GREATNESS AGENDA

The Power of Political Optimism

In 21st century America, optimism is subversive. Flaunt it.

Deny the doomsayers their moment.

By Edward Ring



December 27, 2022

here is a difference between optimism and naïveté. In politics today, optimism offers conservatives an inexhaustible source of infectious power that can overcome and shatter the foundations of the establishment's fear-based version of "populism." Indeed it is



the American establishment now trains voters to accept. From uniparty conformists and their corporate, academic, and media allies who package and spread the messages, to deep state agencies and plutocrats who decide on the messages, there is a common theme: pessimism. And

when pessimism impels us to believe in worst-case scenarios, panic follows close behind.

What else might explain every rote proclamation that the world is coming to an end because of the climate crisis? What else explains why millions of American children are coping with mental illness, suicidal thoughts, and hopelessness for the future? They've been convinced the earth is on the brink of burning up. What else accounts for educated adults utterly convinced that the planet may soon be uninhabitable? What else lends apocalyptic context to every report—a staple now part of all reporting on hurricanes, floods, or winter storms?

It isn't merely the end of our planetary biosphere that has turned half the nation into compliant defeatists. Along with the climate emergency we have a health emergency that even now finds millions of Americans afraid to congregate, afraid to take off their masks, afraid to get a job or go to school.

The currency of establishment politics in America relies on pessimism. What other word better characterizes the incessant claim that white Americans are by definition racist, that America is an inherently racist nation, and that BIPOC individuals (for the blissfully uninitiated, that's black, indigenous, and people of color) cannot possibly hope to succeed without government edicts and entitlements to compensate for the pervasive discrimination inflicted on them by privileged white people?

The power of political optimism is that it rejects all of this. Burning fossil fuel is not going to immolate the biosphere. Forests are not disappearing. We can protect wildlife and wilderness, while also remaining realistic about what sort of a human footprint is necessary to power civilization. Diseases and pandemics will strike, and with courage we can balance the risks, protect the weak, preserve our freedom, and exercise reasonable precautions as we build herd immunity and move from pandemic to endemic. We can methodically develop vaccines and treatments, but don't need to compel people to take them. As for racism, only vestiges remain, as Americans have built the most inviting and inclusive culture in human history.

That is optimism. It is powerful because it challenges the establishment narrative at its roots. In 21st century America, optimism is subversive.

Flaunt it. Deny the doomsayers their moment. Reject the pessimistic essence of everything they're saying. Starting there, we have a chance.

Staying Optimistic Despite Current Events

Anyone taking a hard look at what has happened to this country over the past 50 years can make the case that optimism is naïve and futile. American culture has been under unrelenting attack. The values that made America great have been undermined if not lost. The traditional family, with children raised by a father and a mother, is now denigrated as a vestige of the oppressive patriarchy. A work ethic, once considered the first prerequisite for success, is being systematically destroyed by the rhetoric of "equity." A united nation, which for centuries had embraced the process of ethnic assimilation, in recent decades has been fractured not merely by massive new waves of immigration, but by a new message of division. For the first time in history, immigrants are not encouraged to work and assimilate, but rather to resent as racist the people who built the nation they've entered, and to fight to destroy it. Even the concept of what it is to be a man or a woman is questioned by the institutions we once trusted.

In recent years, unforgettable moments exemplify how far we've fallen as a nation. The heartbreaking images of howling mobs toppling statues of American heroes. The historic St. John's Church came within an eyelash of turning into a pile of ashes, as rioters assaulted the White House, nearly breaking through the fence. Rampaging mobs spent the summer of 2020 spreading a defiant message as they smashed and looted downtowns across the nation: Stop resisting, elect our candidate, or we will burn this whole country to the ground. Major cities, now more than ever, are taken over by tens of thousands of predators, psychopaths, and addicts who are stealing, screaming, shitting, and shooting up in ruined public spaces that once were magnificent examples of a brilliant civilization.

These depredations to our nation and culture just scratch the surface. But the madness that inspires them is fertilized by pessimism. An optimist would never condemn the traditional family, the value of a work ethic, the promise of assimilation, or the immutability of biological sex. An optimist doesn't believe our cities must be ceded to disorder, or that compelling addicts to sober up is an inhumane and futile act. An

optimist does not think that life is fundamentally unfair, or that life on planet earth is about to end because we've reached a catastrophic climate "tipping point."

This is the transgressive, revolutionary power of optimism. Not only does it unequivocally reject the fear-based premises of America's establishment uniparty, but it can inform a comprehensive worldview that sees a bright future for America and for humanity.

In every aspect of global challenges there are optimistic scenarios. Perhaps the biggest premise of the currently prevailing political establishment in America is that globally, we are running out of resources and civilization as we know it is unsustainable. Here and abroad, this deeply pessimistic assertion is used as the moral justification for unprecedented assaults on every aspect of our lives—from freedom of movement, to the retention of middle-class wealth and survival of small businesses, all the way to basic property rights and national sovereignty. Yet this premise is a deeply flawed and hopelessly pessimistic, agenda-driven distortion of reality.

And it is easily debunked.

Choosing a Better Future

Adequate water is often cited as the looming and inevitable Malthusian check on humanity achieving universal prosperity, but technology already exists to recycle urban wastewater, desalinate seawater, engineer interbasin transfers from water-rich regions to water-poor regions, and more efficiently harvest storm runoff. Apart from mustering the political will to undertake these projects, the energy required to pump and treat water is considered by some to be the most prohibitive obstacle. But pessimism over securing adequate energy resources also rests on dubious premises.

To begin with, conventional energy is not in short supply. Proven reserves of so-called fossil fuels, at double the current rate of consumption, are sufficient to last about another 160 years. "Unproven" reserves of natural gas, oil, and coal, are estimated to be many times that. Energy abundance can also be achieved with advanced nuclear fission, or nuclear fusion, factory-produced biofuels, or through improving photovoltaic technologies, satellite solar power stations, or

even direct synthesis of CO2 exhaust into liquid fuel. Energy scarcity is a political choice, not an unyielding reality.

While hard limits do exist on some of the most essential mineral resources, there are also tantalizing new workarounds and innovations to compensate for scarcity. Most metals can be recycled, and even complex systems like batteries will be cost-effectively recycled once robotic technologies dramatically lower reprocessing costs. One of the most promising alternative building materials is cross-laminated timber, a mature technology that is now available to replace concrete panels and steel trusses, and is already used as the primary structural building material in high-rise buildings around the world.

Perpetual human innovation, whether it's cross-laminated timber, or next-generation concrete using abundant desert sand, or, for low-rise buildings, structural blocks with cores of hemp or straw, or virtually inexhaustible new minerals mined from the moon and asteroids will ensure that when the political and economic environment favors innovation, the collective lot of humanity will get better and better.

Optimism is the prerequisite for everything good—the motivation and freedom to innovate, the courage to coexist in peace, the character to work hard and accept meritocracy, the vitality to stay healthy and sober, the judgment to balance the needs of the environment with the needs of humanity, the faith to believe in a bright future, the charisma to attract others to a joyful movement, and the enduring conviction that we will overcome this rapidly descending tyranny.

Pessimism, on the other hand, catalyzes fear, panic, despair, and desperate fanaticism. Pessimism provides the fertile soil into which manipulative agendas are planted, sowing guilt, resentment, hatred, and the dark comfort of extremist solutions to manufactured problems. Pessimism and the products of pessimism are the body on which evil festers and grows.

Practicing optimism, and professing optimistic perspectives on political challenges is the furthest thing from being naïve. Optimism is a weapon, a talisman, capable of recruiting and realigning the American people to obliterate every diabolical schema and evil scheme that currently

threatens their nation. Make it the foundation of your politics, and wield it with recognition of its power. And enjoy every minute.



About Edward Ring

Edward Ring is a senior fellow of the Center for American Greatness. He is also is a contributing editor and senior fellow with the California Policy Center, which he co-founded in 2013 and served as its first president. Ring is the author of *Fixing California: Abundance, Pragmatism, Optimism* (2021) and *The Abundance Choice: Our Fight for More Water in California* (2022).



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Lydia

(2) 2 days ago

Well, there's a pill for everything, so give me one of those optimism pills. If I deny the reality I see, perhaps I can find a silver lining in millions of the world's poor and uneducated flooding into the country illegally sucking away the stability and safety of our communities. I'm sure the must be a silver lining in the mentally ill and drug addicted turning the streets into toxic sewers. There must be a silver lining in brainwashing children to hate their bodies and cut off their genitals. What could be better than government surveillance tracking my every move and word, telling me what I can think and make my medical decisions too.

Yet, I am optimistic that if I am lucky, I probably won't get robbed or shot on my next trip to the grocery store. With luck and optimism, I won't be smashed in my car by a felon speeding down the road in a stolen car. With luck and optimism my home won't be invaded in the middle of the night. These are all things happening to people now, in my city. But I'll remain optimistic that the criminal DFL that has now consolidated their power will do a 180 and change their policies that got us here in the first place, even as they double down-NOT. And I'm really optimistic that my vote counts and we'll vote out the scum in the next election-NOT.

Maybe if someone gives me a happy pill or a brain implant connecting me to the hive, I can become a true optimist. I will look forward to having nothing and being happy until I'm euthanized by a friendly doctor on government orders.

Yes, I'm cynical. There is nothing of the moment that inspires optimism. Crazy people and ideologues have captured most governments, institutions, and corporations. I might become optimistic if DC disappears.

13 0 • Reply • Share >



simplecarpenter

→ Lydia

_ I

② 2 days ago edited

"Well ,there is a pill for everything ", I didn't know "hopium" 'came in pill form . Perhaps it is available as a suppository, I think they would like to

administer it to us in that form? I'm near dead certain it is available and in wide use in liquid form with flavoring as in koolaid.



SamsaraGuru → Lydia

_ '

(b) 2 days ago edited

Lol. Always the one to look for the silver lining in the dark cloud my dear, are you! Lol

As one who lived with the horror of total despair without hope for decades taking care of a dying, invalid, doomed wife?

It isn't over till the fat lady sings and what we are experiencing will in due course be expiring and breathing the last gasps of its horrific life.

It may not be easily evident nor discernable but help is on the way.

It certainly won't be easy, mon ami.

I prefer to follow the Admiral Stockdale Paradox way of thinking re this.

https://www.jimcollins.com/...

"Stockdale Paradox": You must maintain unwavering faith that you can and will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties, and at the same time, have the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be."

Otherwise, if we give up, there truly is no hope. I believe the left is currently digging its own grave, shooting itself in the foot.

And to quote another fellow of no small note:

"Remember that all through history, there have been tyrants and murderers, and for a time, they seem invincible. But in the end, they always fall. Always."

Mahatma Gandhi



Ozarks Tom





© 2 days ago

Since we're quoting modern day philosophers, I give you George Carlin: "A pessimist sees a glass half empty, while an optimist sees a glass half full. I see a glass twice as big as it needs to be". In other words, a realist.



SamsaraGuru → Ozarks Tom

_ |•

② 2 days ago

In other words, prepare for the worst but expect the best; be a realistic optimist, not a pie in the sky fool who thinks things will just naturally work out if they believe they will.



(b) 2 days ago edited

You really think that way? So do I and I became that way because I lived and worked in NYC during the Dinkins' Administration, just before Giuliani arrived. The City Council chairman, a conservative Democrat, and Mayor Giuliani made all the difference.

I have a different problem which could be more serious. My wife and the people who know me are afraid that I may mug a mugger before he mugs me and then might have to do some hard time. I want to see a play in NYC which portrays the life of Micheal Jackson. The people who recommended it were worried about getting mugged, robbed, injured or killed. They took the risk. They said they would have felt safe with me because they know me. That was the way I used to be and never feared anyone because I was always prepared. I was once with my brother-in-law when he experienced an attempted mugging by several wise guys. I happen to have been in another store at the time and when I got back he had already dispatched two which we held for the police to arrive. The problem I had is that he had all the fun and did not wait for my return. His problem was that he lost his wallet anyway.

see more

John → Lydia

_ 1

② 2 days ago

Yes the government making medical decisions like a ten year old rape victim can't get an abortion.



Transplanted Floridian → John

© 2 days ago

Or you and your ilk excusing a sicko raping a 10 year old

RU

O 2 days ago

Noone is saying that but you lefties. Grow up. You cannot even get a girl you limp wristed incel.



ThomStride → Lydia

② 2 days ago

I'd say your optimism pill would be hijacked by big pharma - but then that would be pessimistic of me. Maybe that's why I'd need a prescription myself. Reality is optimism's bane.

Meanwhile, I will remember that the good thing about optimism is that it doesn't cost anymore than the alternative.



FrankHerbert V PATRIOT

② 2 days ago

"professing optimistic perspectives on political challenges" is how we got to WHERE WE ARE. continually electing the same looters who 'promise' to keep their promises 'this time'. if we just give mcCONnell 'one more chance' he might not be a communist. if we put mcCRAPPY in as Speaker, he'll 'fight' for us. it'll be all roses and champagne! yeah, right. it's not pessimism - it's REALISM.

1776-2020, a Republic - we FAILED TO KEEP



Joey89 → FrankHerbert ✓ PATRIOT

② 2 days ago

It doesn't matter who we elect. The system is too corrupt for any individual or even a group of individuals to fix. Look at what they did to JFK when he wanted to take some of their power away by getting rid of the cia. His brains ended up all over his motorcade just like the mafia. What's that saying from the movie The Godfather? Either your brains or your signature will be on this contract. Your choice. That's our gangster mafia government. I used to be red pilled but now I've taken the black pill of pessimism







② 2 days ago

More like 1776-1865. The federal tyrants won out and have destroyed our Republic ever since.



trangbang68

② 2 days ago

"What else might explain every rote proclamation that the world is coming to an end because of the climate crisis" The American experiment is on the verge of coming to an end not because of CO2 gas but because of leftist dimwits and gas bags burning it down.



Wayne Lusvardi

O 2 days ago

I agree with Ring and Mark Twain: "It is better to be an optimist who is sometimes wrong than a pessimist who is always right". However, I have one caveat to Ring's prophetic call for optimism (I like the term "hope" better). It comes from Niccolo Machiavelli, a Realist, not Optimist or Pessimist. To Machiavelli, for a prophet of optimism to succeed, he must be armed, for unarmed prophets fail, such as when the Catholic priest Savonarola attempted to resist the invasion of the City of Florence by the French, without an army. The same for optimists.



simplecarpenter

→ Wayne Lusvardi

© 2 days ago

A realistic optimism then, I like it.



Mike D'Virgilio → simplecarpenter

O 2 days ago

Steve Bannon is my example and inspiration. A gritty realist who believes in our God-given agency, and that changing things requires action, action, action!!!



dbobway

→ Wayne Lusvardi

© 2 days ago

I read your comment Wayne and it enhances my optimism. Google 'without hope'.

Trusting internet driven technology, will make you a pessimist, so don't bother.

I don't ask for hope, I just have it.

I'm confident in my hope, I know people, very capable people, no different than any one here. We are not going to give up on human life, because we don't want to. Our screwed up leaders, haven't a clue. I don't fear doing anything where I live, I trust my Sherriff and I can protect myself.

I don't trust my Sherriff to protect me from a crime, he would be late, so that is up to me. Location, time of day, who you are with, how you present yourself, is even more important than your sheriff. My sheriff will take the bad guy away, and our courts will make sure the bad guy is off the street.

I repeat, location is important.

Quiet4now → Wayne Lusvardi

© 2 days ago

You do need the right tools on the tool box.



B_Marcus

(b) 2 days ago

>Adequate water is often cited as the looming and inevitable Malthusian check on humanity achieving universal prosperity, but technology already exists to recycle urban wastewater, desalinate seawater, engineer interbasin transfers from water-rich regions to water-poor regions, and more efficiently harvest storm runoff.

Unless you live in the r3tarded land of Kommiefornia where they refuse to recycle effluent because some stupid baitfish in the Bay needs the Bay to be slightly less salty. Nothing says responsible government like living in a desert and pouring out all your water.



dbobway → B_Marcus

(b) 2 days ago edited

I think you are describing, just plain stupid politicians, from a beautiful state, called California.

My question is simple. How does water run out within Mother earth? Who or what is taking water and not giving it back?

Nobody, water moves around but it never goes away.

I anyone here can tell where water is disappearing,

I'm ready to hear it.

I'm optimistic, any answer would be a myth.



Wayne Lusvardi

→ B Marcus

© 2 days ago

I'm all for Ed Ring's "Abundance" policy for state wholesale water in California. However, I believe Ring is trying to squeeze proverbial blood from a turnip or abundant water from a water system based on bureaucratic scarcity. California government is 100% controlled by one party - the party of government. This party does not want independent farmers, small businesspersons, or non-unionized workers to gain power. One way they limit power to the opposition is by squeezing farm water to farmers who do not have strong water rights in the western half of the California Central Valley. Water is a political football in California that the Party of Government continually squeezes out of farmers and instead lets it run to the ocean. So, advocating water abundance is like squeezing blood out of a bureaucratic turnip.

Yes, when Trump was President he was able to get more water for California farmers but only because about two thirds of the state wholesale water system is controlled by the federal government. The only way California has historically been able to create water abundance was when entrepreneurs bought up water rights and diverted that water to cities, such as when the Texas Bass Brothers bought up farm land with water rights in Imperial County and eventually that water was transferred to San Diego. Moral of story: if you want water abundance, don't rely on government to produce it, as it takes water rights, water markets and entrepreneurialism to do that.

0 • Reply • Share >



Mike D'Virgilio

© 2 days ago edited

Love this piece! The doomers on our side get tiring. I would only add that our optimism can't be effectively grounded in mere pragmatism, that if we're just optimistic enough, then things will work out. The optimists on the Titanic either died or were on a lifeboat in the middle of a freezing north Atlantic sea. There are many reasons for a justified optimism, however, and here are some.

- 1. God. We are created in God's image, and have God-given agency; we can change things.
- 2. We can also trust God that he didn't create the world, or America, to let the devil win. It's thoroughly biblical, but read Psalm 2 if you don't believe me.
- 3. Also because of God, the Founders were providentially (which they ALL believed) allowed to defeat the British and create the American republic. The Declaration and Constitution were absolutely unique in the history of the world, and gave us country of 50 different states with a sovereignty unknown in any other country in the world. Federalism, etc.
- 4. Things are in fact changing. Since Trump came down the escalator, tens of

millions of American have awoken to so many things that wouldn't have been exposed and revealed if not for Trump and the ever present TDS.

- 5. The left and the GOPe can't help themselves. The former for ideological reasons, the latter because of the grift. Too many of us are on to the scam and we simply will not be fooled again. And because they can't, more and more "normies," as they've come to be called, are also realizing the scum that runs our government and culture.
- 6. We living in a fallen world, and nothing will ever be perfect. There is no Utopia, there is only fight daily for our families, our neighbors, our liberty.

I could go on, but I've been reading about the battle at Trenton in December 1776, and it didn't look good for the Revolution. Washington's response was, it is "victory or death." Like Reagan and the Soviet Union, we must define victory as "We win, they lose."

6 0 • Reply • Share >



ThomStride → Mike D'Virgilio

© 2 days ago

Thank you for bringing a Christian based comment to the discussion. Perhaps there is a closer correlation between the decline of "Faith" and the rise of "Evil" than many people believe.

2 0 • Reply • Share >



Mike D'Virgilio → ThomStride

© 2 days ago

Thanks for both your replies. I have the 1976 painting/print in my office of Washington kneeling at Valley Forge that was painted by Arnold Friberg for the Bicentennial. When I pray daily for our country and it's re-founding I look at it and contemplate the odds against America ever being founded in the first place. It was the "Hand of God" then, and they all knew it, and it will be the "Hand of God" again if we are to succeed. I believe many are being re-awakened to "Faith" in our time in a great revealing, and there are tens of millions of those like us who believe that, and trust in the maker of history.

2 0 • Reply • Share



ThomStride → Mike D'Virgilio

② 2 days ago edited

Not sure of the details but Washington's prayer by his horse was WITNESSED and subsequently written in a young man's diary.

Correction (edited) It wasn't in my elementary school. It was a Washington portrait

0 • Reply • Share > 1 ThomStride → Mike D'Virgilio And Bravo for your reference to the battle of Trenton. It is an excellent reference this time of year that to me - clearly (!) - shows the Hand of God upon the affairs of men. What happened that Christmas Eve and morning must be filed under "Miracle." 0 • Reply • Share > SamsaraGuru → Mike D'Virgilio Well written and spot on! 0 • Reply • Share > Mike D'Virgilio → SamsaraGuru (2 days ago Thank you, sir! Doomers don't seem to like me:) • Reply • Share > 2 SamsaraGuru → Mike D'Virgilio ② 2 days ago You can judge a man by the company and quality of the friends has and the enemies he makes. ReplyShare 1 Mike D'Virgilio → SamsaraGuru O 2 days ago Indeed! 2 ReplyShare SamsaraGuru → Mike D'Virgilio (b) a day ago You may enjoy this most recent post. https://amgreatness.com/202... ReplyShare 1

Mike D'Virgilio → SamsaraGuru

I will check it out Thanks!

(a day ago

(2 days ago

1

© 2 days ago

1

1 0 • Reply • Share >



Kemo Sabe

② 2 days ago

There are three bottles sitting on the counter... The first is filled w/ Optimism, the 2nd is filled is filled w/ Pessimism and the third is filled w/ Reality.

Step right up and pour your favourite drink. I'll have a nice drink of Reality and contemplate whether I should have a glass of Pessimism... I'm passing on Optimism this time.. I've had it before.

6 0 • Reply • Share >



The Grand Poobah

O 2 days ago

Those of the Left are extremely pessimistic and negative, even after defeating the Bad Orange Man. Everyone is Racist and everything is Climate Change, and the only cure is eradication of extreme ultra MAGA semi-fascists from the landscape of the country. Only then will there be hope for the country and the world. They are miserable and depressing people.

4 0 • Reply • Share >



Reasonably unreasonable

→ The Grand Poobah



O 2 days ago

Kinda like a guy with a funny mustache in 30s said if we just get rid of the jews all will be well.

Democrats = nazis

3 0 • Reply • Share >



SamsaraGuru → The Grand Poobah

© 2 days ago

When you have turned to the the dark side, embraced evil there is no possibility of happiness existing. Happiness is born of being connected to truth and to God.

The secular, nihilistic "religion" of Marxism has no joy in it only tyranny.



Tony_Petroski

© 2 days ago

I congratulate the Sunny Californian, Mr. Edward Ring, on this upbeat column. I knew much of the Commentariat would reply "Bah, humbug." Professor Hanson used to write columns like this regarding his optimism for the future of California. I guess having your farm and equipment vandalized and stolen gets to you after a

while. I can tell you it ain't no bargain trying to remain optimistic as a proud slumlord in North Minneapolis.

Three lusty cheers for Mr. Ring.



Tony_Petroski → Tony_Petroski

_ |

② 2 days ago edited

Sam I Am and I'm optimistic this won't be labeled Spam.



chuckp334

© 2 days ago

Progs are happy only when everyone around them is miserable and/or fearful. What a sad way to exist.



Robert Catt → chuckp334

① 2 days ago

In fact the plan of the communists is to create as much fear and misery as they can.



Vito_C → chuckp334

O 2 days ago

It's as if they thrive on stress.



Transplanted Floridian → Vito_C

© 2 days ago

They thrive on our misery.



Pluto's Moon

© 2 days ago

I always become "optimistic " when I read The Second Amendment!



SamsaraGuru

(b) 2 days ago edited

A brilliant analysis and delineation

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