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“As important as these changes were, it was the [Langdell case-law] method of instruction at Harvard that revolutionized the study of law in the United States. Grant Gilmore refers to Langdell as ‘an essentially stupid man’ who early in his life hit on one great idea – the case method – ‘to which, thereafter, he clung with all the tenacity of a genius’ (1977: 42).”

– Howard Abadinski, Law & Justice: An Introduction to the American Legal System, 5th Ed. (2003), p. 88 ¹

HOMO ABNEGUS: The fact that it took me more than 25 years to finish this project argues strongly against the utility of elementary school IQ testing. At 22, I lost badly at chess against a 7-year old opponent who was watching *Beevis & Butthead*; I’d stare at the chessboard and make a move after a few minutes, he looked down, made a move in about 10 seconds and went back to watching *Beevis & Butthead*. If I were to walk into a club with a child – whether a prodigy or not, I would be allowed to consume alcoholic beverages and he would not; not because I am smarter than he is, but because I am older and dumber.

- ❖ Abnegism is an invention of William Tenn in his 1950 short story, “Null P.” It is available for free online.

I am an essentially stupid person² who got hold of a trivial problem and wouldn’t let go; whose main ability – as I have convinced myself (self-absorption, self-delusion) – is to be able to intuitively understand and synthesize ideas and complexities from a wide range of disciplines (mostly social sciences, history and philosophy) to present a panoramic, holistic view of human Western civilization in our time. I have also convinced myself that I can create a simulation game with redeeming intellectual and andragogy value and that doing so is all that *matters* in my life.

- ❖ “One of the great challenges in this world is knowing enough about the subject to think you are right, but not enough to know you are wrong.” – Neil deGrasse Tyson, “Class Trailer” video to Master Class program.

My job in GGDM was to synthesize ideas into a simulation that works, is interesting and produces emergent play. As such, I take ideas from *secondary sources*, ideas I certainly didn’t have originally,³ and mold them into the conversation of GGDM. Sometimes, I have a little to add...

- ❖ Am I the fool who had to say something or the wise man who has something to say? *That is* the question of GGDM.

✚ TOMORROWLAND: “There are fuzzy or stilted warnings, courtesy of co-writers Bird and Damon Lindelof ... about the plight of extraordinary individuals in an ordinary world, and the price we’ll eventually pay for despoiling the environment and demonizing science. Bird has been criticized for infusing ‘The Incredibles’ and ‘Ratatouille’ with simplistic and sometimes elitist-sounding statements about the privileges that should accrue to gifted people. He’ll get raked over the coals again here, thanks to the future’s ‘Atlas Shrugged’-style origin story: the world’s great scientific minds decided they’d had enough of ignorance and apathy and made their own world that’s part Shangri-La and part Emerald City of Oz, but functionally Noah’s Ark.” – Matt Zoller Seitz, review of Tomorrowland on rogerebert.com, March 18, 2015.

- ❖ There's those damned ... fuzzy things again. They snuck into our modern language. I am sure that John Locke would not approve, but he also would not be surprised by it.
- ❖ My criticism of the movie Tomorrowland (2015) is in one scene that caused me to step back from the immersion, to say 'ah yeah, right,' to suspend disbelief. It was that awful scene where an antique, presumably late 19th Century three stage rocket with capsule hidden under the Eiffel Tower was launched into orbit. That is just wrong, ridiculous on so many levels, both historical and technical; William Goddard who invented the entire science of modern rocketry, was just five years old at the time of the 1887 World Fair in Paris and somehow that rocket was hidden under the Eiffel Tower for 128 years and still worked perfectly? What murder and mayhem was employed to keep it hidden, what happened to anyone who discovered it? In addition to the whole thing being just absurd. I think they could have done something else with the scene to move the story along, but apparently, we needed a rocket launch to add boom, bang and whoosh to the movie or to cynically set up a Disney theme park ride.

“For indeed you cannot fail to remember that the most learned men hold what the Greeks call ‘philosophy’ to be the creator and mother, as it were, of all the reputable arts...”

– Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Of Oratory* (55 B.C.), Bk. 1 (trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham) from Patricia Bizzell and Bruce Herzberg, *The Rhetorical Tradition* (1990), p. 201

PHILOSOPHY OF WIKI: A 2011 Wikipedia user essay states that a web-crawler determined that 94.52% of Wikipedia pages eventually link to the Wikipedia Philosophy page through the chain of internal Wikipedia links.⁴ This is not surprising. It reflects the structure of human knowledge; that nearly any meaningful discussion can and will end up being a discussion of philosophies.

- ❖ Wikipedians call it “falling down the rabbit hole”; you start reading about t-shirts and an hour later, you are reading about guinea pigs, and you don't know why, how you got there, and you don't notice the passage of time. The rabbit hole of human knowledge – whether on Wikipedia, the internet in general, reading books, or through formal education – always emerges into the philosophical kingdoms.

I wonder if we encountered another ‘advanced’ species, would they possibly have a meta-structure of knowledge that does not start with philosophy? Is it possible? Imagining such a thing is difficult, like imagining a non-base 10 numeral and maths systems.

- ❖ One possible definition of Philosophy is that it is the home of human thought on subjects which do not yield to empirical analysis or do not have sufficient empirical evidence. Since the discipline of empiricism came so late to humanity, Philosophy represents our first musings on the world and the dark places in the universe for most of human history. Even now, Philosophy exists at the edges of knowledge created by empirical data and scientific method, and is a vital component in any scientific study of humanity (i.e. the social sciences) where empirical data used in arguments cannot be readily repeated or confirmed by testing.
- ❖ All arguments within our current structure of knowledge can be classified broadly as one of three types: Empirical, Philosophical or Mathematics/Logic. Any argument that is not strictly empirical usually ends up being a philosophical argument. Most other arguments fall into a range between empirical and philosophical (for example,

sociological arguments). Some may consider Math/Logic to be an extremely specialized form of Empirical argument (Clarence Marsh Case referred to it as ‘quantitative logic’); others may include music, visual and performing arts as a type of argument.

✚ PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS: There are some who think that because a question sounds ‘philosophical’ that it doesn’t apply to their field or to a particular field other than philosophy. This is especially true in any field that is considered technical, empirical or mathematical – this has been a widespread problem in fields struggling to be recognized as ‘empirical science’ such as economics, psychology, and sociology. For example, this response on Economics Stack Exchange to a question about Mises axiom of human action (economics):

- ❖ “I know Mises was a famous economist and that his name is hallowed in certain circles but this really seems like a question of philosophy.”

Another user, began “As a statement about human behaviour in general, it is a question of philosophy and psychology,” then went on to criticize Mises axiom as not being economics because it says nothing about decision making and doesn’t have any predictive value. Conversely, the Austrian School maintains that psychology or morality have nothing to do with the axiom of human action, that motivations and content of concrete ends are irrelevant.

It is sometimes not understood that behind every field of human knowledge lies philosophy, that because a question *seems philosophical* doesn’t mean it isn’t within any field except philosophy. That philosophy is still considered the top of every field is perhaps best attested to by the highest possible degree in any field, the Ph.D. – Doctor of Philosophy which can be awarded in chemistry as well as political science as well as nursing – in nursing there are DNP – Doctor of Nursing Practice – and Ph.D. – Doctor of Philosophy in nursing – degrees.

- ❖ Odd thing, my Rhetorical Theory professor spent much effort playing off Plato’s Gorgias (380 B.C.) and St. Augustine’s On Christian Doctrine (426 A.D.) to create a conflict between rhetoric and philosophy. None of my many philosophy courses, including Ancient Greek Philosophy in my senior year of undergrad, ever mentioned any conflict with rhetoric. While Plato may have started the fight, philosophy cares not much for it; one can picture an accomplished, charismatic young orator railing against some off-comment made by the philosopher, who snoozes in the corner, unconcerned.

“In fact men will fight for a superstition quite as quickly as for a living truth – often more so, since a superstition is so intangible you cannot get at it to refute it, but truth is a point of view, and so is changeable.”

– Hypatia of Alexandria ⁵

TEACHING FROM A PEDESTAL: I was struck by the curious absurdity of Larentius de Voltolina’s famous illustration of a 14th Century university lecture.



The illustration shows a robed elderly master or instructor, sitting atop a huge, ornate pedestal desk platform with a curved wooden roof, accessible by steps along the side, lecturing over rows of students seated at long benches facing him. Other period images of medieval education show instructors sitting on high chairs above the students who sit on the floor in rows. I recall also seeing pictures and reading that in many reformed churches, especially the Puritan places, the sermon was delivered by the clergy from a high alcove over the congregation. I seem to recall such a scene from one of *The Scarlett Letter* movies.

- ❖ Notice that the students in front have their books open and are looking up at the master, while the students in the last two rows are barely paying attention, only one has a book open, one is writing, others are sleeping, conversing. This observation of human nature by the artist shows that not much has changed in five centuries.

In my youth, I heard many times from my mother the story of her 12th grade, alcoholic English teacher in high heels, falling face first off the teaching platform in front of the whole class (and no one helped her up). By the early 1970s, these teaching platforms were considered an anachronism and had largely disappeared, but I recall that my 3rd grade classroom at Cochran Elementary had a raised teaching platform. I recall this vividly because my desk was moved to the front of the class, onto the platform next to the American flag, where I had to sit most of the time that I was in her class. And because the elderly lady teacher used to sit in a chair at the front of the

platform and read books such as Charlotte’s Web (1952), Charlie and the Chocolate Factory (aka “Willie Wonka,” 1964), and The Trumpeter Swan (1970), to the class in the afternoons.

Since that time, and even before it in early elementary school days, I do not recall any other situation where my teachers, college professors, or other instructors stood or were seated on a raised platform or chair. It is considered sufficient for authority now that the teacher stand in front of students sitting at desks in rows. I have witnessed judges who sometimes did not wear robes or sit on the bench in their courtroom during motions (e.g., Judge Stanton R. Wettick). Many colleges have gone in the opposite direction, using amphitheater-style classrooms where the students sit above the instructor, my 7th Grade geography class was in such a room. I have also been in smaller classes where students sit at long wooden tables formed in a U-shape facing the instructor, like an egalitarian salon of intellectual fellows (e.g., my Personal Identity Theory philosophy seminar class at Lycoming College in the early 1990s).

✚ MODERNITY: The universality and persistence of this change – not just a matter of modern style or passing fashion – is indicative of something much deeper that has changed in the past half millennia. Knowledge and legitimacy of intellect and authority are no longer divinely given or spoken from above, strict Church-legitimized social hierarchy has fallen over; the Enlightenment made knowledge secular and accessible to and the property of humanity, legitimacy is granted by the people and governments are made of people.

- ❖ When authority is based on divine will, expressed through the church, any divergence of doctrine, schism, or heresy within the church is a threat to legitimacy that provokes a violent reaction from the authorities. In England, *Protestant dissidents* to the *Anglican Church* were accused of “popery,” that is, undermining the Anglican Church and aiding the Pope’s alleged schemes to reestablish Catholicism in England.
- ❖ Langdell’s case-law method of law school instruction was the application of empiricism to the process of law. An attorney instructor at the Duquesne University Paralegal Institute, commented further, that the reason the paralegal profession exists is because “the practice of law has been de-mystified.” Legal argument in English common law jurisprudence is a modified form of scholasticism.

“Master Pangloss taught the metaphysico-theologo-cosmologology. He could prove admirably that there is no effect without a cause, and in this best of all possible worlds the baron’s castle was the most magnificent of all castles, and my lady the best of all possible baronesses.

‘It is demonstrable,’ said he, ‘that things cannot be otherwise than they are; for as all things have been created for some end, they must necessarily be created for the best end. Observe, for instance, the nose is formed for spectacles; therefore we wear spectacles. The legs are visibly designed for stockings; accordingly we wear stockings. Stones were made to be hewn and to construct castles; therefore my lord has a magnificent castle; for the greatest baron in the province ought to be the best lodged. Swine were intended to be eaten; therefore we eat pork all year round. And they who assert that everything is right, do not express themselves correctly; they should say that everything is best.’” – Voltaire, Candide (1759)

PANGLOSS DOESN'T VISIT OFTEN: The classic formulation of Gottfried Leibniz' (1646-1716) 'best of all possible worlds' argument is:

1. God has the idea of infinitely many universes. [How do you know this?]
2. Only one of these universes can actually exist. [Really?]
3. God's choices are subject to the principle of sufficient reason, that is, God has reason to choose one thing or another. [His reason or ours?]
4. God is good. [Are you sure?]
5. Therefore, the universe that God chose to exist is the best of all possible worlds.⁶ [Riiiiigghht!]

The 'best of all possible worlds' argument has been criticized and lampooned enough – most notably by Voltaire's most famous book – that it need not be rehashed here. Rather, it is more curious that one of such towering intellect (of which I am but a shadow) as Gottfried Leibniz would not have noticed the fundamental flaw in this argument: the word "God." That one of such empirical and mathematical mind (e.g., he was one of two independent inventors of calculus, see Math Boy discussion, p. 221, 1 Entropy, *supra*) would make such concrete statements about something of which he could know or prove nothing, on such flimsy evidence, is amazing.

- ✓ Although "god" makes four of the five fallacious, Number 2 is equally questionable – and not considered even very likely nowadays.

Half a century later, David Hume argued against the argument from design:

- ❖ "Secondly, You have no reason, on your theory, for ascribing perfection to the Deity, even in his finite capacity, or for supposing him free from every error, mistake, or incoherence, in his undertakings.... But were this world ever so perfect a production, it must still remain uncertain, whether all the excellences of the work can justly be ascribed to the workman.... And what surprise must we feel, when we find him a stupid mechanic, who imitated others, and copied an art, which, through a long succession of ages, after multiplied trials, mistakes, corrections, deliberations, and controversies, had been gradually improving? Many worlds might have been botched and bungled, throughout an eternity, ere this system was struck out; much labour lost, many fruitless trials made; and a slow, but continued improvement carried on during infinite ages in the art of world-making." – David Hume, Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion (1750-1776, pub. 1779).
 - And who is to say that our world was not one of those botched and bungled on the way to a later perfect creation? I would not be surprised. Maybe the Big Bang was one of the "botched and bungled" creations?
 - This passage, if any single passage could be so attributed, is probably the inspiration for Robert Heinlein's Job: A Comedy of Justice (1984).

Rather, it is most likely that Leibniz was keenly aware of the fallacy of the 'Best of All Possible Worlds' argument but likely offered it for shrewd political reasons, concluding internally that:

- 1) Most of humanity is not interested in proving or disproving the existence of God (or having their religious beliefs rationally and empirically examined), and

- 2) Arguing against God in the midst of the Holy Roman Empire of the 17th Century would alienate his patrons and sabotage his ambitions of political and diplomatic advancement.

The ‘best of all possible worlds’ argument then falls into the column of criticisms of the old European patronage systems, beyond merely censorship and suppression.

But Leibniz went one step further, instead of merely refraining from arguing empirically about the existence or non-existence of God, Leibniz created a self-serving justification for the *status quo*, the *Ancien Regime* of Europe that earned him the eternal contempt of Voltaire and others who laid the foundations for the coming revolutions *and atheism*⁷ in Europe. And this, perhaps, is the grand joke of Gottfried Leibniz’ ‘best of all possible worlds’ argument upon his patrons and intellectually inferior social betters – he was mocking his social betters and either they knew it and didn’t care, or they didn’t know it and didn’t get it – for, from the ‘evil’ of his patrons and their social systems, in the ‘best of all possible worlds,’ was caused an argument to be made revealing their fallacious smugness to the restless intellects of the following generation.

This is the genius of genius; geniuses plant time bombs under the age in which they live, in mockery of what they see around them, it is true of Socrates, of Newton, of Darwin, of Bacon:

- ❖ “Francis Bacon coughed out his life alone in a cold and borrowed bed, in a century to which he had been a stranger. He had once written to a friend, ‘I have lost much time with this age; I would be glad to recover it with posterity.’ Bacon saw, like the statesman he was charged with being, the full implications of science and its hope for man. He left his work unfinished and open to improvement, as he knew science itself to be unfinished in the world of time. He warned man of the shadows in his own brain which kept him dancing like one enchanted within the little circle of narrow prejudice and fanatic ideology. Though Bacon died childless his intellectual children in a few scant generations were destined to be legion. He would be called by Izaak Walton a few years after his death ‘the great Secretary of all Nature.’ He planned as a man of great affairs, dreamed like a poet, and yet sought to rope those dreams to earth as though, in doing so, he might more easily sail earth itself into the full wind of that oncoming and creative age toward which his vision hastened.” – Loren Eiseley, The Modern Dilemma (1957), Kindle Loc. 221-229. Bacon has Fallen to Earth.

✚ ON THE OTHER HAND: Alternatively, one might argue that viewed within a certain framework, this is the best of all possible worlds. That doesn’t say much on the positive side, but if that was what Gottfried Leibniz was thinking, shifting framework has certainly been the story of the last three centuries: calculus – which Leibniz invented independently of Newton – is certainly a prime example. We also had to change our view when physics reached the subatomic, Newtonian physics no longer applied.

But it’s a glass half-full or half-empty argument. David Hume, on the basis of the actual world before him (which hasn’t improved much in that regard), suggested strongly that this world is another botched creation. He didn’t say it directly, of course, but certainly it seemed to be hovering there. One day, the artist, with enough experience and bumbles, will get it right, perfect, but this world ain’t it.

*“If you just close your eyes and block your ears
To the accumulated knowledge of the last two thousand years
Then morally, guess what? You’re off the hook
And thank Christ you only have to read one book.”*

– Tim Minchin, “The Good Book” (2009) ⁸

WHEN THE WORLD WAS NEW, WHEN THE WORLD WAS OLD: When I finally came late to college, after a precocious and wildly undisciplined intellectual youth, I found to my dismay that all of the ideas, lines of thought, and questions of my youth had already been invented, bettered, and written down (but not solved, answered) by people who died centuries or millennia before I was born. Some might have found joy in the discovery that their own thinking was in line with those of our great intellectual ancestors, but to me, it caused some dismay to know that I had not really thought of anything new or clever. It seemed that I was not really that smart after all.

Scholasticism was fashioned on the idea of reverence for ancient wisdom; students were taught to make arguments and try to find solutions from Church-approved ancient texts. It must have seemed like the light of the world burned sun-bright in ancient times, and each succeeding generation, being further from the ancient world, lived their lives in slowly dimming twilight. All important things had already been said, disputed, and discussed by revered ancient intellects, all wisdom available to humanity had been discovered already and written down, nothing new could be added by the current generation. And their world of Europe was encased in stone and chaos.

- ❖ “Unlike his associates, however, [Sir Francis Bacon] saw the Ancients in the dawning light of modernity, not as Colossi whose achievements the living could not equal, but, rather, reduced to their true stature as men – men whose accomplishments the hoarded experience of succeeding generations might enable us to surpass. ... In Bacon’s time such a view of the ancients was iconoclastic and heretical to an extent difficult to appreciate in the intellectual climate of today.” – Loren Eiseley, *The Modern Dilemma* (1957), Kindle Loc. 288-294.

As elegantly described by Loren Eiseley, scholasticism had become dysfunctional, even perhaps a socially cancerous or a brain tumor on civilization, by the time of Sir Francis Bacon who died in 1626.

- ❖ “It was Bacon’s whole purpose, set against the scholastic thinking of medieval times, ‘to overcome,’ as he remarks in another of his works, the *Novum Organum*, ‘not an adversary in argument, but nature in action.’ Truth, to the medieval schoolmen of the theologically oriented universities, rested upon the belief that reality lay in the world of ideas largely independent of our sense perceptions. In this domain the use of a clever and sophisticated logic for argument, rather than observation of the phenomena of nature was the road to wisdom.” *Id.*, Kindle Loc. 70-74.
 - See ‘best of all possible worlds’ argument, p. 1495, *ut supra*.
 - Carl Sagan makes this same argument throughout *Cosmos*.

I have often wondered that it never occurred to most people of the period that, rather than trying to tease out solutions to modern problems from ancient texts through dialectic argument, perhaps we should go forth and observe, test and ask new questions?

- ❖ “Aristotle maintained that women have fewer teeth than men; although he was twice married, it never occurred to him to verify this statement by examining his wives’ mouths.” – Bertrand Russell.

Except for a few, such as Paracelsus, whose death preceded Sir Francis Bacon by 20 years, the majority seemed content to continue endlessly rehashing ancient arguments; this must have been an important aspect of their culture. See discussion in *Technosolution, 1 Patents*, p. 726, *supra*.

- ❖ “Elizabethan craftsmen or lonely seafarers sometimes made discoveries, he noted, but the experiments of calloused hands were often scorned by gentlemen. After all, what did newcomers matter in a world of falling leaves, with even the moon grown old and spots upon its face? In a sense these people lived as only we today live under the shadow of atomic disaster, with a foreboding that the human future is running out. We know a universe of greater antiquity, but we, in a different way than the Elizabethans, know our own sinfulness with a dreadful renewed certainty. It is with us as they thought it was with them. Our civilization smells of autumn.” – Loren Eiseley, *The Modern Dilemma* (1957), Kindle Loc. 149-153.

Conversely, there must have been a time when all of this was new. While an argument might be made as to Danubian and Hellenic philosophical traditions that preceded Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, whose text were revered by Scholastic schools, their level of discourse on topics was certainly ‘new’ to the Golden Era of Ancient Greece. And before them, by several centuries, the unknown authors of the lost texts which are summarized in the Brihadaranyaka Upanishad and Chandogya Upanishad, must have introduced new levels of discourse and social religious criticism to the civilization of the Indus Valley. And between the Upanishads and the Golden Age of Greece lived Confucius whose elevated discourse introduced unprecedented senses of propriety and morality in personal and official actions in a time when such needed correction.

Confucius claimed to have invented nothing, but to have merely transmitted the wisdom of the ancient texts. Students were urged to study the ancient texts for wisdom and apply it to their daily lives. Confucianism thus contains a root of Scholasticism and certainly was practiced as official dogma 50 generations later when the Europeans first significantly encountered traditional Chinese culture. The fate of the world was determined by which culture awoke first.

✚ WRONG BOOKS: I now lament that I read the wrong books when I was young; so many books I have discovered that I should have read or should read, but are unlikely to ever do so now. But here I am now, writing GGDM, so did I read all the wrong books when I was young? Sort of an ‘anthropic principle’-like argument. Like a game of Mahjonn where one cannot be certain they made the right choices until the last tiles are removed and the board is resolved. In the design process of GGDM, the internet has been what was promised in the beginning: A vast searchable library of articles and books, blogs, news, and web pages that accelerated my understanding of subjects – and not just from Wikipedia which many criticize on various levels – and my intellectual development. If I have one stand out ability, it is that, with a half a century of intellectual and life experience, and pre-internet formal education, I have an immediate intuitive grasp of most new ideas that I encounter, and can readily synthesize them, and plug them into my GGDM cognitive framework. For what it’s worth.

Unfortunately, the potential for the internet to advance human global civilization is identical to the internet’s potential to propagate human stupidity, cultural poverty, and cognitive bias.

GGDM may be my own absurd form of Nexialism:

- ❖ “Nexialism was an anticipation of the interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary lines of research we now find proliferating in modern scholarship. But Nexialism was more than just interdisciplinary studies. Van Vogt also saw it as a way to encourage scientists from different disciplines to work together in a truly effective manner, with the aid of a properly trained bridge-builder: a specialist in the mechanics of interdisciplinary studies, who could bring experts together and facilitate communication between them.” – Kathleen D. Toohey, “Towards a science of Nexialism,” ResearchGate, September 2013.

I never read A.E. Van Vogt’s book, The Voyage of the Space Beagle (1950), but learned of it and the concept of nexialism in recent years through secondary sources.

“Let us not be too particular; it is better to have old secondhand diamonds than none at all.” – Mark Twain

A SECONDARY PERSON: I do not read (or speak) Latin, Greek, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic or any other language; I therefore depend on translations of others, when necessary, to convey texts and summaries of what foreign intellectual and historical works mean.⁹

I do not understand ragging or break beats, or most other musical concepts. I am fairly good at lyrical retention of songs from my youth, can hum the melodies and imitate drum beats, recognize popular songs, play air guitar, but real discussions of musicology go completely past me.

I am constantly finding the names of original works that I should have read somewhere along the intellectual path, but have never heard of before I am too old and distracted to read original works. I did read a large number of books in my youth, but not enough, of the right kinds. Then I stopped reading books and became a creature of the internet age.

Discussions of science are like discussions of original books and works written in foreign languages, I depend on secondary sources to tell me what it says and what it means, as I have an incomplete science education, but more importantly, I can never understand the original science because I lack math ability (see Math Boy discussion, 1 Entropy, p. 221, *supra*).

As such, having not engaged in scholarly studies (though I have had college courses) of most of the subjects on which I comment, I am a secondary person, depending on a multitude of secondary and tertiary summaries for my knowledge and understanding of the world. This includes, especially, the news. And Wikipedia, which has accelerated that trend.

- ❖ There is a difference between reading a work and reading about a work (or idea expressed in that work). For example, I quote Lynn Montross probably over 200 times in GGDM, but that is not the same as reading his book (which I was fortunate to have read three times in my teen youth), over a thousand pages long; my readers however come away with a secondary understanding of his ideas. But the way the world is structured and the limits of human lifespan and educational time, how can we avoid reading about other works instead of reading those works? Works and their ideas must be summarized until the time we have chips and jacks implanted in our heads.

- A person who continues reading intensely beyond the youth surge might be called ‘bookish,’ but at some point, regardless of how keenly we read

in our youth (or at some point in our lives), life opts for experience and career and the time for reading of original works diminishes.

I strongly suspect that this is true of the vast majority of the population; starting with our dependence of approved text books in public schools and undergraduate college – secondary sources which summarize and discuss their own summaries of the intellectual subjects of our civilization. We have also been long accustomed to news reporting media, starting with the evening news in the time I was growing up to the internet news today. Plus commentaries and opinion on news.

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This is within the nature of an idea as expressed by Thomas Jefferson so long ago (see top feature quote, 3 Patents, p. 746, *supra*) that none are lessened by passing an idea to another, even if in summary form. Ideas can be summarized, packaged in a way stripped of all of the dithering about this and that which the authors engage on their way to the goal,¹⁰ and without the terrifying mountains of empirical data that characterize writings such as those by Joseph Tainter.

- ❖ I don't criticize Dr. Tainter for the empirical mountain he climbs on the way to his conclusions about the collapse of complex civilizations. The point is though that summaries make ideas accessible. I rather enjoyed reading swaths of Tainter's book. Someone may summarize GGDM someday. Or maybe not waste their time.

Secondary summaries play an important role in our civilization; they allow us to make up time, to compress learning (like ancient Greeks watering wine). We are all secondary people. They allow us to grasp subjects quickly that took others years of original text reading to understand.

- ❖ “A doctrine or philosophy insinuates itself into culture by means of rumor as much as by persuasion occasioned by reading its founding, or even subsequent, texts.” – Theodore Dalrymple, *Admirable Evasions: How Psychology Undermines Morality* (2015), discussing enculturation of Freudianism.

My work is possible only because of the internet, computers and secondary works, I truly view things primarily from a secondary level, a view from a height perhaps. But at the same time, there is a risk of distortion and the risk of losing the voices from the vaults of time that speak to us across millennia from the old books and writings (see also the Inge Process, 5 Diplomacy, p. 1161, *supra*).

- ❖ It would be nearly impossible for one to write a holistic treatment of civilization as a gestalt structure or emergence and read all of the important works of the first and second order in every subject touched upon in the simulation while also going to college, working, moving, paying bills, having a career and watching sports. Thus, secondary sources were key. In fact, though I do not object to or condemn wide reading of original works – in fact, I encourage it – I think that trying to read all of the major and original works on a subject tends toward specialization, with people writing and reading within a tiny area without framework or outside interaction with other subjects, that is, I am echoing A. E. van Vogt's nexialist and modern nexialism arguments.¹¹

Conversely, it follows and it hurts to say, but there is little, if anything, in GGDM that is original, and even less that is truly original. Almost everything in GGDM is gleaned, or was absorbed from the cultural milieu of my youth, even when I did not know of or had not read the sources of the ideas, or even secondary summaries. *I truly am a crazy man in an existential box.*¹²

It is a nearly daily occurrence to find quotes from other writers (often secondary writers discussing others), usually dead, who have said something that I had already written into or expressed in

GGDM, or that I find that the ideas I expressed have a name and that I accidentally arrived namelessly at the same idea. And it is a nearly certain occurrence that the quotes and/or end-notes will be added to wherever I discussed it, to show the reader that others – much brighter lights than I – have said the same or similar things, or that I know what I am talking about by properly referencing the terms, so that I am not a complete crackpot.

- ❖ C.f. “None of these claims have any sources. One would think a serious professor of this field would tell where these claims come from. Without being able to establish the premises, I see no reason to believe the conclusion.” – Nick Peters, “A Brief Look At Alexander Cain,” May 6, 2015 (forum post, TheologyWeb).

Thus it is that GGDM is filled with, and consists mostly of, appeal to authority fallacies in the finest scholarly tradition, and accidental enlightenment. The best I can offer is what a friend said once, that I have combined existing ideas in a way that they have not been connected previously.

- ❖ See Judge Learned Hand feature quote (there I go again!...) top of 2 Patents, p. 734, *supra*, to wit: “The test of invention is the originality of the discovery, and discovery depends upon the mental act of conceiving the new combination, for substantially every invention is only a combination.”

✚ POLYMATH PROBLEM: This perhaps feeds into the discussion about why there are very few polymaths and the fading influence of polymaths in our civilization. For comparison, think of a multi-sport athlete (in Britain, called sometimes a “sports polymath,” in the U.S., a three- or four-letter athlete) or in music, a person who is accomplished on several instruments, but instead, well versed and cutting edge across several fields of arts, math, science, philosophy and logic.

- ✓ The polymath is the one-person, one lifetime nexialist. The fact that we now speak of nexialism is symptomatic of the passing of the polymath from our civilization.

A modern sub-trend related to longer work life and life expectancy, are the dual professionals, i.e. lawyer-engineer, doctor-lawyer, rock star-astronomer, pornstar-doctor, engineer-mathematician, which require returning to graduate school after having had a prior professional career. The Patent Bar requires an undergraduate degree in science or engineering in addition to being a lawyer. But these are technicians, not cutting edge intellectuals (mostly).

- ❖ Some definitions of a public intellectual place them in the same position as polymaths of previous generations, e.g., Barry Gwen: “That is, public intellectuals were free-floating and unattached generalists speaking out on every topic that came their way...” (NYT, June 11, 2008). But at the same time, others have lamented the passing of the public intellectuals, e.g., Russell Jacoby, “Christopher Hitchens: The Last Public Intellectual?” *The Chronical of Higher Education*, December 18, 2011. If both can be true to a decent degree, we’ve landed right back at the beginning – the discussion of the fading influence of polymaths in our civilization! See *Anti-Intellectualism and Public Intellectuals* excerpts, *Kairotic Moments*, *supra*.

✚ ALITERATE: Though I have learned an innumerable number of concepts and dynamics in designing GGDM, and I have enjoyed reading many articles and books across many fields, and my knowledge has increased commensurate to the size and complexity of GGDM, my lack of true depth of knowledge¹³ to accompany the breadth and inability to comprehend higher math (even in sociological articles, such as those discussing Social Entropy Theory) – like a

tall, skinny, underdeveloped, lightheaded athlete, makes me a ‘lightweight’ in academia.¹⁴ Thus GGDM is not in any sense equivalent to either a master’s thesis, advanced writing project, or doctoral dissertation as the terms are currently used. It is nothing but self-puffery for me to think otherwise.

- ❖ “My feeling about whether you’re going to be happy in your chosen career has a lot to do with your personality. Being an academic biologist requires being able to focus on one particular thing for a very long time, forsaking breadth for depth. A career like journalism is just the opposite. You have to give up depth, but what you get is breadth. You learn about a lot of things and talk to a lot of people in many different circumstances.” – Carol Yoon as quoted in her Ecological Society of America profile.

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Does this mean that I have more the mind of a journalist than an academic? I seem to be interested in a holistic breadth of things on a macro level. This is not to say that GGDM is a work of journalism (unless as a journal of middle-age dork/nerd psychology) and I am certainly no journalist (that would be an insult to journalism) and I don’t enjoy talking to lots of people (amen!). I mumble to myself and that is about all I can handle.

- ❖ “Did you exchange a walk-on part in the war for a lead role in a cage?” – Pink Floyd, “Wish You Were Here” (1975).¹⁵

GGDM covers a lot of ground, it is, as I have claimed repeatedly, a holistic work interwoven across many disciplines. There are of course, areas where I have decent or even good understanding and knowledge, either from my youthful interests or from what I had to read in college courses, and I have read much while designing GGDM.

When I encounter new ideas, I must be able to read them and grasp the basic concept quickly, I often don’t have time to read deeply into new subjects as one would if it was their chosen interest; I am more interested now in concepts generally and my base of knowledge, learning, and experience allows generally quick comprehension of new ideas and subjects. This means that most movies and TV shows quickly bore me. I also tend to wander around in circles and encounter the same subjects or ideas in different guises, connecting the dots here and there. This is the value of secondary sources to me, I would probably love to read Steven Johnson’s book, Avi Sion’s book, or even Gilles Fauconnier’s book, and I may someday, but now I must be focused on concepts within GGDM, and secondary summaries are key. Like college students all, we depend on the deeper knowledge of others.

“Our posturings, our imagined self-importance, the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe, are challenged by this point of pale light. Our planet is a lonely speck in the great enveloping cosmic dark. In our obscurity, in all this vastness, there is no hint that help will come from elsewhere to save us from ourselves.” – Carl Sagan, A Pale Blue Dot (1994)

ONE FEWER GOD: It should be abundantly clear to the reader by this point that I generally agree with Carl Sagan’s statements on most matters, including religion (I occasionally exercise some independent intellect however) as they relate to the subjects of this simulation game.

Many of my statements regarding religion align generally with The Four Horsemen of New Atheism, however, true New Atheist and/or antitheist would consider my position ‘soft,’ in that I

am neither militant, pejorative, proselytizing, offensive, or certain of things that I cannot possibly know or prove. Nor am I witty or razor tongued.

- ❖ “I contend that we are both atheists. I just believe in one fewer god than you do. When you understand why you dismiss all the other possible gods, you will understand why I dismiss yours.” – Stephen F. Roberts.¹⁶
 - This quote drives theists nuts; in a singular moment, it suggests that they are the slow kids in the cognitive progression of humanity (see Mythopoeic Thinking discussion, 1 Temporal Technology, p. 809, *supra*). There are at least a dozen top result articles on Google by Christian apologists clarifying, distinguishing, and arguing against this single comment.

Instead, I offer my thoughts and observations in writing for what they are worth. I am more interested in religion as a structure of human civilization and psychology – empirical minds cannot deny that religion is and has been an important mechanism, part of human civilizations and must acknowledge that facts cannot be conveniently ignored in any honest inquiry – and I do not believe that religion will ever be wished or argued away until there is a fundamental change in base human psychology – for example, if future generations of humans spring forth from factories, pre-educated, preconditioned, with no childhood memories or infantile needs or fears, then there may be no need for religion. If that sounds like a horrific future; well there you have it, the conundrum.

- ❖ I do not think I am anti-Christian or anti-religion, rather, I am anti-stupidity. Unfortunately, religion (and its cousin, politics) and stupidity have historically been locally co-extensive, as Daniel Dennett might say. I think most of religion now doesn't know what it's really about, and in the words of the God Whisperers, “needs a good, swift kick in the shins,” (see 1 Patents, p. 732, *supra*) and I have tried to deliver that enlightenment in GGDM (though I am sure I went about it much differently than the two Reverends). Religion has a place in humanity, and both Nietzsche and Douglas Adams have warned that we should not “throw the baby out with the bath water” (Adams, see 1 Technology, p. 695, *supra*). I agree.¹⁷

I do not consider myself a New Atheist, as I understand the term. My argument isn't about God, my argument is about the relation of humanity and the universe, and I consider the arguments about God as largely irrelevant. The pillars of my argument (or assertions if you prefer) are Empiricism, Absurdism, Education (a macro view), and perhaps a brand of Anti-natalism.¹⁸ Atheism has changed over the last 50 years, from ‘live and let live’ atheism, to a militant, pejorative, dismissive atheism that is the New Atheist:

- ❖ “Several thoughtful writers have already laid bare the slapdash know-nothingism of today's modish atheism, but [Nick] Spencer's not beating a dead horse – he's beating a live one, in the hope that Nietzsche might rush to embrace it. Several critics have noted that if evangelical atheists (as the philosopher John Gray calls them) are ignorant of religion, as they usually are, then they aren't truly atheists. ‘The knowledge of contraries is one and the same,’ as Aristotle said. If your idea of God is not one that most theistic traditions would recognize, you're not talking about God (at most, the New Atheists' arguments are relevant to the low-hanging god of fundamentalism and deism). But even more damning is that such atheists appear ignorant of atheism as

well.” – Michael Robbins, “Atheists Used to Take the Idea of God Seriously. That’s Why They Mattered.” Slate Magazine, July 8, 2014.¹⁹

If I am an atheist, I am one of the old brand, I am willing to say in writing (if anyone cares to read it), ‘this is what I believe’, point out what I think is fallacious and why,²⁰ and that I think most religious belief is ridiculous, illogical, and has been as much harmful as good, and I’ll leave it at that.

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- ❖ I watched the introductory video on The Richard Dawkins Foundation for Reason & Science channel on YouTube, the very same video could be reproduced *in toto* (with necessary changes) as a parody and put up as an intro video on a fundamentalist Christian YouTube channel. The video contained political mockery, caricature of the opposition, conspiracy theories, assertion that their beliefs are under attack, and the suggestion that they alone hold the absolute truth, all delivered in fast narrative in two minutes. In short, the New Atheist use the very same language, arguments, tones and tactics of the religions they criticize.

Consider the following from an article on Greta Christina’s blog, “Deepities On Parade: ‘Oh My God’ Reviewed” (movie review, November 27, 2009):

- ❖ “Any competent atheist could shoot it down in seconds. (‘If things don’t just come out of nothing and everything has to have been created, then who created God? And if God always just existed or somehow came into being out of nothing, then why can’t that be true for the universe?’ See how I did that?)”

Her comments suggest that any competent Atheist must be a stout and crafty defender of the faith (and should be so instructed), just like Christians, just like Christian Apologetics, just like any other major religion in the world.

- ❖ Neil deGrasse Tyson said, “I can’t agree to the claims by atheists that I’m one of that community. I don’t have the time, energy, interest of conducting myself that way... I’m not trying to convert people. I don’t care.”

A sensible reading of this indicates that Mr. Tyson also views the current form of atheism as evangelistic.²¹ There is an impatience and frustration boiling over in modern forms of atheism, a stunning *lack of faith* in the eventual success of reason, the marketplace of ideas, or in developing other ways to approach the problem. They hasten to throw the baby out with the bathwater, as Douglas Adams suggests (echoing Nietzsche). Aggressive atheism only hardens the lines in to walls, competing redoubts of believers; atheism, like anything else, only succeeds in enculturation when enough people see it as natural and reasonable. And neither side is reasonable.

✚ RELIGION SUBLIME: If while reading GGDM, you ever experience a faint moment of wonder or awe, you should stop a moment and ask yourself: How could the work of an angry middle-aged asshole ever be sublime? If you think that this can be true, then it is possible that the Bible is a work sublime. Here is the quandary: I know that in order for my work to have any measure of success (whatever that might be in this case, I am not even sure myself) it must become or seem to be sublime to a significant part of its readership (sublime is always a subjective standard, individually, but a work can be said to be in some way sublime objectively when enough individuals have that opinion, see Five Types of Facts, 1 Dreamtime, p. 135, *supra*).

- ❖ Consider this: The reason we know so much about Plutarch’s works is that the Romans loved Plutarch and hand-copied (imagine: no photocopiers) probably hundreds of thousands of copies of his books. Thus, Plutarch has survived the ages, though we believe that a least half of his works have been lost. If I were to decide that success of GGDM would be that the work is being read hundreds (like Machiavelli) or a thousand years (like the Bible) from now, what would be the required basis?
 - See previous discussion of Unpublished Book, 3 Kairotic Moments, p. 1439, *supra*.

However, I cannot ever personally accept that I am creating or capable of creating something that is sublime.

- ❖ If any doubt remains to my claim of the title “angry middle-aged asshole,” go back and re-read 2112 Absurd Words, *supra*. Nothing cements a claim of ‘angry asshole’ like a refutation of educational optimism in the future universe.
 - Similar to the way that trading lady Gwendolen for an illiterate peasant girl concubine established Prince Henry as a cad in the 1964 movie *Beckett*. Gwendolen committed suicide due to the unbearable insult.

Anyone who is turned off by 2112 Absurd Words probably shouldn’t and won’t read further. In any event, I will not change a word that I have written because it still serves a purpose: If I am wrong, then you will see that I am wrong and be something else. If I am correct, in any sense or degree, the world will learn something from this, my legacy: If enough people read it or it is summarized in secondary sources.²²

*“In a 1978 interview, Friedrich Hayek said about [Ludwig von] Mises’s book *Socialism*: ‘At first we all felt he was frightfully exaggerating and even offensive in tone. You see, he hurt all our deepest feelings, but gradually he won us around, although for a long time I had to – I just learned he was usually right in his conclusions, but I was not completely satisfied with his argument.’”*

– from Wikipedia article, “Ludwig von Mises,” captured July 9, 2019

PROFOUND TRUTH: I could write the most profound singular truth – the one thing the world needs to know to make it a better place – on a piece of paper and leave it on the desk for the world to discover. The likelihood that any good will come of it is next to nothing.

Probably, the wind would catch up the piece of paper and blow it out the window where it would become part of the swirling collection of street trash. Or the building would burn down. Or some three-year old human monkey would color on the paper with crayons and markers.

Were anyone to discover it laying on the desk and take the time to read it carefully (another barrier, most people don’t have time to read carefully, some don’t read at all, just glance at the squiggles and move on – the infuriating people who respond to emails without reading them first or order food without looking at the menu), they would have to understand the context of the message and have knowledge of the subjects to which it applies.

And they would have to be able to read the language in which it is written. If it were somehow to survive and be discovered by an archaeologist in hundreds or thousands of years from now,

the people of that time might not be able to read it. There are still about a dozen ancient languages we cannot read.

And in the end, whether readable or not, read or not read, the message of profound truth would have to matter to the reader to have any meaning. The profound truth would not be everyone's truth.

“I am not very impressed with theological arguments whatever they may be used to support. Such arguments have often been found unsatisfactory in the past. In the time of Galileo it was argued that the texts, ‘And the sun stood still... and hasted not to go down about a whole day’ (Joshua x. 13) and ‘He laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not move at any time’ (Psalm cv. 5) were an adequate refutation of the Copernican theory.”

– Alan Turing, Computing Machinery and Intelligence (1950)

Endnotes.

¹ Citation: “To put it plainly, law school is not lawyer school.... Law school is about training legal scholars. Despite the persistence of the time-worn phrase, law school does *not* teach students to think like lawyers. It teaches them to think like law professors. Judge’s decisions, in the law school classroom, are far more important than what the lawyers did or could have done.... There is little attempt to look at the law, as practice will see it, through the remedies it affords. Practicing attorneys rarely think first about the grand sweep of the law and its rational development. They think about the needs of their client and how the law can be applied, shaped, or reformed to accomplish their client’s goals.... But most law professors don’t practice; some never have practiced and don’t ever want to. Their focus is on scholarship: cutting edge changes in the law, law review articles, complex analysis of vexed legal problems. And law school is made in their image.” – Scott Turow, One L (1977) (emphasis in original).

² Commentary: At the Replay FX Arcade and Gaming Festival in Pittsburgh in 2015, I sat down at a table with a group to learn to play the tile game Hanabi which was being taught by a lady who is considered to be very good at the game and who probably plays the game more than anyone else around. During the first game, which involves limited player communication, I did something that made her think that I was a genius of some kind, that I got the game instantly and was playing at some advanced level on my first game. As my next moves proved, however, I hadn’t a clue what I was doing, and I told her afterward that I am no genius, in fact, I am just pretty dumb overall. Twenty years ago, I knew someone who could do that, an A-rated chess player, whom I observed would win hobby board games against experienced players the first time he played, he had the ability to instantly understand the strategy of the game when it was explained, without having played. I am not, have not, that kind of mind.

³ Commentary: This is one very good reason why I would never ‘steal’ or plagiarize anyone else’s work. Any work worth stealing or plagiarizing was written by someone a lot smarter than I am and it would become quickly obvious that it was not my work, as I am not smart enough or educated enough to have thought of it.

⁴ Citation: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Getting_to_Philosophy.

⁵ Commentary: Hypatia of Alexandria quotes are offered here as such because the internet sources represented them as being attributed to her (which is the case with the majority of my quotes, I have not read the original books). In the case of Hypatia, this is especially dubious as I understand that none of her writings survived, except in the works she edited in her father’s name. So I must assume that if authentic, the quotes come from those works or perhaps from works written by her students (as was common at the time, many philosophical works were edited, written or added to by students later). The quote offered here is also consistent with her historical image and troubled times.

⁶ Citation: Colin Temple, “Leibniz: The Best of All Possible Worlds,” <http://colintemple.com>, March 1, 2012.

⁷ Citation: “[Atheism] had only a limited amount to do with reason and even less with science.... In reality ... modern atheism was primarily a political and social cause, its development in Europe having rather more to do with the (ab)use of theologically legitimized political authority than it does with developments in science or philosophy.” –

Nicholas Spencer, [Atheist: The Origin of the Species](#), as quoted in Michael Robbins, “Atheists Used to Take the Idea of God Seriously. That’s Why They Mattered.” *Slate Magazine*, July 8, 2014.

⁸ [Commentary & Citation](#): Video available on YouTube. He begins thus, “If you find the criticism or bashing of religion tiresome, just give me five more minutes.” Which is exactly the length of the video.

⁹ [Commentary](#): I have noted over the years how much we depend on the titling or captioning of pictures and videos for information. I have noted videos and pictures captioned where there is no other information contained in the video or picture to verify that the caption is correct, I have seen the same video or picture (or parts of) captioned in completely different ways in different places that were not in agreement or even contradictory. For example, the old-looking, black-and-white picture at the top of the Wikipedia article, “Nongqawuse,” shows two African women dressed and sitting for a portrait. It is labeled, “Nongqawuse (right) with fellow prophet, Nonkos” and is allegedly the famous picture of Nonquawuse taken at the behest of the wife of Major Gawler while the two lived in his home (as described in the article). That’s all nice, but how do I know it’s not just a random picture that someone found of two dressed African women sitting for a portrait? Yes, I am sure there are authorities who have published this picture as being of Nongqawuse and Nonkos for over a century but without actually knowing these two or having other pictures to compare (this is likely the only one) it could still be just a random pic that someone at some point decided to label as Nongqawuse and Nonkos.

- ✓ See previous discussion of the various portraits of Christopher Columbus, 1 Expansion, EN 1, p. 888, *supra*. He could have been an alien for all we know. Or maybe he was Ozzy Osbourne transported back to the 15th century? “All aboard, hahahaha!”
- ✓ This also relates back to the previous discussion of the nature of facts, see Five Types of Facts, 1 Dream-time, pp. 135-137, *supra*.
- ✓ Near the end of working on GGD, I watched a short film on YouTube titled “Celina” that was labeled as ‘post-apocalyptic.’ While the film short was very low budget, there was nothing in the film itself that showed it was post-apocalyptic. Most of the 8½ minute runtime shows a bruised young girl wandering around an abandoned residential housing development with a picture and GPS coordinates looking for something. If it was not labeled as post-apocalyptic, if the viewer did not have that preconception, what might they think is going on in the film? A young girl wandering around looking for her drug-dealer boyfriend? But people react to it as if it were a post-apoc story because it was so labeled. Labeling theory.
- ✓ Trust in secondary sources is also what makes the collectibles market so suspect – you have only the seller’s contention that this X thing has enhanced value because it was owned by Y or used as a prop in Z movie or is game-used in XYZ sporting event. Everyone who sold the item before now has claimed it and so you have a chain of secondary claims where only the original seller knows the truth. There are entire industries devoted (e.g., the guys at MLB games who certify and mark game used items or certain prestigious movie prop stores) dedicated to authenticating collectibles. Otherwise, any old fraudster could...

¹⁰ [Commentary & Citation](#): The 1927 silent film *Metropolis* (long lost but now 95% recovered) is considered important as the first full length feature science-fiction film as well as for its stylish groundbreaking German Expressionist sets, cinematography and the dystopian political and social message. In 1949, Osamu Tezuka (the father of manga), while in medical school, produced a manga version of the story in the aftermath of WWII in occupied Japan; in the defeat of WWII, the time was ripe for a dystopian messaging film. However, Osamu Tezuka has stated that he never actually watched any version of the 1927 film (there were many hacked versions about) and only was inspired by seeing a screen still shot in a magazine. It is likely that he got the general idea of the movie plot from secondary sources, but the two stories – 1927 and 1949 – bear only general parallels. Information from Wikipedia articles, “*Metropolis* (1927 film)” and “Osamu Tezuka,” December 18, 2018.

- ✓ “In this sense, if in no other, [Brad] Bird’s latest owes more to ‘Metropolis,’ ‘Blade Runner,’ ‘Dark City,’ the first ‘Tron’ and other works of top-shelf eye-candy than to most of the SF-and-fantasy-tinged franchise entries that modern studios churn out. ... No matter. The ‘message’ of ‘Metropolis’ – a parable of labor and capital which concludes that society needs the heart to mediate between the head and the hands – was a mess, too. Today it seems at once reductive and overreaching, basically Marxism Lite. But if you had to make a list of reasons why that film is still remembered, discussed, and raided for inspiration by films like Bird’s, ‘message’ wouldn’t be on it. ‘Metropolis’ is remembered because watching it is as close as many of us will get to being able to have another person’s dream.” – Matt Zoller Seitz, review of *Tomorrowland* on rogerebert.com, March 18, 2015.

¹¹ **Citation:** “I experienced a classic example of the kind of extreme specialization that van Vogt envisaged, when I attended a conference on Arthurian Literature in Bangor in 2002. At the conference one of the speakers delivered a paper on the ‘First Continuation’ to Chretien de Troyes’s unfinished poem, *Le Conte du Graal*. Chretien’s poem was the first to tell the story of the (Holy) Grail, and because it was left unfinished, a string of works were penned in an effort to complete the work. The first continuation begins at the very point where Chretien’s narrative breaks off, and its story, at least in the early part, directly follows on from Chretien’s story. After the speaker had finished, questions were invited from the floor, and I asked a question about how events in the early part of the first continuation related to final incidents of Chretien’s poem. The details don’t matter. What mattered was that the speaker couldn’t answer the question because she had no real knowledge of Chretien’s poem. Her focus was solely on the ‘First Continuation,’ and on the differences between the shorter and longer versions of that work. What had happened in the preceding work was of no importance to understanding the continuation. Just one example of the growing trend amongst academics to know more and more about less and less.” – Kathleen D. Toohey, “Towards a science of Nexialism,” ResearchGate, September 2013.

¹² **Citation & Commentary: Dr. Who:** “I really am just a madman in a box.” – “The God Complex” (2011). Except that to have said what was really meant would not have played as well and the target audience would not have understood it; existential is not a word in common use with the under-20 audience. The TARDIS is the Doctor’s existential box; he chose it and/or it chose him, and he can control it only when it lets him. According to Google dictionary graphs, use of the word *existential* – not surprisingly, climbed sharply after the end of WWII, peaked probably in the early 1960s, and has slowly declined since. According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary (entry updated September 14, 2018), *existential* is in the top 1% of lookups, and lookups spiked after President Obama declared that ISIS was not an existential threat:

- ✓ “Groups like ISIL can’t destroy us, they can’t defeat us. They don’t produce anything. They’re not an existential threat to us. They are vicious killers and murderers who perverted one of the world’s great religions.” *Id.*

¹³ **Commentary: Rhetorical Question:** Does knowledge consist primarily of facts (see 1 Dreamtime, p. 135 *et seq.*, *supra*) and proper forms or does it consist as much or more of understanding, depth, profundity? Is it only Justified True Belief (JTB)?

¹⁴ **Commentary:** Not to mention that my once legendary attention span and focus seems to have become semi-retired at this point – it works a little here and there, but not too much, and not too long. Like a young Irish Setter:

- ✓ “Like other Setters, the Irish is known for having a bit of a short attention span when it comes to training. Small, short sessions are best to get in activities before the dog becomes distracted. Patience and repetition are key to getting concepts into the head of an Irish, hopefully before he gets too bored and moves on to hunting or other, more fun activities.” – dogarena.com (September 24, 2018).
- ✓ “Irish Setters are intelligent but can have short attention spans, so when it comes to training the owner should know what they are doing. They can alternate between wanting to please and deciding that they would rather go do something else during training time. It is the trainer’s job to keep them focused and motivated in a firm but fair (and fun) way. Like all sporting breeds, the Irish thrives when he has a job to do, and obedience training is one such job that will keep him happy and fulfilled. Once the basics of obedience are taught, an owner can move into other dog sports if desired – Irish Setters do great at hunting, dock diving, tracking, agility, rally and flyball – just to name a few!” – academichound.com (September 24, 2018).
- ✓ Thus, much to my annoyance, the process of final work on GGDM has, near the end, become a non-linear progress, with some straight progress through the sections, and a lot of bounding about through others, playtime (i.e. goofing off) and distraction (i.e. off on tangents, looking stuff up, YouTube videos).
- ✓ See Discipline & Distractibility discussion, 2 Colleges, p. 475, *supra*.

¹⁵ **Commentary:** Yes.

¹⁶ **Citation:** Commentary by Stephen F. Roberts: https://freelink.wildlink.com/quote_history.php:

- ✓ “I first used The Quote as a tag line for postings on the newsgroups alt.atheism and talk.atheism at some point before October 1995. I don’t remember exactly when I started using it, and unfortunately lost my mailer that would have contained the archive. The earliest records that DejaNews.com have is back to

1995, and by October 1995 it appeared ‘widespread’ in taglines, so I must have originated it sometime before then. Most likely early 95 or late 94.

...The Quote is an original quote that came from an online debate I was having with religious people in the newsgroups. I used a similar comparison in a debate when my opponent wondered why I ignored the evidence for god, and in return, I wondered why my debate opponent chose to ignore the evidence for Shiva, or Zeus, or any of the other possible gods.

...I then slightly refined and shortened it the next day to the ‘modern’ form it is now to use in a tagline. Within days, The Quote was in use by others in their taglines (I added my name as an attribute a few weeks later when people asked me if it was my original quote).” *Id.*

¹⁷ Commentary: I don’t mind, for example, the Bahá’í Faith – except that it is just that – an unjustified faith. It begins with the whole God thing – however it is cast – they are talking in positive, serious statements about something they cannot possibly know anything about. The appeal of the Bahá’í Faith is the same as the appeal of a used car that has been freshly repainted. Were the Bahá’í Faith to become the dominant faith in any place, I would expect that the results would be the same as when and wherever Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Shinto in feudal Japan (after syncretism with Buddhism), and Hinduism and Buddhism became dominant faiths – they would persecute others because it would then be a matter of power, control, being ‘right’, and personal gain – regardless of the unity which the faith teaches. The Faith would become the legitimacy of the authorities in those societies, clerics would bend the rules for those who rule.

There is always an interpretive way around restrictions of faith, for example, the unity of religion in the Bahá’í Faith could be interpreted to mean (in the same way that the Beatles “Hey Jude” (1968) could be interpreted as vaguely anti-Semitic if “her” is Mother Mary) that previous religions are obsolete (and subsumed) and their adherents are religious degenerates (e.g., as the sacrificial Brahmans were to Hinduism and Buddhism and as Hinduism and Confucianism were to Buddhism) and while the previous religions would be valued as created/inspired by prior Manifestations of God, the same probably wouldn’t be granted to the current followers of those religions if in conflict with the sociopolitical ascendancy of the Bahá’í Faith. Adherents will probably write unkind things about me, saying that I am ignorant, wrongheaded, and faithless (all of which are true), that faith does not require justification (and isn’t that exactly the crux of the matter?), that it would never happen, that their religion expressly forbids it or avoids past mistakes, but I see nothing there that would suggest otherwise. We’ve seen this play before...

¹⁸ Commentary: I am personally and deeply insulted by having to live in this universe, by having to exist against my will. Which is the living paradox, isn’t it?

¹⁹ Citation: As of September 2018, the article is still available on Slate, and can be found easily by Google search.

²⁰ Commentary: If Christianity and/or the Abrahamic Religions had been a universal, consistent, unerring force for good, had they demonstratively improved humanity, Christians would be in a better position now to argue. As the record stands, the Christians are historically as black as the Romans and Babylonians they tarred. Christianity cannot take much credit for where we are now, for the nascent global civilization following the advent of technology following the period of European Colonialism; it is in fact arguably a reaction *against* Christianity and the Church that led to science and discoveries that made it possible for the Europeans to dominate for 500 years, that eventually made possible world wars and nascent global civilization. Christianity was just along for the ride.

²¹ Citation: “Called by the Universe: A conversation with Neil deGrasse Tyson,” The Science Network, July 23, 2009. The video of the interview was still available on The Science Network’s website in 2018.

²² Citation & Commentary: “I did it again, I picked another stupid ape. I should have known. It’s not about showing you the universe. It never is. It’s about the universe doing something for you.” – Dr. Who, “Father’s Day.”

- ✓ Yep, I plead guilty, I’m a stupid ape too. With the caveat that it’s not so much what the universe does for me – not much really – but what the universe does to us every day we have to live here. That’s really the human plight. Ape here!, get yer Stupid Ape here!