an alien content. Ricoeur suggests we think of the examined life as a narrated life, characterized by a struggle between concordance and discordance, the aim of which is to discover, not to impose on oneself, a narrative identity. This process allows one to develop a sense of oneself as a subject, not as a narcissistic ego but as a self ‘instructed by cultural symbols’. (Wood, 2003. p. 11)” We need to find a balance between the stories we tell ourselves we are and how our environment responds to the identity we create for ourselves. We have the freedom to try out narratives for ourselves, but are confined by our surroundings who do not naturally accept your claim.

According to Dan P. McAddams in *The stories we live by* (2001) a human-being experiences its life like a story. McAdams's central premise is that we give meaning to our lives by applying a narrative structure dividing the life into chapters, each with its own setting and characters, and, ultimately, unified with a central theme. More specifically, we each create personal myths, based on dominant narrative forms (e.g., comedy, romance, tragedy, irony) and archetypal characters (e.g., the intellectual, the healer, the creator) from within our culture. Who we are, our identities, are the

stories we tell ourselves and others. They are formed from the stories we are thrown in and, as we grow up, our meaning and ideas we give to that story and our own place within them.

You tell yourself: *I am my name, I am this body, this is the food I like, this is the music I listen to, these are the colors that I like, this is the place I live.* But these stories in themselves have no real meaning. They only define the I as a moment in time. All these things can change and your experience will still originate from your perspective. Meaning supposes a purpose, a direction. A direction needs a bearing²⁸. To go from one place to the other you have your point of origin and the point of arrival. But a third point is needed in relation to the first two points, this triangulation gives meaning to the bearing. Our story is always experienced in relation to every other story that it comes into contact with. But without understanding a story has no meaning or influence on our own story. So the most important influence on our own story are the stories of others. Being human comes natural to us, it is the human story that is closest to our own and thus the easiest to understand. And so it is the other who shapes our story, our identity the most.

We are always depended on others for the creation of our own narrative. One of the most fundamental notions of being human is that we are who we believe we are. And these believes, the story of humanity, has changed over time. Through religion and science our narrative of who we are evolved into what we believe today. This 'human-story' is not segmented, it is the story of the whole of humanity. A story that is constantly reviewed and renewed as people enter and leave. According to Danah Zohar our story is a holistic one. "Holism (a sense of the system, or of connectivity) [is the] ability to see larger patterns, relationships, connections. A strong sense of belonging. (Zohar, 2004 p.79)" We belong to humanity because we are human. And being a part of humanity and cooperating in writing the human-story we are highly depended on others.

The other

If it comes to writing about *the other* the philosopher *Emmanuel Levinas* stands out. In the first chapter of *Kopstukken Filosofie* (Leaders in Philosophy) an interpretation of his core thoughts is given. "In relation to the other, something, like value or moral is created. (Duyndam, 2003 p.17)" Levinas is not looking for the foundations of morality, to him morality is the foundation. Morality is the basis for the human story, our reality. And this "origin of morality [...] is a given of experience. This experience is accessible to everyone – given in the everyday interaction I have with others. (ibid. p.14)" For Levinas the origin of ethics is not given in Ricoeur's affirmation of *I can* but starts in the interaction between a subject and the other. "The image of man of Levinas, the anthropological starting-point, [...] does not start at being. His thinking starts at 'I and the other'.

²⁸ Bearing, *n.* - 9. Tendency to exert influence, practical relation or reference to other things; aspect.

(ibid. p.17)” For Levinas the *I* is the center of experience en “this being-the-center means that I am *totalizing*²⁹: perceiving, acting and giving meaning I make from *the* world *my* world. (ibid. p.18)” We incorporate the world into our stories, we give it meaning. Morality means the other is outside of this totalization. The other can-not be reduced to my world, because then we would take away the other's freedom to create a story of its own. If I do this the other would stop being other, I would take away the authenticity of the other. We would take away the autonomy of the other if we believe them to be the same as *I*. “[...] the metaphysical notion of the infinite becomes concrete in the face of the other. [...] The other, as other, is outside or is transcendent of my totalization. [...] On the fundamental level there is a qualitative inequality: the other is completely different from me. [It is] in this relation between me as subject and the transcendent other that the source of morality lives. (Ibid. p.21)” Levinas does not speak about man from some abstract view outside of us. He makes the final step that brings philosophy home from the outside view as criticized by another influential philosopher: Martin Heidegger.

Heidegger argues for a participatory-view instead of an observer-view. We cannot understand the world without the perspective of *being in the world* (Heidegger, 2006 p.49). But in my opinion he did not make the final step. In analogy: Philosophers, according to Heidegger, were like people on the sideline of the game of life. Trying to understand the rules of the game from the outside. His addition to philosophy was saying we should get into the game, experience the game, if we truly want to understand the meaning of it. But with the mechanical world-view in mind we could say that he was not talking about people, but about camera's. Without the connection we reviewed the game as we do on television. We are not emerged in the real world as we were cut off from the idea that we were an integral part of it. What Heidegger did was place the camera from the sideline on the field. Now we saw the game from the inside perspective, but we were still not connected to it because we were reviewing it on a television somewhere outside the game. This analogy seems to be similar to Plato, who invites us to come out of the cave, Levinas invites us to turn off the television (or get out of the cave) and join in the experience of being in the game.

Responsibility

According to Levinas the face of the other does an appeal³⁰ on me. The face of the other chooses me to take responsibility for the other. This appeal has a negative and a positive interpretation. As negative it asks me not to totalize the other. To allow the other to have the freedom to be other. Because in principle the other is powerless. “*I can* assimilate the other, reduce her to an object in

29 Totalize, v. - *trans*. To make total; to combine into a total or aggregate.

30 Appeal, n. - 5. A call for help of any kind, or for a favour; an earnest request; an entreaty.

my world, but I should not. (Ibid.)”

As positive the appeal has “the character of an invitation to responsibility. [...] My primary responsibility to the other is the purport³¹ of my relationship with the other. [...] This primary responsibility is the basis for everything called moral [...] as it gives us norms and values their negative, authoritative powers as well as a positive, invitational or attractive power. (ibid.)” According to Duyndam, this responsibility gives us the task of caretaking (which is similar to Heidegger's notion of care (Sorge, Besorgen and Fursorge) mentioned earlier) that has to be fulfilled, shaped and be lived up to. It appeals to me to make an effort. But I am free in how I exert this effort. Freedom for Levinas exists in the space between I and the other. Also this freedom is asymmetrical, in that it is “not reversible (ibid. p.23)”. Which means I can not transfer my responsibility to the other or an other. As long as I shape my I can I am responsible for the other. Although the appeal the other does on us and our responsibility to act are essential to Levinas's philosophy one thing supersedes these. According to Duyndam Levinas's conclusion is that we are here to enjoy live. We should get in the game and enjoy it as much as possible. Just by realizing that we are connected to, and depended on, other people.

Dialogue

There is only one way to understand the other even if it's only to a certain point. To understand the perspective of the other you'll have to go into dialogue.

“Levinas's phenomenological approach begins with the experience of the face (*le visage*) of the other, with whom I relate face-to-face. The main dynamic behind this relation is ethics. I recognize the otherness of the other by not competing with him or her but by responding to him or her in a relation of discourse. When two persons "meet" each other, according to Buber, there is an essential remainder common to each of them that reaches out beyond the special sphere of each. That remainder is the basic interhuman reality, the "sphere of the between " [...]. The participation of both partners is indispensable to this sphere. The unfolding of this sphere is the "dialogical." (Atterton, 2004. p.2)” Dialogue is the way with which to bridge the unknown horizon of the otherness of the other. Only in sharing experiences we can get to understand how the other differs from us.

“The meaning of this dialogue is found in neither one nor the other of the partners, nor in both taken together, but in their encounter. *The psychological, that which happens within the souls of each, is only the secret accompaniment to the dialogue. It influences the dialogue but does not*

31 Purport, *n.* - 2. That which is intended to be done or effected by something; intention, object, purpose; an instance of this. Now *rare*.

define it. In a dialogic relation, the "barriers" of individual being are breached and "the other becomes present not merely in the imagination or feeling but in the depths of one's substance, so that one experiences the mystery of the other being in the mystery of one's own" (Atterton, 2004. p.2)" Through dialogue the experience of the other comes within our horizon of experience. The other becomes part of you as you become part of the other.

"The I-Thou relationship is direct, mutual, present and open; I -Thou is a dialogue in which the other is accepted in his or her unique otherness and not reduced to a content of my experience. We may move in the direction of greater wholeness through greater awareness and fuller response in each new situation. "The inmost growth of the self does not take place, as people like to suppose today," writes Buber, "through our relationship to ourselves, but through being made present by the other and knowing that we are made present by him. (Atterton et. al., 2004 p.3)" It is through the other that we start to see ourselves. The other is as a mirror showing us the stories we tell ourselves in the others and how it differs from our own and the other's experience.

Who we are

So as human beings our meaning and humanity is shaped by the world around us, of which other people are a fundamental part. We build our identity-stories in connection to others. It's the need for this connection and the invite of the other that motivates us to act moral. Thus we are invited to act morally towards each other to feel like we belong to our species. But we are also responsible towards our-self to experience our own being and develop our own authentic self. But that responsibility should also be extended to others to let them have their own experience and development. One of the foundations of meaning is knowing that we belong in this world and amongst the others. And we are supposed to enjoy life to its fullest potential. But do we feel connected? Is everyone heeding the appeal of the others around us. I feel it is not.

It would seem more and more people are showing a need for more communality. As the current system falters many people are getting more and more depended on each other. The realization grows that the atomistic world-view, the inherent individualization of society is unsustainable. We need others to take care of us. Almost everything we have was created by someone else. The supermarket doesn't grow food, it just sells it. It is grown somewhere else, by someone else. It is transported by someone and put on the shelves. If we get sick we need others to take care of us. The individualistic society is showing her limitations when we fall on hard times. So why is this our reality? Here we come full circle to our initial duality between freedom and control which is held together by the scale of society.

Society

society, n.

1. The fact or condition of being connected; a connection.
3. a. The fact or condition of participating in some action, event, etc.; participation.

According to the OED society means being connected and participating in a bigger group. Inadvertently society means government³². Where ever humans come together organizational structures start to form. Thomas Hobbes believed government is necessary to contain the beast-like nature of man. “In the *Leviathan*, Thomas Hobbes likened it to a “war of every man against every man. (Zohar 1994 p.73)” This raises the question of what the natural state of man is. Are we beast-like? Do we need to be protected from each other because we are unable to be peacefully connected? Are we mere egocentric atomistic experience modules only out for our own gain? Or are we social beings able to live in harmony? The two current opposing ideologies which underlay these questions are respectively capitalism and socialism. And the bottom line of these ideologies have to do with ownership. To put the duality in perspective, capitalism advocates individualism³³, authenticity³⁴ and private ownership, whereas socialism advocates commonality³⁵ and shared ownership. This is the balance that has shaped the human story of the last few decades. This is the balance mentioned in the introduction. So what is the story of these two systems. And how do they relate to this story.

Socialism

Socialism, n.

2. Freq. with capital initial. A theory or system of social organization based on state or collective ownership and regulation of the means of production, distribution, and exchange for the common benefit of all members of society; advocacy or practice of such a system, esp. as a political movement. Now also: any of various systems of liberal social democracy which retain a commitment to social justice and social reform, or feature some degree of state intervention in the running of the economy.

“Socialists [...] typically subscribe to views of humanity that emphasize sharing resources, rather than competitive accumulation; common ownership of goods, especially those involved in the production of essentials, rather than ownership by individual or incorporated bodies; voluntary or responsible cooperation in producing goods and services, rather than disciplines or pressures

32 Government, n. - 1. The action of governing (see senses of the vb.). **a.** The action of ruling; continuous exercise of authority over the action of subjects or inferiors; authoritative direction or regulation; control, rule.

33 Individuality, n. - a. The fact or condition of existing as an individual; separate and continuous existence.

34 Authenticity, n. - The quality of being authentic, or entitled to acceptance →

Authentic, *adj.* and *n.* - 3 **a.** Entitled to acceptance or belief, as being in accordance with fact, or as stating fact; reliable, trustworthy, of established credit. (The prevailing sense; often used in contradistinction to *genuine*, esp. by writers on Christian Evidences, while others identify ‘authentic’ and ‘genuine.’ See sense A. 6.)

7. Belonging to himself, own, proper. *Obs.*

35 Commonality, n. - 6. The state or quality of being in common with, or shared by, others (cf. commonness n. 1a); spec. community of function, structure, or purpose; also, a shared feature.

But interestingly also: **3.** A corporation; = commonalty n. 2. *Obs.*

arising from necessity and scarcity; schemes of distribution that eliminate money or at least severely curtail the accumulation of capital, rather than reliance on markets and private trading; collective decision-making and planning, rather than letting individual decisions and market outcomes determine what happens in society. (Axtmann, 2003 p.252)”

The basis of sharing is on par with the fundament of the open source society. There is however an obvious problem regarding socialism. And that is that it has never really been tried. This means that we can-not know whether humanity is able to live in this way. The most well-known socialists theory is that of Marx's communism. But the real world applications of the system in history have been Leninism³⁶, Stalinism³⁷ and Maoism³⁸. And since the fall of the Berlin wall it is safe to say that the regions where this ideology was practised have adopted their own version of capitalism. And if I might add, I believe that was for the best. Those “self-defined ‘Marxists’, such as V.I. Lenin (1870–1924), Joseph Stalin (1879–1953) and Mao Zedong (1893–1976), took political success much more seriously, and took charge personally, creating disciplined party structures, and disciplining party doctrines, that promoted new power structures. Those power structures became infamous for harsh methods and terror . [...] none of those regimes made a transition to democracy as Marx, or as democratic socialists, had envisaged it, and none fulfilled the high standards of welfare and productivity that Marx and the ‘industrializing’ socialists had promised (ibid. p.257).”

The promise was a classless society, one where there would be no 'elite' that controlled the means of production and other capital. Today however “class can still be discerned beneath the trappings of nationalism and ethnicity, and because the ravages and corruption entailed by largely unchecked and globalized capitalist industry are sometimes exposed by academic and media inquiry (ibid. p.258)” And with the advent of the internet the true extend of those ravages and corruption are ever more in the open. The same power structures that evolved in the USSR and China have evolved in America. The problem with power is that it corrupts.

"Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.

Great men are almost always bad men."

--- Lord Acton

The problem with any system is the fore mentioned 'power structure'. If one person or a group of persons get the control over distribution of resources and with that gain control chances are they

36 Leninism, *n.* - The political and economic doctrines of Marx as interpreted and applied by Lenin to the governing of the Soviet Union, to the theory of the international proletarian revolution, and to the dictatorship of the working class.

37 Stalinism, *n.* - The policies pursued by Stalin, based on but later deviating from Leninism, esp. the formation of a centralized, totalitarian, objectivist government.

38 Maoism, *n.* - The Marxist–Leninist theories of Mao Zedong, developed and formerly practised in communist China, having permanent revolution as a central principle, and emphasizing the importance of the peasantry, small-scale industry, and agricultural collectivization.

will not uphold the ideology presupposed by the socialist system or any system.

Another problem of the system is the idea of uniformity. Although this is not inherent to the socialist ideal it is one of its biggest fears of opponents of the system. And this fear is not unfounded³⁹. The comfort of people is also defined by the freedom they have for autonomy. If interpreted wrongly, as show in the real world examples, socialism could lead to *totalization* of people. People should be allowed to have their own identity. Not just in socialism but in any societal system.

However the socialist system exists, even if it's only in theory. Which means that there are people who believe in the basic values of communal living. It expresses the need of individuals to belong to groups, share resources and cooperation.. Which makes socialism something that should be taken into account when thinking about society. The opposite of socialism is the believe in private ownership and individual freedom, for this we look at Capitalism.

Capitalism

Capitalism, *n.*²

The possession of capital or wealth; an economic system in which private capital or wealth is used in the production or distribution of goods and prices are determined mainly in a free market; the dominance of private owners of capital and of production for profit. Cf. capitalist n.,

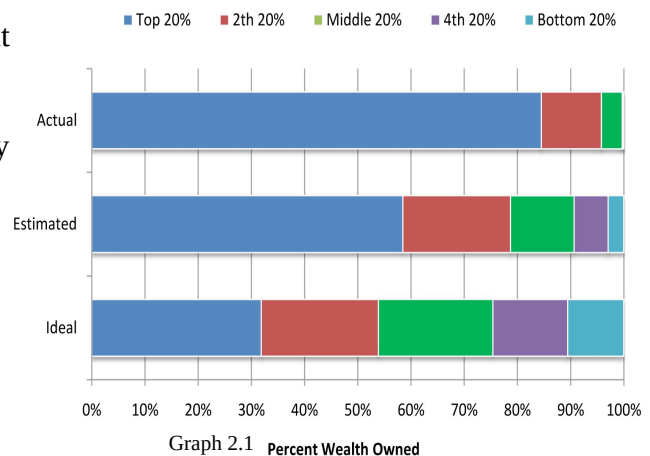
In the current capitalist system human beings are predominantly seen from the mechanistic worldview, we are seen as mere biological-computers with only our-selves in mind. The biggest supporters of this idea can be found in neo-liberal capitalism of which Ayn Rand is one of the most influential philosophers. In her book *Atlas Shrugged* she glorifies egocentric behavior. "This point is succinctly summarized in the oath sworn by the hero of *Atlas Shrugged*: "I swear by my life and my love of it that I will never live for the sake of another man, nor ask another man to live for mine." This code advocates a non-sacrificial way of life-a mode of conduct that repudiates⁴⁰ both altruism and cynical exploitativeness, both the sacrifice of self to others and the sacrifice of others to self. (Bernstein 2008 p.21)" At the end of his book Bernstein writes: "The nature (and the history) of capitalism have been egregiously distorted by Marxist and other anti-capitalist intellectuals. But capitalism's essence can be stated succinctly: **capitalism is the system that protects the inalienable right of each individual to his own life**. As Ayn Rand put it: "Capitalism is a social system based on the recognition of individual rights, including property rights, in which all property is privately owned." *The essence of the capitalist system is a limited government which protects the rights of each individual to live by his own judgment in all areas of life, including both personal morality*

39 Un'founded, *adj.*² - Not numbed or powerless.

40 Repudiate, *adj. and n.* - 2. *gen.* Rejected, set aside.

and economics (*this implies, of course, that each individual must respect the rights of all other individuals*). (ibid. p.107)”

The 'problem' with the capitalist system is that it is founded on the enlightenment philosophy that every man is equal. Everybody has the ability to become wealthy. But as it turns out, this not true. The system has inherently fallen victim to the same concentration of power as the 'real world communistic' societies. The Washington post posted an article on march six 2013 with the title: This viral⁴¹ video is right⁴²: We need to worry about wealth inequality. The video is an artful representation of graph 2.1



Based on a 2011 study by Norton and Ariely it clearly shows that the American population are worse off than they even estimated. “Modern capitalism as currently defined has only two basic assumptions about humanity. First, it assumes that human beings are primarily economic beings, with what Adam Smith called a “natural propensity to truck, barter and exchange.” Second, capitalism assumes that human beings will always act so as to pursue our own rational self-interest, or at least our hunches about what will benefit ourselves. In business terms, these principles are mirrored by the pursuit of profit for its own sake and by the assumption that every business exists to maximize its own self-interest—the profits of its shareholders measured in quarterly returns. Capitalism and business as we know them today [is] an amoral culture of short-term self-interest, profit maximization, emphasis on shareholder value, isolationist thinking, and profligate disregard of long-term consequences. I have argued that it is unsustainable. (Zohar, 2010. p.10)”

There are many others like Zohar who do not believe capitalism, in its current and dominant form, is the right system for humanity to live. But the idea of capitalism expresses the need for individuals to be authentic, to distinct themselves from others through ownership of private property which gives them this ability. To denounce capitalism would be to denounce the need for individualism and authenticity. But it's short term egocentric thinking in which it evolved is, as Zohar says, unsustainable.

41 Viral - Chiefly *Marketing*. Of, designating, or involving the rapid spread of information (esp. about a product or service) amongst customers by word of mouth, e-mail, etc. to go viral : to propagate in such a manner; to (be) spread widely and rapidly.

42 <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2013/03/06/this-viral-video-is-right-we-need-to-worry-about-wealth-inequality/>

Altruism and long-term interests

There has been a debate between proponents and opponents of altruism⁴³. The debate is about the question “if it is better to care about the well-being of others or your own well-being. (Klein, 2010 p.10)” Stefan Klein, in his book; *The Sense Of Giving*⁴⁴, makes the compelling argument for the first position. He builds his argument from game theory and real world examples and shows that altruism is the better stance to adopt in the long term. However he does not make the case we should give up egocentric short-term thinking either. But “the biggest advantage altruism brought us is that it helped our forefathers develop into beings with a large brain. This could only happen because they started sharing and working together with one and other like no other living being had previously done. For that they had to cross the boundary of their own person and learn to see the world through the eyes of the other and experience the world like them. Only through altruism have we become human beings. (ibid. p.5)” This is on par with Levinas's view of morality. Altruism works because it builds a sense of connection.

In the second part of the book he describes the failing of the capitalist model from the altruistic perspective given in the first part. He argues that trust is essential to building good businesses. Short-term thinking leads to a decline in trust because you can never know when the other will break the bond of trust. “An economy that pursues the well-being of all with only the aim of managing egoism only encourages profiteers⁴⁵. (ibid. p.217)” Klein shows that the effect of this short-term thinking is destructive for society in the long run. Because it allows for the people with the least empathic tendencies to gain the most power.

It is not that we should completely do away with short-term thinking, in itself it is a good thing. It is good to know what you want to do this week and this month. But if the focus is only on the short-term in combination with Rand's egocentric perspective it appears to be quite destructive for society and the common⁴⁶ good. The tendency to inequality is too tantalizing for those who allow themselves, or are born, to be less communal⁴⁷. But since the openness of information allows for everyone to have everything they need, egocentric behavior would not yield as much as it does within a closed-source system. Ego-centrism is an intrinsic human trait, but if we change the surroundings to make it less profitable it will happen a lot less.

43 Altruism, *n.* - **1.** Disinterested or selfless concern for the well-being of others, esp. as a principle of action. Opposed to *selfishness*, *egoism*, or (in early use) *egotism*.

44 Der Sinn Des Lebens – not available in english.

45 Profiteer, *v.* - **2.** *trans.* To obtain (money) by profiteering; to exploit financially.

46 Common, *n.1* – **1.** The common body of the people of any place; the community or commonalty; *spec.* the body of free burgesses of a free town or burgh; sometimes, the commonwealth or state, as a collective entity. (Latin *commune*, Greek *τὸ κοινόν*.) *Obs*

47 Communal, *adj.* - Participated in or shared by the whole community or by members of a group; owned in common; collective

Equality

Richard Wilkinson ends his Ted talk on *How economic inequality harms societies* with saying: “I think the take-home message though is that we can improve the real quality of human life by reducing the differences in incomes between us. (ted.com/talks/richard_wilkinson.html)”

“Between rich and poor nations, inequality leads to the pressure on the poor to migrate to wealthier areas, swelling populations of illegal immigrants and the accompanying social and political unrest. It creates both a global underclass and various domestic under-classes. Extreme inequality adds to the sense that “globalization” means simply the colonization of the poor by the wealthy capitalist world. (Zohar, 2004 p.10)”

Baker et. al., in their book *Equality from theory to action*, make the analysis “that different systems play different roles in generating the inequalities experienced by different groups and that this helps to explain why different groups have different political priorities. But we have emphasized that people often belong to more than one disadvantaged group, that the contexts that generate inequality for a given person change over their life course and that inequality is systematically reproduced across the whole range of systems. The practical point of this analysis is to show that an egalitarian programme has to take up the challenge of reforming and restructuring the systems that generate inequality and of developing inclusive strategies for bringing about change. (Baker, 2004 p.72)”

They recognize Marxism as the model that has the most influence on egalitarians. Eventhough there are things Marx could not have foreseen he noted that “the development of capitalism, and in particular its increasing dominance of the world economy and its intensifying exploitation of the working class, was seen as creating conditions under which workers would have both a compelling interest in social change and the capacity to bring it about. (ibid. p.191)”

Revolution

Revolution, n. II

7 a. Alteration, change; upheaval; reversal of fortune.

In the documentary 'The one percent' the heir of a wealthy family from America concludes his portrait of wealthy families with the argument that “preservation has given rise to the growing wealth-gap in America and the bigger the gap gets, the more removed wealthy people get from the world around them. But if you are always hiding from the problem, you'll never find any solutions.” (Johnson, 2012) His **documentary** is another example of what I call the revolutionary cycle. One maybe best described by Paul Orfalea: “The whole history of mankind is similar to geology. The

center of the earth is all molten lava and there is only a thin layer of earth you can live on, three or four miles. And there's so much down there that's all hot, hot, hot. And that thin layer is the layer between rich and poor. You need to set up society so that rich achieves things, but the whole history of mankind is that the lava overflows and kicks their ass.” (Ibid.) It is a crude description, but it paints the picture. A more obvious example would be the French revolution. Although Marie Antoinette never said “let them eat cake” when informed the poor were demanding bread, we understand the symbolism of the example.

It seems to be a recurrent theme in history that once a group of people have enjoyed great wealth for a period of time they lose the empathic understanding of what it means to be poor. It is as Hegel said: What experience and history teach is this — that people and governments never have learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it. (Hegel, 1956 *pragmatic history* §8).⁴⁸

If we do not find a way to stop this cycle we may end up being destroyed by it. Dr. Michio Kaku, “we are the generations that will determine whether we make the transition from a type zero to a type one [civilization] or we destroy ourselves because of our arrogance or our weapons. [Emphasis added] (Kaku, 2009)”

Of course there were also 'good' revolutions that helped mankind forward in our quest for comfort. The agricultural revolution, the industrial revolution, the digital revolution and now I propose the open source revolution. We learned how we could increase our need for comfort even though the distribution of the wealth was unequal. Steven Pinker shows us in his ted talk; The surprising decline in violence, that a lot of people are better off today than they would have been in earlier times. Even though I have the feeling his data is not complete⁴⁸ he does make a valid point. At least some of us have luxuries and freedoms never before enjoyed by man. These freedoms allow us to build systems that make us independent from the current system. With the knowledge and tools being created and shared today it is possible that we can build a way out of the turmoil. In contrast to previous revolutions, there is potential for a different form of revolution.

There is more than one definition for revolution:

- Alteration, *n.* - 1 **a.** The action or process of altering or being altered; an instance of this.
- Change, *n.* - 1; **a.** The act or fact of changing (see *CHANGE* v. 1, 2); substitution of one thing for another; succession of one thing in place of another.
- upheaval; **a.** *Geol.* The action of raising, or fact of being raised, above the original level, esp. by volcanic action.

⁴⁸ Pinker only uses cases of direct violence into account. I wonder what would happen if you take indirect violence like poverty and hunger into account.

- reversal of fortune, which is two words and I could show you their entries but to use less words I take it you get the picture.

Now all these meanings have a positive and negative interpretation. Just remember that if control means information, and that information is in more hands than ever. Thus we do not need to fight control. We have it, so we don't need to get it. We now have the freedom change the system in the most 'unwar' like fashion ever.

In an episode of dinosaurs I once saw when I was younger papa dinosaur, named Earl, was walking around with a sign saying **We**

Are

Right

Too me it is the simplest explanation of the complexity of war. And the easiest way to do that was to just hit the other on the head until they agreed. But now we possess the tools to show anyone our perspective in a civilized way. So what are we right about today? Who thinks is right? And about what? Well there seems to be a notion that some cultures are better than others. Much like some of Orwell's animals where better than others. But also there seem to be a notion that some people are allowed more freedom than others.

It is this freedom that has led us to the current moment in our human story. To this recurring point in our story where we have to make a decision about how we want it to go on. If we want to have the type one civilization or we destroy ourselves and will have to start over. For this we need to find the balance between freedom and control in society.

Chaos and Complexity Living on the edge

As mentioned in the introduction a positive balance would be a humane society where there is a maximum amount of freedom with the necessary amount of control. It would seem this would be a balance between socialism and capitalism. A balance between individual freedom, authenticity, the right to own property and having means on one side with communality and concern for the common good the other. Also it would be a society where there is little to no possibility for one person or group to gain control in such a way that the people in power forget that they are dependent on the people who give them power. But most importantly humanity has to understand the value of long-term thinking, the value of altruism and trust in society. Seeing how altruism is the natural state of our reality it is dissonant to act only egocentrically. If you take yourself out of the equation you ignore the fact that you and your actions are connected to everything else.

“Chaos (and the associated science of complexity) is one of the twentieth century’s “new

sciences.” It describes nonlinear and self-organizing systems poised at the boundary between order and disorder, between stability and instability. Such systems include anthills, beehives, the weather, the stock market, and the human immune system. I argue that any organization or society with the capacity to be creative and sustainable in today’s unstable and crisis-riven world will have the characteristics of what chaos and complexity theory calls “complex adaptive systems.” These characteristics include holism, diversity, spontaneity, self-organization, emergence, and coevolution between the systems and their environments. (Zohar, 2010. p.8)”

“Holism in science is a defining quality of both quantum and complex adaptive self-organizing systems. It is an internal holism in that the relationship of the different parts of the system helps to define not just the system itself but even to give final form to the parts themselves. In physical holism, it is the relationship between things that defines their reality. You can’t break a holistic system down into its separate parts without losing something vital of both those parts and of the system they comprise. You can’t isolate the individual factors within the system. (Ibid. p.90)” If society moves in the other direction, an atomistic society that is over controlled and thus leaves no room for coevolution, it has the tendency to become more chaotic. Until there is the breaking point in the revolutionary cycle where a society collapses, and from it a new one or several new ones arise. Zohar calls this moment before the collapse the edge of chaos.

“Any system, if not disturbed, will settle into a small number of its possible states, which are stable. These stable states in any field are called attractors. (Our motives are attractors in a field of meaning.) If the system is challenged or disturbed too much, it can spin off into chaos, where there is no discernible or predictable order. But when complex adaptive systems are presented with a crisis, they are drawn to the edge of chaos. This is a point between order and disorder. The elements of the system are just ordered enough to be in a number of semi-stable states, but these are easily upset by the smallest perturbation. When this happens, the system searches in every direction for new attractors to settle into, creating new order and new information in the process. The principles of transformation that the system uses to find its new state are the same as those we will need to shift our motives from old attractors to new ones.” (Ibid. p77)” Society is always a collective, you are part of it even if you choose not to be part of it. Being a member of the human race means being part of the human collective. And as human being we have to work together. Ego-centrism and short-term thinking will not make it better for future generations. Even if your family is the one with the monopoly on property, since future generations will rebel against the claim you and your family make on it. For decades people have controlled people through the monopoly on knowledge. But now things are changing because knowledge has the ability to move around more freely.

Open source

“Open source is a way for people to collaborate on software without being encumbered by all of the problems of intellectual property; having to negotiate contracts every time you buy a piece of software, have a lot of lawyers involved. In general, we just want to get the software to work and we want to be able to have people contribute fixes to that etc. So we sort of sacrifice some of the intellectual property rights and just let the whole world use the software.”

---Bruce Perens - Author, Open source definition (Revolution OS, 2001)

For the complete Open Source Definition visit <http://opensource.org/docs/osd>.

One of the most well-known open source initiatives is wikipedia and it has this to say about it:

“Generally, open source refers to a program in which the source code is available to the general public for use and/or modification from its original design. Open source code is typically created as a collaborative effort in which programmers improve upon the code and share the changes within the community.

The open-source model includes the concept of concurrent yet different agendas and differing approaches in production, in contrast with more centralized models of development such as those typically used in commercial software companies. [...] A main principle and practice of open-source software development is peer⁴⁹ production by bartering and collaboration, with the end-product, source-material, "blueprints", and documentation available at no cost to the public. This model is also used for the development of open-source-appropriate technologies,[4] solar photovoltaic technology [5] and open-source drug discovery.[6][7](wikipedia open source)”

The open source philosophy came out of computer programming and was initially intended for software development. But as the philosophy caught on more and more groups of people started using the term to describe how they worked together. The term is not only used in technology and medicine, but also in, government, education, science, film, the arts, ecology and even food production.

The idea

The general idea of open source is that *the information (knowledge)* on how goods and services are created is *open to everyone*. The philosophy that created the idea comes from Richard Stallman who started the free software foundation. He will not like it that I use the term open source instead of free software. My reason for using the term open source is that it is more widely known and goes beyond software. But this paper could not have been written without his work. Stallmann has been

⁴⁹ Peer, *n.* and *adj.* - 1. **a.** A person of the same civil or ecclesiastical status or rank as the person in question; an equal before the law. Freq. with possessive adjective and in *pl.*

opposing the closed source system before there even was a name for it.

Eric S. Raymond uses the two models of production to the cathedral & the bazaar. The cathedral which he describes as the place where large tools are built “by individual wizards or small bands of mages working in splendid isolation, with no beta⁵⁰ to be released before it's time. (2001. p. 2)” Is a top down approach used by most modern⁵¹ businesses.

The Bazaar he describes as a model where the business was to “release early and often, delegate everything you can, [and] be open to the point of promiscuity. [...] No quiet, reverent cathedral-building here rather, the Linux community seemed to resemble a great babbling bazaar of differing agendas and approaches [...] out of which a coherent and stable system could seemingly emerge only by a succession of miracles. (ibid. p.2)” The bazaar style allows for many different minds to work on the same project. This diversity of input allows for a great creativity and because anyone can join in it allows for rapid development. There needs to be system for this of course, and eventually the open source movement was given one by the other great man in open source. Stallman created the GNU herd, which is a collection of free programs. Linus Torvalds gave us Linux, which allowed us to use the GNU herd. Together they have created a collaboration that might one day change the world.

Property

Open source is about property and the sharing of that property. And as Steven Weber says in his book *The Success of Open Source*, “property” in a broad sense—not only who owns what, but what it means to own something, what rights and responsibilities property confers, and where those ideas come from and how they spread. [...] Put most simply, ownership of property is the right to exclude others from it according to terms that the owner specifies. This is the core entitlement that energizes the act of market exchange, with all of its attendant practices. [...] Open source is an experiment in building a political economy that is, a system of sustainable value creation and a set of governance mechanisms. In this case it is a governance system that holds together a community of producers around this counter-intuitive notion of property rights as distribution. (2005 p.1)”

The beauty is that it does not negate the idea of private property. “Open source code does not obliterate profit, capitalism, or intellectual property rights. Companies and individuals are creating intellectual products and making money from open source software code, while inventing new

50 Beta, *n.* - beta test, a test of machinery, software, etc. in course of final development, carried out by a party or parties unconnected with the developer (freq. *attrib.*); so beta testing, beta-test *v. trans.*, beta-tester.

51 Modern, *adj.* and *n.* - *A. adj.* †1. *Being in existence at this time; current, present. Freq. applied (sometimes as postmodifier) to the current holder or incumbent of an office or position, esp. a reigning monarch. Obs*

business models and notions about property along the way. (ibid. p.3)

But what it does is it shift the control from the owner to the community. Weber gives the example of a friend of his who practices several religions. Because different religions are so easily accessible today “it illustrates the way in which people now treat notions of property around religious traditions. In effect, the property rights regime is much like open source. People take the religious “code,” modify it, recombine it with pieces of code from elsewhere, and use the resulting product to scratch their spiritual itch. [...] It is only one small step from there to redistributing what you have created to others as a “new” religion, which is increasingly a common practice. Many established religious leaders resist these changes understandably, because the changes profoundly threaten their basis of legitimate authority. But it is probably too late to go backward. There is too much “open code” in circulation. Technology surely enabled this change (it does matter that anyone can access any religious text in an instant on the web). But more profoundly important is the mindset change around what property rights attach to texts and traditions, which are often intricately intertwined. It is this property mindset shift that drives change in what a [religious leader] is. More generally, there has been a dramatic change in what it means to be a leader in a religious community. Change the foundations of property, and you change the network of relationships that radiate outward from that which is owned, in fundamental and often unexpected ways. [emphasis added] (ibid. p.229)”

It is the exchange of information in an Open Source fashion that empowers us to become less depended on the people who traditionally controlled the information. Because we can access information in such vast amounts we can gather and compare all the information on a subject that holds our interest. And not only that, we can we share our findings with others and build on the knowledge. This is the bazaar model where people can get the things they *need* and *desire*, the things they personally consider valuable information and build or combine it to make their own autonomous story from it.

Since the beginning of the open source way of working a lot of people have adopted the philosophy to create an alternative way of working together that embraces the idea of sharing knowledge. The idea is that if you share what you know, others can build and improve on it. There is no monopoly on knowledge this raises the need for new ways of living and working together.

Examples

There are many movements using the term open source for their way of working. The philosophy has spread to a lot of different fields of knowledge. Below are just a few examples of projects that are or touch on the open source philosophy. There are many more and I feel there needs to be an overview of all the different initiatives and communities, but that is a project that is too big for this paper. Because we are on an exploration I will only generally touch a few topics.

Intellectual Property

The first question that is often asked concerning open source and intellectual property is how you can benefit from your idea if you give it away. In open source you share your idea but you do not necessarily give it away. There are many open source licenses that claim the property as yours but does not inhibit others to use the information. The open source enthusiast will say that the information is free as in freedom, not as in beer. You can brew your own beer, but if you want someone else's beer, you will have to pay for it. Open source licenses can be found on websites like: opensource.org/licenses, [wikipedia](https://wikipedia.org), oss-watch.ac.uk to name a few.

“The **GNU General Public License (GNU GPL or GPL)** is the most widely used[5] free software license, which guarantees end users (individuals, organizations, companies) the freedoms to use, study, share (copy), and modify the software. Software that ensures that these rights are retained is called free software. The license was originally written by Richard Stallman of the Free Software Foundation (FSF) for the GNU project.

The GPL grants the recipients of a computer program the rights of the Free Software Definition[6] and uses copyleft to ensure the freedoms are preserved whenever the work is distributed, even when the work is changed or added to. The GPL is a copyleft license, which means that derived works can only be distributed under the same license terms. This is in distinction to permissive free software licenses, of which the BSD licenses are the standard examples. GPL was the first copyleft license for general use. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GNU_General_Public_License)”

“Copyleft is a form of licensing and can be used to maintain copyright conditions for works such as computer software, documents, and art. In general, copyright law is used by an author to prohibit recipients from reproducing, adapting, or distributing copies of the work. In contrast, under copyleft, an author may give every person who receives a copy of a work permission to reproduce, adapt or distribute it and require that any resulting copies or adaptations are also bound by the same licensing agreement. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Copyleft)”

The difference between copyleft and open source licenses is that: "Copyleft" refers to licenses that allow derivative works but require them to use the same license as the original work. For example, if you write some software and release it under the GNU General Public License (a widely-used copyleft license), and then someone else modifies that software and distributes their modified version, the modified version must be licensed under the GNU GPL too including any new code written specifically to go into the modified version. Both the original and the new work are Open Source; the copyleft license simply ensures that property is perpetuated to all downstream derivatives. (There is at least one copyleft license, the Affero GPL, that even requires you to offer the source code, under the AGPL, to anyone to whom you make the software's functionality available as a network service however, most copyleft licenses activate their share-and-share-alike requirement on distribution of a copy of the software itself. You should read the license to understand its requirements for source code distribution.)

Most copyleft licenses are Open Source, but not all Open Source licenses are copyleft. When an Open Source license is *not* copyleft, that means software released under that license can be used as part of programs distributed under other licenses, including proprietary (non-open-source) licenses. For example, the BSD license is a non-copyleft Open Source license. Such licenses are usually called either "non-copyleft" or "permissive" open source licenses.

Copyleft provisions apply only to actual derivatives, that is, cases where an existing copylefted work was modified. Merely distributing a copyleft work alongside a non-copyleft work does not cause the latter to fall under the copyleft terms. (<http://opensource.org/faq#copyleft>)

Because of the rise in open source software and hardware a lot of companies are changing to open innovation because they understand that “[w]hen managing intellectual property, your goal should be to choose the terms and conditions that maximize the *value* of your intellectual property, not the terms and conditions that maximize the protection. (Shapiro, 1998. p.5)” In fact “some of the world’s largest patent holders (firms like Philips NV, IBM, and Microsoft) have embraced the open innovation model. [...]

A skeptic could argue that the IP being given up by these large firms is not very valuable to them, and that pledging allegiance to open innovation is merely a convenient way of saying that they are open to taking others’ ideas without giving up any of their own. In one sense, the skeptic would be right that these firms have not given up their quest for profits in embracing the open innovation model. Of course the technology they offer to the public will not be that which is most valuable to them; it will be that which they have no plans to develop but where they think there is a possibility that development by others may ultimately benefit them via knowledge spillovers or

increased demand for the firm's own goods and services.

However, the skeptic would be wrong in supposing that the advocacy of “open innovation” is hollow. These firms have simply recognized two things: the first is that no single firm is able to develop all the technology it needs internally. The second is that the products they produce need to work well with those produced by other firms, even including direct competitors and firms with very different business models, for example open source software providers. In this setting, it is essential that firms develop new ways to ensure that they retain some of the profits accruing from “open innovation” projects and development. (Hall 2010. p.2)”

So there is an incentive towards the open source treatment of intellectual property, but since the legal 'tug of war' between copyright and copyleft is still pending there is no definite legal framework for open source intellectual property.

“A final caveat is in order, however. There are limits to IP as a tool for organizing open innovation, just as there are limits to the effectiveness of markets for technology. The most successful similar model of this type is the open science model described by Dasgupta and David in 1994. [...] Even today the Web 2.0 sector is characterized by a relative lack of attention to IP issues and a great deal of effort devoted to interoperability. The developers of social networking sites, blogging tools, searching tools, and content aggregators spend a considerable amount of time ensuring that “crossposting” and recombination operates smoothly across their sites, even those operated by direct competitors. Success in this sector depends to a great deal on increasing returns from a large user base, which means that allowing and encouraging all kinds of access is important. So open innovation is the norm, and it is somewhat less mediated by IP licensing agreements than in more mature industries. (ibid. p.4)”

Science

Scientific knowledge has become more readily available through the advent of the open science movement. “**Open science** is the umbrella term of the movement to make scientific research, data and dissemination accessible to all levels of an inquiring society, amateur or professional. It encompasses practices such as publishing open research, campaigning for open access, encouraging scientists to practice open notebook science, and generally making it easier to publish and communicate scientific knowledge.

Open science began in the 1600s with the advent of the academic journal when the societal demand for access to scientific knowledge reached a point where it became necessary for groups of scientists to share resources with each other so that they could collectively do their work.[1] In

modern times there is debate about the extent to which scientific information should be shared.[2] The conflict is between the desire of scientists to have access to shared resources versus the desire of individual entities to profit when other entities partake of their resources.[3]”⁵²

But more and more scientist understand the need for exchanging knowledge. Because science too is subject to the increasing complexity of society. As Cees Pieters, who wrote *Into Complexity*, taught me in class. The paradigms of science are becoming so big that they become impossible for on person to overlook. Also because the paradigms are becoming so big they start to overlap each other it's becoming increasingly difficult to study one field of science without needing information from another field.

Also there are scientists who dedicate their knowledge and experience to the growing open source movement.

Ecology

“Open Source Ecology is a network of farmers, engineers, and supporters that for the last two years has been creating the Global Village Construction Set (GVCS), an open source, low-cost, high performance technological platform that allows for the easy, DIY fabrication of the 50 different Industrial Machines that it takes to build a sustainable civilization with modern comforts. The GVCS lowers the barriers to entry into farming, building, and manufacturing and can be seen as a life-size lego-like set of modular tools that can create entire economies, whether in rural Missouri, where the project was founded, in urban redevelopment, or in the developing world.

[The founder] Marcin Jakubowski came to the U.S. from Poland as a child. He graduated with honors from Princeton and earned his Ph.D. in fusion physics from the University of Wisconsin. Frustrated with the lack of relevance to pressing world issues in his education, he founded Open Source Ecology in 2003 in order to make closed-loop manufacturing a reality. Marcin has been the lead fabricator, designer, blogger, and technical curator for OSE's prototyping thus far. His main interest is evolving to freedom by *eliminating resource scarcity* as the main force behind human relations with the wise use of modern technology adapted for human service.⁵³” In appendix A, his ted⁵⁴ talk titled; *Open-sourced blueprints for civilization*, we read his motivation. And it is a great example of most if not all open source initiatives.

Another interesting initiative are earthships. Eartships are “Radically sustainable buildings made with recycles materials. The earthship is the epitome of sustainable design and construction. No part

52 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_science

53 www.opensourceecology.org/about.php

54 www.ted.com/talks/marcin_jakubowski.html

of sustainable living has been ignored in this ingenious building. “Earthships can be built in any part of the world and still provide electricity, portable water, contained sewage treatment and sustainable food production. [It is] the most versatile and economical sustainable green building design in the world. (earthshipstore.com/about_us)” Even though the project is not completely open source since you will have to buy their building plans if you want to use their accumulated knowledge. But most of their knowledge is online for free so it is possible to build one yourself if you have the time and energy to reinvent everything. As mentioned earlier, it is possible to make money within the open source philosophy. An earthship allows you to be free from certain types of control, power, water, sewage. The knowledge they have is not free as in beer, but most certainly free as in freedom.

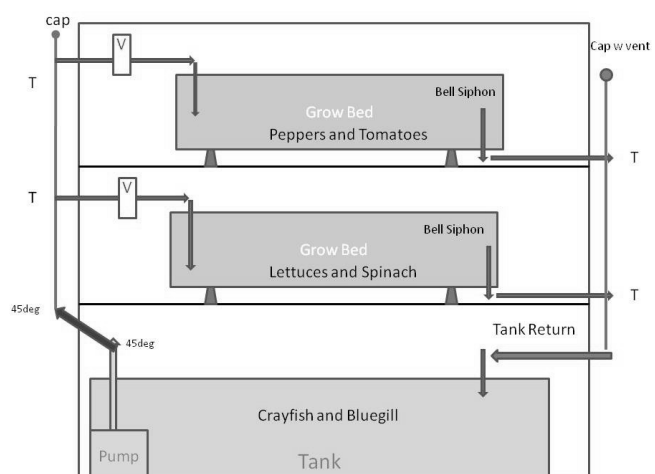
I mention the earthship because of its sustainability and as a new concept for housing. It shows that there are different ways of doing things and that you can build your own house if you so desire. The next thing you need for your comfort will be food.

Food

Food is one of the most fundamental resources for humanity. Through the expanse of knowledge on agriculture we are learning that the 'old' ways of growing food are rather counterproductive in the long-term. And so people started to look at different and new ways to grow food. Either through permaculture, which is a non-invasive type of agriculture, which means that they are not depleting the land of its natural resources through plowing and mono-crops. But instead they use the natural biological cycle of nature to grow a variety of foods.

One of the most interesting examples of permaculture is the idea of the foodforest, which is a manmade forest with predominantly food-growing trees and plants. Designed correctly the foodforest at one point doesn't need any cultivation. The natural cycle of a forest is reinstated and all a farmer has to do is walk into the forest to collect the yields.

There are also new technologies that do not need any soil at all. Hydroponics is a system in which plants are grown directly in water without the use of soil. But this didn't absolve the need for fertilizer. So some people started combining fishfarms with hydroponics and thus aquaponics was born. Aquaponics is a closed-loop system



in which the water is being recycled through the system. There is fishpond where fish are grown. The fish create fertilizer, the fertilized water is used to grow plants who take the nutrients from the water and thus clean it. The water ends up back in the fishpond and the cycle starts again.

Another interesting example for the philosophy of open source is open cola. According to wired in their article; Open source cola and the 'Napster moment' for the food business, “it was meant as a kind of promotional tool. The recipe was published online for anyone to take and adapt. Version 1.0 was published on 27 January 2001 -- the latest version is 1.1.3. Opencola closed in 2003, but Open Cola's recipe is still around. (wired april 15 2013)” “Coca-Cola has a proprietary formula that it will not divulge, on the bottle or anywhere else. This formula is the knowledge that makes it possible for Coke to combine sugar, water, and a few other readily available ingredients in particular proportions with a secret flavoring mix and produce something of great value. The point is that the bubbly liquid in your glass cannot be reverse-engineered into its constituent parts. You can buy Coke and you can drink it, but you can't understand it in a way that would let you reproduce the drink, or improve upon it and distribute your cola drink to the rest of the world. (Weber, 2005. p.4)”

Economics

There is even an open source currency called bitcoin. “Bitcoin uses peer-to-peer technology to operate with no central authority; managing transactions and the issuing of bitcoins is carried out **collectively by the network**. Through many of its unique properties, Bitcoin allows exciting uses that could not be covered by any previous payment systems. (bitcoin.org/en/)”

The currency is already being used to pay over the internet and has now 'landed' in Kenya according to James Smith in his article entitled: Africa: Bitcoin Fuels Africa's Banking Revolution. “The online currency that was, until recently, the preserve of tech entrepreneurs and only the most pioneering financiers, is to go mainstream in Nairobi while the rest of us continue to look on gingerly from the sidelines. (allafrica.com/stories/201307140004.html)”

“Bitcoin is one of the first implementations of a concept called *crypto-currency* which was first described in 1998 by Wei Dai on the cypherpunks mailing list. Building upon the notion that money is any object, or any sort of record, accepted as payment for goods and services and repayment of debts in a given country or socio-economic context, Bitcoin is designed around the idea of using cryptography to control the creation and transfer of money, rather than relying on central authorities. (en.bitcoin.it/wiki/Main_Page)”

Business

A form of open source businesses could be the system as applied in Mondragon. “Mondragon co-operatives are united by a humanist concept of business, a philosophy of participation and solidarity, and a shared business culture. The culture is rooted in a shared mission and a number of principles, corporate values and business policies.

Over the years, these links have been embodied in a series of operating rules approved on a majority basis by the Co-operative Congresses, which regulate the activity of the Governing Bodies of the Corporation (Standing Committee, General Council), the Grassroots Co-operatives and the Divisions they belong to, from the organisational, institutional and economic points of view as well as in terms of assets.

This framework of business culture has been structured based on a common culture derived from the 10 Basic Co-operative Principles, in which Mondragon is rooted: Open Admission, Democratic Organisation, the Sovereignty of Labour, Instrumental and Subordinate Nature of Capital, Participatory Management, Payment Solidarity, Inter-cooperation, Social Transformation, Universality and Education.

This inspirational philosophy is complemented by four Corporate Values: Co-operation, acting as owners and protagonists; Participation, which takes shape as a commitment to management; Social Responsibility, by means of the distribution of wealth based on solidarity; and Innovation, focusing on constant renewal in all areas.

This business culture translates into compliance with a number of Basic Objectives (Customer Focus, Development, Innovation, Profitability, People in Co-operation and Involvement in the Community) and General Policies approved by the Co-operative Congress, which are taken on board at all the Corporation’s organisational levels and incorporated into the four-year strategic plans and the annual business plans of the individual co-operatives, Divisions, and the Corporation as a whole. (wikipedia Mondragon)”

Means of production

Within the open source movement a lot of new ways of production are emerging. One of which is the 3d printer. For now the technology is too new to influence production but it has great potential for the future. It's ironic that the first 3d printed object to receive a lot of media coverage and even political debate is a gun. The fear, according to cnbc in their article; *3-d gun printing: Here's the software that stops it* (cnbc.com/id/100861913), is that it will become too easy for anyone to build a gun.

There are two interesting notions we can take from just the title and this quote. The first is the promise of control by software, which shows us again the dynamic between freedom and control. The second is the fear that people will be able to build weapons too easily. This too can be seen in the light of control. There is the fear that people can not be trusted with access to this technology. But like the internet, it will most likely be impossible to stop the advent of the 3-d printer. It has too much potential to be subdued because it also allows you to make weapons. Right now the technology is changing many aspects of society. I could go on for length on the possibilities of 3d printing, which I won't. The important story is that soon anyone who wants a 3d printer can own or even build their own. This means the means of production are no longer exclusively for people with a lot of resources.

Now 3d printing is not a new technology. What is new is that they have become increasingly cheaper which allows for almost anyone to have one at home. One of the most interesting aspects of the 3d printer is that it can print most parts to build itself. So once you have one you can print printers for others. This allows for a rapid growth in machines. Also, because the plans and drawings for the printer are open source, everyone can tweak the machine to become even better. This in turn allows for a rhizomatic⁵⁵ growth of the technology. The first printers could only print in plastics but soon we might be eating 3d printed meat as envisioned in an article on geek.com entitled: *3D printed meat could soon be cheap and tasty enough to win you over* (Geek.com feb 12 2013). We might be living in 3d printed houses and driving 3d printed cars.

Also because of the increase in available knowledge and the decline of material costs almost anyone can build mostly anything, provided there is the necessary will and skill to do so. Ben Krasnow, who I don't know anything about, only that he built a DIY electron microscope in his garage (youtu.be/VdjYVF4a6iU). He built most of it from 'off the shelf' parts, with only one part ordered from China. Another example is Taylor Wilson who, at the age of 14, built a fusion reactor in his garage (Ted Taylor Wilson). These two examples shows the potential we have today to build our own tools. Of course Ben's electron microscope might not be as efficient as a commercial one, but maybe someday it will. What matters is that we have the freedom to build machines that not too long ago could only be found in universities and big corporations.

Computing

But building things needs certain tools. The RaspberryPi.org is a computer the size of a credit card and only costs \$ 25,- and only runs with open source software. It allows us to make cheap

⁵⁵ Rhizomatic, *adj.* - **2.fig.** (orig. *Philos.*). Resembling an interconnected, subterranean network of roots. Hence: non-hierarchical, interconnected.

computer controlled devices. Then there is arduino.cc, which is “an open-source electronics prototyping platform based on flexible, easy-to-use hardware and software. It's intended for artists, designers, hobbyists, and anyone interested in creating interactive objects or environments. Arduino can sense the environment by receiving input from a variety of sensors and can affect its surroundings by controlling lights, motors, and other actuators. The microcontroller on the board is programmed using the Arduino programming language (based on Wiring) and the Arduino development environment (based on Processing). Arduino projects can be stand-alone or they can communicate with software running on a computer (e.g. Flash, Processing, MaxMSP).

The boards can be built by hand or purchased preassembled; the software can be downloaded for free. The hardware reference designs (CAD files) are available under an open-source license, you are free to adapt them to your needs. (arduino.cc)” People are building all sorts of new systems with a combination of Raspberry Pi and Arduino. A lot of systems involve agriculture, like PiPlanter that is featured on raspberrypi.org/archives/4327, it uses sensors to detect light and humidity and will sustain a good growing temperature and humidity for greenhouses. These sort of systems can also be used in combination with aquaponics which makes the system even more efficient.

But it is also used to mashup existing electronics to create more functionality with old systems, like a Raspberry Pi Mod that adds voice control and a barcode scanner to a microwave⁵⁶. The barcode scanner allows you to cook a meal at the desired setting of temperature and time just by scanning the barcode on the food package. And these are only a few examples of the creativity and ingenuity that are possible with this hardware. People have more and more freedom to hack existing systems and build new ones.

Hackers

Also there are companies like Sugru.com with their slogan: the future needs fixing. “sugru is the exciting new self-setting rubber that can be formed by hand. It moulds like play-dough, bonds to almost anything and turns into a strong, flexible silicone rubber overnight. (sugru.com)” Their philosophy is “to make it easier to adapt, modify, repair and improve anything [...] People are natural hackers, fixers and improvers, we've just got out of the habit of it. And so many products are badly designed or not designed to last. Now more and more of us are taking control and sorting it out for ourselves. (sugru.com)”

“A hacker is someone who loves to program or who enjoys playful cleverness, or a combination of the two.[3] The act of engaging in activities (such as programming or other media[4]) in a spirit

56 geek.com/chips/raspberry-pi-mod-adds-voice-control-barcode-scanner-to-microwave-1561787/

of playfulness and exploration is termed *hacking*. However the defining characteristic of a hacker is not the activities performed themselves (e.g. programming), but the manner in which it is done: Hacking entails some form of excellence, for example exploring the limits of what is possible,[5] thereby doing something exciting and meaningful.[4] Activities of playful cleverness can be said to have "hack value" and are termed hacks[5] [...]. (wikipedia hackers)”

Hackers then are people who like to play with technology to improve on existing designs, or create new technology by mixing existing technology. The term hacker, like the term open source is no longer only applied in software.

Hackers are naturally inclined towards open source, because they want to know how stuff works. They are also the ones who built the new systems to improve existing technology.

Politics

Open-source governance is a political philosophy which advocates the application of the philosophies of the open source and open content movements to democratic principles in order to enable any interested citizen to add to the creation of policy, as with a wiki document. Legislation is democratically opened to the general citizenry, employing their collective wisdom to benefit the decision-making process and improve democracy. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open-source_governance)

Governments are implementing open source ideas. For example the French gendarmerie in an article on arstechnica.com that it has “saved millions of dollars by migrating its desktop software infrastructure away from Microsoft Windows and replacing it with the Ubuntu Linux distribution.”⁵⁷

Also the UK government is considering joining the Open Government Partnership⁵⁸, which “is a global effort to make governments better. We all want more transparent, effective and accountable governments with institutions that empower citizens and are responsive to their aspirations. But this work is never easy. [...] The Open Government Partnership is a new multilateral initiative that aims to secure concrete commitments from governments to promote transparency, empower citizens, fight corruption, and harness new technologies to strengthen governance. In the spirit of multi-stakeholder collaboration, OGP is overseen by a steering committee of governments and civil society organizations. (opengovpartnership.org/about)”

oss-watch.ac.uk/resources/governanceModels provides an inside in open source government. “A governance model describes the roles that project participants can take on and the process for

⁵⁷ arstechnica.com/information-technology/2009/03/french-police-saves-millions-of-euros-by-adopting-ubuntu/

⁵⁸ gov.uk/government/consultations/open-government-partnership-uk-draft-national-action-plan-2013

decision making within the project. In addition, it describes the ground rules for participation in the project and the processes for communicating and sharing within the project team and community. In other words it is the governance model that prevents an open source project from descending into chaos.” To avoid chaos we might also use the predominant tool for open source software development.

Github in Politics

In his witty and evocative TED talk; How the internet will (one day) transform government, Clay Shirky makes an appealing argument for a new way to argue⁵⁹. He gives the example of the invisible college who created the first scientific journal after the invention of the printing press. They where “a group of natural philosophers who only later would call themselves scientists, and they wanted to improve the way natural philosophers argued with each other, and they needed to do two things for this. They needed openness. [and] speed. They had to quickly synchronize what other natural philosophers knew. Otherwise, you couldn't get the right kind of argument going. The printing press was clearly the right medium for this, but the book was the wrong tool. It was too slow. And so they invented the scientific journal as a way of synchronizing the argument across the community of natural scientists. The scientific revolution wasn't created by the printing press. It was created by scientists, but it couldn't have been created if they didn't have a printing press as a tool. (Shirky, 2012. Ted.com)”

He then asks the question what the internet could mean for arguing and which group he would choose as our modern day 'Invisible College', “our generation's collection of people trying to take these tools and to press it into service, not for more arguments, but for better arguments, I'd pick the open-source programmers. Programming is a three-way relationship between a programmer, some source code, and the computer it's meant to run on, but computers are such famously inflexible interpreters of instructions that it's extraordinarily difficult to write out a set of instructions that the computer knows how to execute, and that's if one person is writing it. Once you get more than one person writing it, it's very easy for any two programmers to overwrite each other's work [...] To a first approximation, the problem of managing a large software project is the problem of keeping this social chaos at bay. (ibid.)”

It appears to be similar to chaos and complexity in society. And just as in society the problem was solved by implementing a centralized organizational structure. Because to avoid this chaos programmers used a 'version control system' which “provides a canonical⁶⁰ copy of the software on

59 *Argue*, v. - 4 a. *intr.* To bring forward reasons concerning a matter in debate; to make statements or adduce facts for the purpose of establishing or refuting a proposition; to discuss; to reason.

60 *Canonical*, *adj.* And *n.* - 4. *gen.* Of the nature of a canon or rule; of admitted authority, excellence, or supremacy;

a server somewhere. The only programmers who can change it are people who've specifically been given permission to access it, and they're only allowed to access the sub-section of it that they have permission to change. [...] This is feudalism: one owner, many workers. [...]

But there was one programmer who decided that this wasn't the way to work. This is Linus Torvalds. Torvalds is the most famous open-source programmer, created Linux⁶¹, obviously, and Torvalds looked at the way the open-source movement had been dealing with this problem. Open-source software, the core promise of the open-source license, is that everybody should have access to all the source code all the time, but of course, this creates the very threat of chaos you have to forestall in order to get anything working. So most open-source projects just held their noses and adopted the feudal management systems. But Torvalds said, "No, I'm not going to do that." His point of view on this was very clear. When you adopt a tool, you also adopt the management philosophy embedded in that tool. (ibid.)”

And then, 15 years after looking at Linux and figuring out how the community worked, he said, "I think I know how to write a version control system for free people." And he called it "Git." Git is distributed version control. It has two big differences with traditional version control systems. The first is that it lives up to the philosophical promise of open-source. Everybody who works on a project has access to all of the source code all of the time. [...] But this is also the thing that brings the chaos back, and this is Git's second big innovation. Git creates [a] signature. [A] long string of numbers and letters [which] is a unique identifier tied to every single change, but without any central coordination. Every Git system generates this number the same way, which means this is a signature tied directly and unforgeably to a particular change. [...]

Now, I would love to tell you that the fact that the open-source programmers have worked out a collaborative method that is large scale, distributed, cheap, and in sync with the ideals of democracy, I would love to tell you that because those tools are in place, the innovation is inevitable. But it's not. Part of the problem, of course, is just a lack of information. [...]

The bigger problem, of course, is power. The people experimenting with participation don't have legislative power, and the people who have legislative power are not experimenting with participation. They are experimenting with openness. There's no democracy worth the name that doesn't have a transparency move, but transparency is openness in only one direction, and being given a dashboard without a steering wheel has never been the core promise a democracy makes to its citizens. (ibid.)”

authoritative; orthodox, accepted; standard.

61 Linux is actually called after Linus.

So Git software is built to manage decentralized complex structures, and he proposes to use git as a tool for arguments, or dialogue as I would call it. It would mean the democratic process of decision making would become decentralized and open source.

Possibilities

With these examples I want to show that there are already a lot of initiatives and communities working in an open source fashion. It shows us that there is a desire to work in this way. And it shows us an alternative to our modern day centralized system.

The open source society

The open source society is a decentralized system allowing for self-organizing complex systems. It's a way of thinking and working that is already present in society today. It can exist side by side with our current system and perhaps improve it. But the potential is far greater than that. If worked out right it could be a new model for society. I wish I could give you a complete model but I can't for two reasons. The first is that I do not possess the knowledge and aptitude⁶² to write it, second and maybe more obvious is that it would be not very open source of me to design a system like that. The open source society should be built by many people who live and work in it. This allows for every group to build the society it wants, by collaboration⁶³ and trials in many different forms and places the stable system can emerge. We are looking for the right balance between freedom and control and having all knowledge available allows everyone to be more in control over their freedoms. But it will take time and effort to find the right balance.

Framework

What I can do is try to describe the basic philosophical framework for such a model in which the system could grow. As this is just an exploration I will not go in depth about the details. That would be book in and of itself.

Foundation

The foundation would have to be built on trust. Trust that the other understands I am part of the system that creates the desired comfort. But also because we still live in a predominantly closed source system which might take advantage on the knowledge produced in an open fashion. It will require a change in mindset which, depending on the real motives of people, will either be hard or

62 Aptitude, *n.* - **1.** The quality of being fit for a purpose or position, or suited to general requirements; fitness, suitability, appropriateness.

63 Collaboration, *n.* - **1.** United labour, co-operation; *esp.* in literary, artistic, or scientific work.

easy. Although most likely it will be both.

From one perspective the transition should be easy for some. Because we desire freedom, the increasing control by the current system will motivate some people to choose a different lifestyle that allows more freedom. Of course there have always been people that lived alternative lifestyles and some of them paved the way towards this possible future. But they were not many and their efforts did not always show because they lacked the medium to connect with others. But today the internet can connect and educate us. When we learn about the increasing control and the possible alternatives towards more freedom it allows people to become defiant which fuels a need to be free from that control. They find that there is power in groups and that trust is the only way to effectively organize and resist the mistrust that is inherent to oppressive control.

Another thing is that, as Brown says, connection gives meaning and purpose to our lives. For our desire to be connected we need to go into dialogue with each other. Dialogue is only possible if we do not totalize the other. This inherently means we have to trust the other not to totalize us.

Also the increasing uncertainty of living a comfortable life in modern day society forces us to fall back on family and friends. Because the gap between rich and poor is growing ever greater it is almost impossible to live completely independent. We are forced to live in groups because the atomistic lifestyle is becoming unsustainable. This doesn't necessarily imply trust, but it forces us to start trusting each other more and more. Because we have to live with less taking care of others becomes necessary, and how can you trust someone to take care of you if the others do not trust you to care for them.

But mostly the change will be easy because most human beings have a natural tendency towards trust and cooperation and adapt well to new situations.

From another perspective though it will be hard for people to change. The main reason I think is that the story you grew up in becomes part of you, becomes part of your identity. Changing the story means giving up part of the story that defined you, giving up part of the story thus means giving up part of your identity to allow for something new. And changing beliefs has proven rather difficult.

Transparency

To change the story we must have access to the story. The openness in society should extend to every aspect of society in order to allow everyone to understand why and how everything is designed and/or growing. Transparency is necessary for understanding and being able to see where you as an authentic being want to join in the cooperation with others.

Responsibility

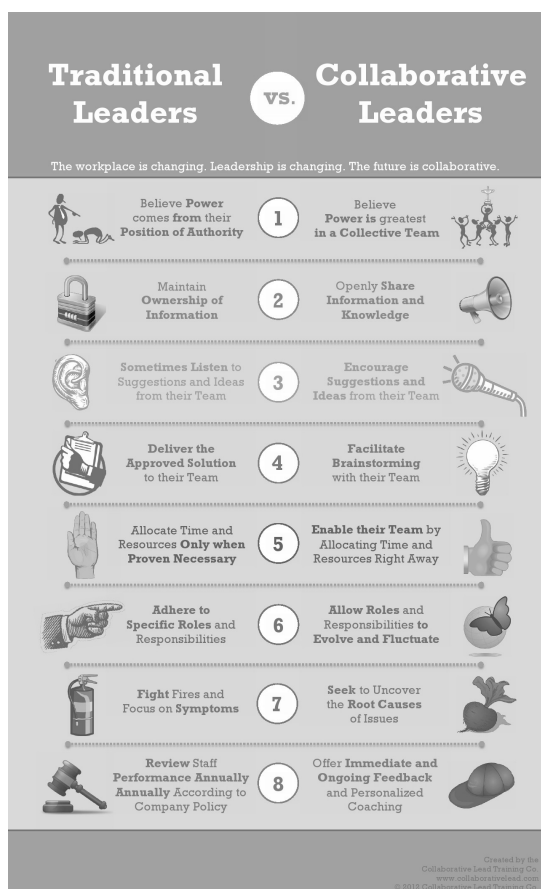
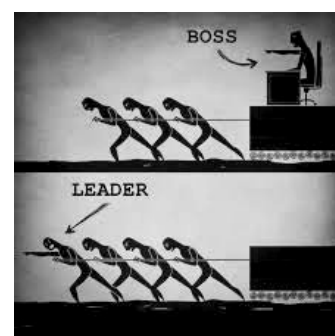
Another important aspect of the foundation of working together will be the responsibility we take towards the other and our-self. In the closed source society the 'version control' system only allowed for some people to have control over how a society or company worked. The owner directed the work the other had to comply, this allowed some people to be dissatisfied with their work but since they were not in control the responsibility for the dissatisfaction lay with the controlling party. In essence, willingly or unwillingly, they gave the responsibility for their comfort to the other. In the open source society however this will be harder to do. You can no longer blame something or someone outside yourself. Since you will have the ability to control most aspects of your own life you are also responsible for the quality of your comfort. Being a leader or being led is now a choice.

Leaders and followers

Leader, *n.* - I. One who leads.

1 **a. gen.** in various senses of the vb.: One who conducts, precedes as a guide, leads a person by the hand or an animal by a cord, etc. [...]

3 **a.** One who guides others in action or opinion; one who takes the lead in any business, enterprise, or movement; one who is 'followed' by disciples or adherents; the chief of a sect or party.



Derek Sivers in his TED talk: How to start a movement shows us what a leader is by analysis of an amusing video of a guy doing a weird dance⁶⁴. “First, of course you know, a leader needs the guts to stand out and be ridiculed. But what he's doing is so easy to follow. So here's his first follower with a crucial role; he's going to show everyone else how to follow. Now, notice that the leader embraces him as an equal. So, now it's not about the leader anymore; it's about them, plural. Now, there he is calling to his friends. Now, if you notice that the first follower is actually an underestimated form of leadership in itself. It takes guts to stand out like that. The first follower is what transforms a lone nut into a leader. (Sivers, 2010)”

The most important thing about his analysis, I think, is the need for equality. In life you play many

64 First Follower: leadership Lessons from Dancing Guy - <http://youtu.be/fW8amMCVAJQ>

roles in many stories. You might be a leader somewhere, but somewhere else you are a follower, or you might lead by following. Zohar calls for leaders to become “servant leaders”—leaders who serve not just stockholders, colleagues, employees, products, and customers, but leaders who serve the community, the planet, humanity, the future, life itself.” (Zohar, 2010. p19)”

Being the leader does not mean you are the boss, it means you are chosen by a group because you are the right person for that job by popular vote and because of merit⁶⁵. As a leader you are equal to everyone else, everyone is working for the same goal, leading becomes a function. Leading does not mean you can sit back and watch other people do the work, it means you take on greater responsibility for the group. You are supposed to show where we are going, it is imperative you lead by example. Which in turn means that it is a position you have to be willing to take. It is a supportive role instead of a controlling one.

In turn the (leading) followers should realise that the leader is dependent on their support to 'get the job done'. The followers will have to acknowledge the fact that the leader fulfils a function that is dependent on an active involvement and support of the whole group.

Function and being

One of the biggest reasons for discord within a group is the idea that someone is doing more, or working harder than another. An easy example for this might be doing the dishes, which has to be well organized to make sure no one feels they did it more often than another. I believe that no matter what system you build this will always be a problem because of, what René Girard Calls, “Mimetic Desire and Mimetic Rivalry”. As prof. Duyndam explained in a *lecture on mimesis*: Mimetic Desire can be explained as the child who sees another child playing with an object which makes him want to have that object to play with. Since we all strive for the greatest comfort in equality we do not like it when others appear to have more comfort than we have. And so we rival the other for whatever it is that the other has. Especially in group activities it is imperative that everyone shares responsibility to avoid discontent.

Therefore I suggest a clear as possible distinction between the functions there are in a system, community, society, etc, and the people filling in those functions. Because we want a system where nobody can take a monopoly on power the functions should be well documented to allow anyone who is apt to perform the function can do so. If we separate function from person it becomes easier to tell someone why we do not agree with how that person performs in the function without fear of

⁶⁵ Merit, *n.* - **5.** That which is deserved or has been earned, whether good or evil; due reward or punishment. *Obs.*

losing the connection.

Of course a person and a function are tied together. Because we are all authentic beings we have our own 'style' when we perform a certain function. But in the end it does not matter how you achieve something, as long as you achieve it. Functions do not have to be strictly designed and organized. A function could be doing the dishes by the end of the day. How you achieve it is up to you as long as you take the responsibility to do it.

I realise that this is not as easily done as portrayed here, I understand that it gets a whole lot more difficult when it gets more complex, but I hope you understand the necessity of the distinction. For every goal certain aspects need to be fulfilled, it is possible to define those without losing track of our authentic self.

Equality and otherness

Another important aspect of an open source society is of course to allow everyone to become this authentic self. The system thrives in diversity and grinds to a halt when everyone is doing the same thing. What we do need to realise is that although everyone is equal every one of us as a human being is also unique. I always say that one of the greatest paradoxes of man is that everyone wants to be special but nobody wants to be different. With which I mean that we all want to be recognized as individual human beings, but we also want to belong to humanity. Being different is often a reason for misunderstanding and exclusion. We have to allow people to be their authentic self but this also means people will have to understand that everyone is different and that not everyone is capable of doing everything.

In her TED talk; *The world needs all kinds of minds*, Temple Grandin “talks about how her mind works sharing her ability to “think in pictures,” which helps her solve problems that neurotypical brains might miss. She makes the case that the world needs people on the autism spectrum: visual thinkers, pattern thinkers, verbal thinkers, and all kinds of smart geeky kids.” “We've got to think about all these different kinds of minds, and we've got to absolutely work with these kind of minds, because we absolutely are going to need these kind of people in the future. (Grandin, 2010. Ted.com)” In a decentralized, self organizing, complex adaptive system, all sorts of people are needed.

This means that in our striving towards our authenticity within the open source society we must come to see ourselves for what we are capable of. Some who want to lead might not be capable and some who do not want to lead might. We are the creators of our own story, but since we build the story with others we will have to show to our self and others that we are capable of performing a

certain function. Every new generation will have to find their own place in society by exploring their own I-can within society.

Making money

The most well know open source company that is making money from open source software is Red Hat. All I found of their business model is a small entry on wikipedia. “Red Hat partly operates on a professional open-source business model based on open code, development within a community, professional quality assurance, and subscription-based customer support. They produce open-source code, so more programmers can make further adaptations and improvements.

Red Hat sells subscriptions for the support, training, and integration services that help customers in using open-source software. Customers pay one set price for unlimited access to services such as Red Hat Network and up to 24/7 support. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Red_Hat#Business_model)”

In the article; How do you make money with Open Source? The short answer is: Services, Fabienne Riener explains a little bit on how the company sourcefabric makes their money: “as the initial creators of the tools, we would like to think we are the best (and hence your best choice) at working with our own tools, but the more people want to work with our software and the more people that have the ability and a vested interest in developing additional functionality, the better for us too. It keeps us on our toes to keep producing the best possible solutions. And because we are in it for the long haul, that means creating a vibrant ecosystem with many active participants. One benefit for users is simply that even if Sourcefabric were to stop actively working on a certain tool, its future is not at all endangered by that move.

The idea of an ecosystem is also important in light of the license question and the overall quality of the tool. Because although the licenses our tools are published under free the user from any payments for usage, the licenses (in the case of Booktype this is **AGPL**) include an obligation on the user’s part to share any extensions or improvements so they can be brought back to the source code. That means that the tool gets better the more people use it. Imagine just 20 organisations are using Booktype, all with complementing needs (workflow, input / output formats, you name it). Each organization simply has to commission one improvement but can in fact make use of all new functionalities. Now, don’t tell me that’s not a good thing?! (toc.oreilly.com/2013/02/how-do-you-make-money-with-open-source.html)”

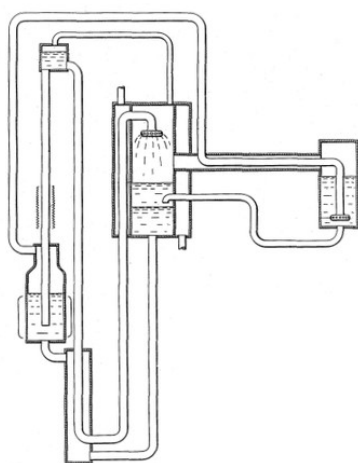
Like Red Hat, the way to make money with open source seems to be the service you can provide in implementing the software you create. The community is the most important. With the community development the product can improve. The company that gives the service on the

product has the overview on the improvements and they can offer more service.

The biggest problem for open source companies is the current cathedral system of production. If you have a good idea it is possible for big companies to buy the copyright to your idea. Let's say I think of a product that will do very good on the market, but I don't have money to buy the rights to my own idea I will have to go to existing companies for funding and research. Or I could try to go to a bank and get a loan, but then I will have to compete with far bigger businesses who, by now control most of the market. My chances are biggest in the new industries, like phone apps and software. The best way to make money with open source is by creating a service for my product.

But this works for software, you need experts to install the software and educate people on how to use it. So how do you make money from other products. For this we will have to do a thought experiment.

Einstein's refrigerator



Einstein Refrigerator
Patent number US1781541 -- November 11, 1930
Albert Einstein
Leó Szilárd

So let's say I want to build Einstein's refrigerator⁶⁶. It is, by now, an open source model for a refrigerator with no moving parts. Even though the mechanics behind it are interesting I will only focus on making a product. So let's say I 3d-print this machine, it works, is very cost effective and I can build it with eco-friendly parts. Eco friendly is a growing market share, also it is actually better for the environment so we take it that it will sell. Essentially what we need is a box that I can cool with Einstein's invention and that can protect the stuff. Also I want to cool for a reasonable time.

“Yuhta Alan Horie of the University of Michigan wrote in his thesis in 2004 that there is an observed lifetime for a refrigerator of 14 years, which is the average length of time that a family will keep one, and a maximum functional lifetime of 20 years. With the average refrigerator lifespan reported by Iowa State University to be only 13 years⁶⁷.”

So lasting longer than 13 years would be considered reasonable. But since we want to look green, we make it 50 years or we make it work as long as possible. In capitalism this is not done

66 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Einstein_refrigerator → The **Einstein-Szilard** or **Einstein refrigerator** is an absorption refrigerator which has no moving parts, operates at constant pressure, and requires only a heat source to operate. It was jointly invented in 1926 by Albert Einstein and his former student Leó Szilárd and patented in the US on November 11, 1930 (U.S. Patent 1,781,541). This is an alternative design from the original invention of 1922 by the Swedish inventors Baltzar von Platen and Carl Munters.

67 http://www.ehow.com/info_10061216_average-refrigerator-life-span.html

because of the need of perpetual growth, but we are not aiming for perpetual growth. And let's say it is possible to build this item for \$ 200,- total. (I don't know how much it would cost to produce one, but let's say it is this price.) All you need is a hall with 3d printers and someone to move it to packaging.

Now All I have to do is print the box and fill it with cooling fluid and I have a finished product. For variation we make the design modular. So we give it an exchangeable door and create several doors in different styles or colors. This allows for people to personalize their refrigerator. If you sell the refrigerator for \$ 300 you make your money.

But what if others take your idea and start building them as well? Build a community. The idea of open source is the bazaar model. Everyone can join and work on your basic idea. Say you want to expand to other cities. All you have to do is find people who want to make the same product as you. You help them to set up their factory and you ask them for a percentage of their income once they start generating income. As I said, the system is built on trust, so you'll have to trust the other to pay. But even if only five out of ten hold their promise you still make more than when you would have only your income. Also it is beneficial for the other to hold to the promise because once the other creates a product, lets say an open source toaster, and you want to build it, you give the other a percentage of the income you generate with that idea. In this way the open source society grows. This is a true free market, if another takes your product and makes it better you'll have to make it even better, until it reaches its optimal form. After that demand will regulate how many production there is. You can compete of course, but working against each other will only reduce your income and product development. If you ask too much for it somebody else can sell it cheaper, so you'll have to lower your price.

But what if the 'big companies' start making the refrigerator? Firstly, its against their bottom line, they will not build goods that last longer than a certain period because they need to sell products to stay in business. So Any Leonard travelled the world for ten years tracking where our stuff comes from and where it goes. And what she found is that our current production system “is a linear system and we live on a finite planet and you can not run a linear system on a finite planet indefinitely. (Leonard, 2007)” Right now there is Planned obsolescence which “is a business strategy in which the obsolescence (the process of becoming obsolete—that is, unfashionable or no longer usable) of a product is planned and built into it from its conception. This is done so that in future the consumer feels a need to purchase new products and services that the manufacturer brings out as replacements for the old ones. (economist, 2007)” So the bussiness interest is not to make stuff last longer, but to find the right balance between sales and obsolescence.

But even if they do they push themselves out of the market because when equilibrium⁶⁸ has been reached they will become obsolete. By which I mean that eventually there will be a balance between supply and demand. If everyone has a refrigerator there is no use to build them any more. The little demand there is can be fulfilled with factories that can build (i.e. print) the needed product.

The more products get replaced by open source products the less need there will be for big companies. This world is not built for eternal growth because it has finite resources. For now there is opportunity to make money with making products that last. Once everything is replaced with stuff we need we can build stuff we want. Just try to imagine the resources that will become available for any project we want to do that is now considered non-profitable. Imagine what could happen to space travel for example once people don't have to work on protecting their control. Work will consist of maintenance and keeping the system running smoothly. Most resources will most likely be allocated to public services. Next to that we will have a lot of free time.

Now to my amazement some people do not like this idea. They say they like working. But not having to work does not mean you can't work. Now you can work on things you want to work on, or join communities that organize work for you. Also you can work on 'unique' items. Now you can build that boat you always wanted. Or design and build that wooden chair you've always wanted. Or maybe you make candles. You can even sell them so you have credits (e.g. bitcoins) to buy unique items others have built. This is how the system still allows for authenticity. Together with the fact that everyone can build their own identity from the marketplace of stories and create the look on almost anything because of the use of modularity. I imagine a modular car, a sturdy basis of a car on which you can design any shape you want. Need a saloon? Or a pickup? Just change the top.

From scarcity to abundance

As the old centralized structures of society become more and more unsustainable. The long supply-lines of goods will become more and more expensive. Most likely there will be a point where it will be cheaper to grow your own food and build your own furniture than to buy it from some place far away. I do not know when this will happen, but I'm pretty certain at some point it will, because of the inherent unsustainability of the current system. When this happens there will have to be an alternative to the current system. These alternatives are already being tried and tested as some people have come to the same conclusion as Bernstein and Zohar that our current system is

68 Equilibrium, *n.* - **a.** In physical sense: The condition of equal balance between opposing forces; that state of a material system in which the forces acting upon the system, or those of them which are taken into consideration, are so arranged that their resultant at every point is zero. A body is said to be in *stable* equilibrium, when it returns to its original position after being disturbed; in *unstable* when it continues to move in the direction given to it by the disturbing force; in *neutral*, when it remains stationary in its new position.

unsustainable.

As I've showed a number of communities and collectives are building alternative ways of producing goods. And because we can build them ourselves we have the possibility of creating a new form of abundance. A new form because 'the west' most likely won't be able to consume as it does now. We will have to learn to live with far less stuff than we are used to. The biggest change we will have to make towards a stable society will be of the mind. We will have to start living simpler ascetic lives, enjoying more the things we have.

And the stuff we will have will be designed to last and will enable us to create stuff we really need. Food will most likely be grown locally, and will probably be more varied because of the foodforest or another permaculture technology. Or food could be grown in aquaponic systems, which can be fully automated. Both technologies create another very important resource besides food: Time. A foodforest is a self sustaining field where you go in to get the food without any, or very little, need for cultivation once the system is fully grown. Also there will be a variety of foodstuffs, because the forest will need different types of plants and trees. The same goes for the aquaponics system although you can also grow mono-crops, but why would you. The time you win with these technologies can be spent on connection, organization or building new technologies. Say for instance you need a new vacuum cleaner, refrigerator or toaster. Then you either build one or ask someone who likes to build one to do it and give some food. Or maybe pay for them with bitcoins.

Government will be arranged by councils and decisions will be made by leaders who listen to an informed public who in turn can see the decision-making process through github.

Work can be organized around the idea of sustainability and intrinsic motivation. We can have our connection to others and to our work. We can live in a sustainable way. Sounds too utopian? In theory it is possible. The infrastructure is there, all we have to do is realize it. Again, I make it sound too easy. But there are two possible ways for the future. Either we believe we are doomed, that there is no way out of our current predicament, and then we are. Or we believe we can change things for the better, and we try, and then maybe we will, because we can.

Conclusion

So: How is an Open Source Society, where information is shared freely, different from today's society and how would society be experienced if all knowledge is available?

The open source philosophy could enable us to create a new system that creates a new balance between freedom and control. Because all information is open to everyone there is far less

possibility for one person or a group of persons to take control since it means control over information. Because information is shared freely and to all the control will shift from one owner to many owners. Everybody has the choice to be in control or give control to someone other who they believe has proven the capability of carrying the responsibility for a group. So the experience will most likely be a greater sense of connection, authenticity, autonomy and purpose, i.e. the right amount of freedom vs. the right amount of control.

The open source philosophy allows for a more humanistic society since we will have all the information necessary to create a system that allows for the greatest comfort for all. If we change from a mechanistic world view to a holistic one it will become easier to understand our place within the world and our place between others. Because all information is open to everyone it allows for all to create their own authentic story in the collective story of man through easier dialogue with our environment. With this understanding the system has room for more sociability. As the system becomes more social our need for connection and meaning can be fulfilled more easily. Once we understand our responsibility for our own comfort and enjoyment we can understand the value the other has because they have the same responsibility. The understanding of the value of the other for our own comfort will increase dialogue, through which a deeper understanding of the other can grow. This means living together becomes easier because through understanding comes greater connection.

Society would be mostly socialistic without forgetting about the need for authenticity which relies on private ownership. Since everyone can have everything they need egocentric behaviour would be of little use. In this way the inequality existing today might be reduced or even disappear since the basic needs of all people could be fulfilled. Because of the rising inequality it is most likely that some form of revolution will take place. Since the open source system is built for decentralized self-organizing structures it might allow for a comprehensive way to deal with the increasing uncertainty of our complex society moving towards chaos. Acting from the supposed egocentric motives inherent to humanity as seen by the current closed source system leads to short-term thinking which will be destructive for humanity in the long-term. Only if we take a holistic stance with a long-term vision for humanity we might prevent societies to spiral of into complete chaos.

The general idea of open source is that *the information (knowledge)* on how goods and services are created is *open to everyone*. It's model resembles a bazaar where different agenda's and minds can work on the same thing. It is a new way of thinking about and handling the idea of property. It changes ownership of property from a single owner or group of owners to everyone

without taking away the possibility for authenticity. There are already numerous examples of people working in an open source fashion. Intellectual property rights are protected by copyleft, scientists are opening their research to others to improve science, the open source ecology community offers blueprints for a civilization starter-kit, the permaculture groups show us how to build aquaponics and foodforrests, Bitcoin allows us to directly pay each other without the interference of banks, there are entire businesses built on the open source philosophy, the 3d printer and DIY community teach us how to build our own means of production, Raspberry Pi and Arduino give us the ability to automate those means, hackers can improve and build the tools we need and github and open-politics allow us to manage the decentralized complex self adapting system that is starting to emerge.

The open source society is this decentralized system allowing for self organizing complex systems. Which means that it allows for groups of people to work together without having been told to do so or how. Also it allows for a great number of people to work on something without the collaboration turning into chaos. The society will have to be built on trust and transparency, which is possible because we don't have to protect self interest. Because we are all in control we are responsible for our own actions. If we do not want to be responsible we choose someone who has proven to possess the aptitude to bear the responsibility. Since there is little possibility to control others it's difficult to lead by force, so leadership becomes a serving function. Leadership now means greater responsibility, it becomes a position earned by merit not by status. Those who follow the leader are also leaders in their own right, because without the followers the leader is just a lone nut. Everyone in the group is an authentic being, everyone just has a different function according to capability. When function is separated from the person it becomes a tool that can be improved without having to improve the person handling the tool.

There are many types of people, every single human-being is unique in its own right. We will have to accept that we are all equal but not the same. This is a good thing because the open source society thrives on diversity. It is the otherness of the other that is needed to create something that only one of us could never have thought of. Because it allows many minds to work on something there is a lot of room for creative solutions. And it is with this creativity and communality that we might be able to make money from open source. The companies that make money with open source do so by offering the service that is needed to implement and/or understand the software.

When it comes to produce I believe it will be possible to create new products with the new technologies available to us and sell them. When you want to expand your businesses you find people in other places who want to sell your product. As soon as they start to make money they give a percentage of their income to you. Since the system is built on trust you will have to trust the

other to do so, but even only a few pay you still make more collectively then you would on your own. Also it is in their best interest to do so, because once they have an item they want to sell they can do so through you and you pay them the percentage. The key to success is community. Produce simple and durable products that you can sell for little money to a lot of people. This has two effects. You make money fast and it saturates the market which means to keep making money new products will have to be produced. As soon as all the basic needs are met there will be little use for money other then for buying unique goods.

We can have a more humane society where the balance between freedom and control is in the hands of everyone. As soon as we stop trying to control the flow of information we gain freedom never before experienced. The type one civilization could be a global civilization built as decentralized self-organizing complex adaptive system, an open source society.

p.s.

This is my perspective on a new story we can live up to. It is a short exploration and as such I probably mis a lot of information. Also, as I've said, I do not believe that one man can create a system like this. It will need many people from different fields of knowledge to fill in the gaps that are undoubtedly within this writing.

Therefore I invite you to join the dialogue on www.theopensourcesociety.org. For now there is nothing there, because I do not have the time or skill to set it up. So the first people the site will need are designers and developers.

The document is online for review and improvement at:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Sh2376OTA4Jy0WKxxO2cn3ff2RfO8TdBfkst5ihXXa4/edit?usp=sharing>

for the hardcore open source people at:

<http://openetherpad.org/p/theopensourcesociety>

Are you motivated or maybe angered by this story. Want to help out or shoot at the theory. Sent me an e-mail at: theopensourcesociety@gmail.com or improve the online documents.

Thank you for your attention.

Sources

- Aufenhanger, J. 1985 *Prisma filosofie* Spectrum:Utrecht
- Atterton, P. et. al. 2004 *Levinas & Buber Dialogue & Difference*. Pittsburgh: Duquesne Univ.
- Axtmann, R. 2003. *Understanding Democratic Politics: An Introduction*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd
- Baker et. al., 2004. *Equality from theory to action*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Mcmillan
- Bernstein, A. 2008 *Objectivism in One Lesson: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Ayn Rand Falls Village: Hamilton Books*
- Brené Brown as found on http://www.ted.com/talks/brene_brown_on_vulnerability.html 00:03:15)
- Cacioppo, J. et. al. *Loneliness: Human Nature and the Need for Social Connection* New York: Norton & Company
- Dennett, D. 2013 *Philosophy That Stirs the Water – the new york times*. As found on march 16 2013
http://www.nytimes.com/2013/04/30/books/daniel-dennett-author-of-intuition-pumps-and-other-tools-for-thinking.html?_r=0
- Duyndam, J. et al. 2003 *Kopstukken filosofie: Levinas*. Rotterdam: Lemniscaat
- Economist, 2007 *Planned obsolescence*, as found on 06-16-2013 at: <http://www.economist.com/node/13354332>
- Gradin, T. 2010, *The world needs all kinds of minds* Ted.com as found on july 11 2013 on:
http://www.ted.com/talks/temple_gradin_the_world_needs_all_kinds_of_minds.html
- Greene , B. 2010 *The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory*. New York: Norton & Company
- geek.com (feb 12th 2013) *3D printed meat could soon be cheap and tasty enough to win you over* As found on:
<http://www.geek.com/news/3d-printed-meat-could-soon-be-cheap-and-tasty-enough-to-win-you-over-1539410/> on july 3rd 2013
- Hegel, G. 1956 *The Philosophy of History*. New York
- Hall, B. 2010. *Open innovation and intellectual property rights*, short paper written for *Japan Spotlight* (January/February 2010 issue As found on july 11 2013 on: <http://emlab.berkeley.edu/~bhhall/bhpapers.html>
- Heidegger, M., 1996. *Being and time*. New York: State university of new york press
- Kaku, M, 2009. *About Future Civilizations*. As found on 2012 on: <http://youtu.be/JdILmgJGuvw>
- Maslow – hierarchy of needs
- Moore, J.T.S. 2001 *Revolution OS*. Los Angeles: Wonderview Productions
- Msnbc july 3rd 2013 *3-d gun printing: Here's the software that stops it* as found on: <http://www.cnn.com/id/100861913> on July 3rd 2013
- Laitman, M. 2006 *Kabbalah Revealed : The Ordinary Person's Guide to a More Peaceful Life* Toronto: Laitman Kabbalah Publishers
- Leonard, A. 2007. [Story Of Stuff, Referenced and Annotated Script](http://dev.storyofstuff.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/annie_leonard_footnoted_script.pdf). As found on 06-06-2013 on:
http://dev.storyofstuff.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/10/annie_leonard_footnoted_script.pdf
- Opensource.org – Definition - <http://opensource.org/docs/osd>

- Shapiro, C. and Varian, H. 1998 *Information Rules: A Strategic Guide to the Network Economy* Cambridge: Harvard Business Review press
- Shirky, C. 2012 - *How the internet will (one day) transform government* Ted.com as found on july 11 2013 on: http://www.ted.com/talks/clay_shirky_how_the_internet_will_one_day_transform_government.html
- Sivers, D. 2010 How to start a movement. TED.com as found on july 11 2013 on: http://www.ted.com/talks/derek_sivers_how_to_start_a_movement.html
- Weber, S. 2005 *The Success of Open Source* cambridge: Harvard University Press
- Visscher, J. 1995 *Het probleem van de grondslagen van de moraal*. Ingeleid en geannoteerd Kampen: Kok Agora.
- Wood, D. 2003. *On Paul Ricoeur* Narrative and interpretation. New York: Routledge Routledge
- Woodruff, D. S. 2007 *Husserl* London: Routledge
- Wikipedia open source - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_source
- Wikipedia Mondragon - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mondragon_Corporation#Business_culture
- Wikipedia Hackers - [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hacker_\(programmer_subculture\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hacker_(programmer_subculture))
- Zohar, D. 1994 *The quantum society : mind, physics, and a new social vision* New York: Harper Perennial
- Zohar, D. 2010 *Spiritual Capital, wealth we can live by*. California: Berrett-Koehler

Hi, my name is Marcin -- farmer, technologist. I was born in Poland, now in the U.S. I started a group called Open Source Ecology. We've identified the 50 most important machines that we think it takes for modern life to exist -- things from tractors, bread ovens, circuit makers. Then we set out to create an open source, DIY, do it yourself version that anyone can build and maintain at a fraction of the cost. We call this the Global Village Construction Set.

So let me tell you a story. So I finished my 20s with a Ph.D. in fusion energy, and I discovered I was useless. I had no practical skills. The world presented me with options, and I took them. I guess you can call it the consumer lifestyle. So I started a farm in Missouri and learned about the economics of farming. I bought a tractor -- then it broke. I paid to get it repaired -- then it broke again. Then pretty soon, I was broke too.

I realized that the truly appropriate, low-cost tools that I needed to start a sustainable farm and settlement just didn't exist yet. I needed tools that were robust, modular, highly efficient and optimized, low-cost, made from local and recycled materials that would last a lifetime, not designed for obsolescence. I found that I would have to build them myself. So I did just that. And I tested them. And I found that industrial productivity can be achieved on a small scale.

So then I published the 3D designs, schematics, instructional videos and budgets on a wiki. Then contributors from all over the world began showing up, prototyping new machines during dedicated project visits. So far, we have prototyped eight of the 50 machines. And now the project is beginning to grow on its own.

We know that open source has succeeded with tools for managing knowledge and creativity. And the same is starting to happen with hardware too. We're focusing on hardware because it is hardware that can change people's lives in such tangible material ways. If we can lower the barriers to farming, building, manufacturing, then we can unleash just massive amounts of human potential.

That's not only in the developing world. Our tools are being made for the American farmer, builder, entrepreneur, maker. We've seen lots of excitement from these people, who can now start a construction business, parts manufacturing, organic CSA or just selling power back to the grid. Our goal is a repository of published designs so clear, so complete, that a single burned DVD is effectively a civilization starter kit.

I've planted a hundred trees in a day. I've pressed 5,000 bricks in one day from the dirt beneath my feet and built a tractor in six days. From what I've seen, this is only the beginning.

If this idea is truly sound, then the implications are significant. A greater distribution of the means of production, environmentally sound supply chains, and a newly relevant DIY maker culture can hope to transcend artificial scarcity. We're exploring the limits of what we all can do to make a better world with open hardware technology.

Thank you.

(Applause)