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Amorally Yours, A Letter from Dominique Strauss-Kahn to Marquis de Sade

Andrew Thompson

Abstract

With this paper, I satirically question how moral can a free market economy really be.

Keywords: *Morals, ethics, free market economy and capitalism*

Author Interview

Which professors (if any) have helped you in your research?

Professor Omar Moran has helped me.

What are your research/creative interests?

I am interested by how reality is perceived in photographs.

What are your plans after earning your degree?

What is your ultimate career goal?

I intend to display a number of exhibitions locally and abroad. My ultimate career goal is to have museum exhibitions and to publish books about contemporary art theory and criticism.

There is nothing wrong with an unregulated world economy. The only way to measure success, power and pride is through money. Capitalism has made America a land of great liberty and since America is the harbinger of freedom across the globe, capitalism must truly be the great liberator. And the free economy will be the emancipator of morality. No longer will we bow our heads to the law of God or Man because morality has become a monetary exchange. People will pay whatever they can, for whatever they want depending on its availability on the market. What is so great about Capitalism is that it makes no moral claim; as long as you can come to an agreement on price you can achieve anything, purchase anyone and do anything to him or her without any moral recourse. If a person desires a fresh kidney to replace a worn out one, as long as the price is right, that person should be able to purchase a kidney. If a family wants a child there is no reason they can't buy one. If a consenting adult would like to sample the greatest libertine soirées in Thailand then so be it, I'll book the hotel room and you call the maid.

Buy Buy Baby

While China doesn't have the market cornered on baby sales they do have an excellent track record, "A senior police official said baby boys could now be purchased in China's interior for less than \$5,000 — and then resold for three times that amount in the wealthier coastal provinces" (McDonald). Fifteen thousand dollars for bouncing baby boy is a pretty good price in China, but I hear you can get a bargain if your purchase a little girl. "Although some are sold to buyers in Singapore, Malaysia and Vietnam," Andy reported, "most of the boys are purchased domestically by families desperate for a male heir" (McDonald). Here is where these poor families are losing sight of an excellent business opportunity because of cultural customs and morality. Instead of worrying about having a male heir, they should finance a bargain priced female child and raise her to be a moneymaker. She can be rented out to countless costumers beginning immediately upon receipt. Costumers will pay the highest price when they are young so the family can have her paid off in little time and begin to earn a lifetime of profits. Of course it's

not *that* easy yet. China put on a public moral face when they executed three baby traffickers in 2004. "Authorities uncovered the biggest baby trafficking case in China's 55-year history last year in the southern region of Guangxi, bordering Yunnan, when 28 newborn girls were found jammed in bags on a bus with their arms and legs tied" (Agencies).

I find it distasteful that the authorities would execute these fine entrepreneurs. How does China expect to become a first world country if they go around executing entrepreneurs like this? Why should they be upset that the babies were jammed in bags with their limbs bounds? The binds of capitalism and the chains of debt will eventually comfort those children, as they grow older.

The Land of Smiles

Let's leave the morally conflicted country of China and head south to Thailand where a pedophile can party all night long:

Thailand is often called "Disneyland for pedophiles" and has up to 600,000 AIDS cases. The huge sex-for-sale industry is driven mostly by Australian, European, and American tourists. The number of prostitutes in Thailand ranges from 800,000 to 2 million of which 20% are 18 or younger. U.S. citizens traveling abroad to exploit minors can be held responsible under U.S. laws; however, neither U.S. laws nor international human rights declarations address the culpability of tourists engaging in sexual voyeurism and exploitation of women in the so-called Land of Smiles (Guzder).

Sounds like a charming place to visit but it is too bad that only 20% of the approximate 2 million pleasure entrepreneurs are under 18 years old. Of all the love agents, the underage market has the highest potential of monetary growth and I would suggest more people invest their capital there.

Those afflicted with morality may disagree. There are many who still follow that moral fuddy-duddy Immanuel Kant who believed that humans are "not entitled to offer themselves, for profit, as things for the use of others in the satisfaction of their sexual propensities" and that "man cannot dispose over himself because he is

not a thing; he is not his own property” (Sandel 131, 130). Kant is as bad as any Christian who holds virtue and righteousness above money.

These ignorant souls do not understand that when you have money you are a better person because of it. “While the commonly held belief is that women - and some men - enter the industry because of poverty, new research reveals that middle class Thais are offering sex for money in order to finance a more affluent and glamorous lifestyle” (Percy). Finally, a country that understands money has its own morality and as long as you sell what people want and you will always make money. These entrepreneurs in Thailand are afforded the affluent lifestyle that good people deserve.

Another deserving entrepreneur is a twenty-year-old Brazilian woman named Catarina Migliorini who allegedly auctioned her virginity for \$780,000. Here is a woman deserving of praise and respect. Not only is she an astute businesswoman selling her best assets but she also “has parlayed her notoriety into a photo spread for Playboy” (Move). Unfortunately, “Brazil’s attorney general, Joao Pedro de Saboia Bandeira de Mello Filho, who ordered and “urgent investigation,” to look into the auction, which he equated to “people trafficking”, hasn’t gotten the memo about not limiting the forces of a free market (Move). Again we see a politician blinded by some sense of Kantian moral outrage. Filho must agree with Kant that, “we should not treat others—or ourselves—merely as objects” and that “we are not at our own disposal” (Sandel 130). To which I say poppycock! Autonomous men and women can sell whichever part of themselves as they see fit.

Human Organs for Sale! Get 'em while they're cold!

Folks get so attached to their inner organs. This doesn’t make sense since when you can sell an extra kidney to fund your retirement. If people need a kidney they’ll pay to get one. This is basic supply and demand, which is the foundation of capitalism. Here is a quote from a woman that has received a kidney from an altruistic friend:

"Despite decades and decades of public

education about the virtues of organ donation, the waiting list just gets longer, and the time to transplantation just gets longer. ... Its past time to face the fact that altruism is just not enough. Many people need more of an incentive to give. And that's why we need to be able to compensate people who are willing to give a kidney to a stranger, to save a life. ... We are not talking about a classic commercial free-for-all, or a free market, or an eBay system. We're talking about a third-party payer. For example, today you could decide to give a kidney. You'd be called a Good Samaritan donor. ... The only difference in a model that I'm thinking about is where you go and give your organ, and your retirement account is wired \$40,000, end of story." -Sally Satel (Knox)

Satel is mostly correct but she does stop short of advocating an unregulated market, which is entirely wrong. There should never be any restrictions on a market. The market should be allowed to regulate itself.

While some countries shamefully wrestles with the morality of this topic, the black market continues to meet the demand but not without risk. Take a look at Tang Wee Sung, a retail tycoon from Singapore who was “charged with offering to pay a broker \$220,000 to secure a healthy kidney from an Indonesian man” (Ritter). Poor Tang got tangled in a web of morality because, “like every nation in the world apart from Iran, Singapore law forbids the buying or selling of human body parts” (Ritter). If Tang had only traveled to Iran for his transplant he would have been able to surpass this mess. In Iran, Tang could have legally had his kidney transplant without moral entrapment.

Again Immanuel Kant tries to spoil our free economy with his old-fashioned moralism because he, “considered this practice a violation of human dignity” (Sandel 131). What a prude. I concur with the Libertarian notion that “if I own my own body, I should be free to sell my body parts as I please” (Sandel 71).

Bentham's Big House of Manufactured Goods

When you resolve yourself from morality you can become a very successful businessman. Let's take a look at two particularly shrewd businessmen. First, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) had the brilliant idea to design a Panopticon that would be, "a prison with a central inspection tower that would enable the supervisor to observe the inmates without their seeing him" (Sandel 35). But that's not all; Bentham, "suggested that the Panopticon be run by a private contractor (ideally himself), who would manage the prison in exchange for the profits to be made from the labor of the convicts" (Sandel 35). Bentham was a visionary who was far ahead of his time but it took another great businessman to fulfill his prophecy.

Nelson A. Rockefeller (1908-1979) was a New York Governor when on May 8, 1973 he signed into law mandatory prison sentences of 15 years to life for drug dealers and addict—even those caught with small amounts of marijuana, cocaine or heroin. Rockefeller stated, "I have one goal and one objective, and that is to stop the pushing of drugs and to protect the innocent victim," (Knox). Thankfully his laws did not hinder the drug trade but with these laws the seeds of the modern prison system were sewn.

What a bountiful crop he provided! Today, "The United States puts more people behind bars than any other country, five times as many per capita compared with Britain or Spain" (Knox). The communities most affected by the Rockefeller laws are black and Hispanic but that alone isn't what made Rockefeller the perceptive businessman we admire today. The important aspect of Rockefeller's austere drug laws is that it provides the state a large pool of independent labor units at a mere fraction of the normal cost. The UNICOR Mission Statement reads:

The mission of Federal Prison Industries, Inc. (FPI) is to protect society and reduce crime by preparing inmates for successful reentry through job training.

Vision Statement

It is FPI's vision to protect society, reduce crime, aid in the security of the Nation's prisons

and decrease taxpayer burden, by assisting inmates with developing vital skills necessary for successful reentry to society. Through the production of market-priced quality goods and services, FPI provides job training and work opportunities to inmates, while minimizing impact on private industry and labor. (UNICOR.gov)

The production of quality market-priced goods with minimal impact on private industry and a decrease of taxpayer burden is a fantastic business model. In fact, prisons are an excellent place to manufacture products such as clothing, apparel, bed linens, drapery, even eyewear and circuit boards in America because the minimum wage at a UNICOR facility is only \$0.23 an hour and the maximum pay is \$1.15 an hour (UNICOR.gov). Not since that anti-capitalist Abraham Lincoln freed the American slaves have entrepreneurs been provided such a large pool of labor units at a reasonable cost. If America continues building prisons centers and recruiting large amounts of eligible laborers through the Rockefeller laws it will have a chance to pull itself out of this current recession.

Power is a Virtue

So what if life is unfair? Citizens of the world need to get used to it. A good entrepreneur cannot live his or her life believing as John Rawls did, "that we deal with these facts by agreeing "to share one another's fate," and "to avail [ourselves] of the accidents of nature and social circumstance only when so is for the common benefit" (Sandel 166). It is better for an entrepreneur to view the world as Milton and Rose Friedman did in their book *Free to Choose*. That while life may be unfair and "it is tempting to believe that government can rectify what nature has spawned. But it is also important to recognize how much we benefit from the very unfairness we deplore" (Sandel 165).

Some may argue that putting money ahead of everything is amoral. They may cite the word of God as the highest power and thus the moral authority. But this argument is meaningless to an atheist and a capitalist. For an atheist there

is no God and for a capitalist there is no God except money. This means that money is the highest power. If money is the measure of all things then it is also the measure of morality. Because Capitalism makes no claim to morality and is only concerned with the buying and selling of goods; then morality can also be bought and sold. Some may believe that this logic is cruel and aggressive, but they are typically weak-minded moralist:

In De Sade's view Christians succeeded in enslaving and weakening the aggressive type of person ('homme puissant') which nature created as a free and cruel being. He derives the following teaching from these considerations: everything is allowed, from prostitution, divorce, incest, rape, and infanticide. Nothing forbids us from seeking our desires at the expense of others, and nothing is more satisfying than exercising our will to destroy and to inflict cruelty. In order to do this, we should free ourselves from feelings of remorse, which are also natural, but not as powerful and worthy of realization. (Schroeder)

As strong capitalists and entrepreneurs we have no room for remorse for others suffering. It is, after all, their fault that they are weak. Each person has the same twenty-four hours in a day but a worthy entrepreneur chooses to succeed at any cost while the meek choose to live his or her lives trapped beneath the boot heel of capitalism. Frail-minded moralists have two choices; learn to love the ties that bind them or sell what little capital they have; their bodies, their inner organs and their children. I, for one, will not feel remorse for them or any other sentient being that chooses not to be strong, powerful and wealthy, but instead remains weak and morally conscious.

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