

The Lone Raver Writes Again



by

Sam Aurelius Milam III
c/o 4984 Peach Mountain Drive
Gainesville, Georgia 30507

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Dedication

I haven't written a Ravings Essay in about ten years. I'll bet that everybody thought that there wouldn't be any more of them. I know that I did. Anyway, this essay is dedicated to the Lone Raver, to any future Clone Ravers, to the flag wavers, to the freedom cravers, to all possible tax waivers, to those mischievous misbehaviors, to the Holy soul savers, to the little shavers, and to others.

So, Return With Me Now To Those Thrilling Days of Yesteryear,
As The Lone Raver Writes Again!

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caveat lector

If you'd like to read the previous essay in this series, then ask for
To Rave Is Madness.

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Instruments of Commerce

Many years ago, I spent some time studying with the Constitutional Patriots. Since then, I've pondered some of what I learned from them. One concept that I encountered and retained is the idea of people as property.

Most people haven't been exposed to the Constitutional Patriots or to their ideas so the idea of people as property might not make much sense without some understanding of the underlying assumptions. There are some documents that we've all been taught to uncritically accept as normal but which the Constitutional Patriots view as instruments of commerce. Marriage licenses and birth certificates are examples of such documents. Here's the Constitutional Patriots' view of those documents, as I understand it.

Marriage License — According to the Constitutional Patriots, a marriage license is, commercially, the equivalent of a business license. It establishes a commercial relationship. A marriage that is created by a marriage license is a licensed institution, like a business. It is authorized by a government agency and operates in a regulated industry. Such a marriage is established by the authority of the government, operates under the jurisdiction of the government, must comply with applicable government regulations, exists at the pleasure of the government, and can be terminated only by the authority of the government. Such a marriage is authorized for the accomplishment of certain specified or implied purposes that are defined by the government. Such purposes include, but are not necessarily limited to, the production of children.

Birth Certificate — According to the Constitutional Patriots, a birth certificate is another commercial instrument issued under the authority of the government. In its commercial sense, it is somewhat equivalent to a certificate of origin for a product that is manufactured with a serial number. The instrument documents the origin of the child. It establishes that the child is entitled to all applicable privileges and considerations and is subject to all applicable regulations and obligations. The Constitutional Patriots claim that the birth certificate, retained in the possession of a government agency, represents a transfer of ownership of the child from the parents (or parent) to the government.

Some implications are that people are products of the government's institutions and are property, owned by the government. Can that be true? The Constitutional Patriots believe so. Read on and form your own opinion.

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Chattels of the State

Other documentation exists, in addition to birth certificates and marriage licenses, which suggests that the government owns the people. The Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments are two such documents. We've all been taught that the Thirteenth Amendment abolished the ownership of people. However, we were **not** told that the Fourteenth Amendment reestablished such ownership in a different form. However, that is one effect of the Fourteenth Amendment. Only the owners have changed. Today, instead of people being owned by other individual human beings they're owned by governments and corporations. Certain definitions provide support for this claim.

chattel.... *n.* **1.** *Law.* An article of personal, movable property. **2.** A slave....
—American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language
<underline added>

own ... *—tr.* **1.a.** To have or possess as property: **b.** To have control over....
—American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language
<underline added>

jurisdiction ... **2.** authority; power; control. **3.** extent of authority....
—Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary

All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside.
—Section 1, Fourteenth Amendment
Constitution for the United States of America
<underline added>

There's a thread that can be followed through those definitions.

A chattel is something that is **owned** and such ownership isn't limited to inanimate property. According to the definition, the word is also applicable to slaves. A slave is a **person**. Therefore, the definition reveals that it is legally possible for a **person** to be **owned**. Whether or not it is openly acknowledged as permissible at any particular time or place is irrelevant. The important point is that it is acknowledged as being legally possible.

Ownership is proven by possession or **control**. Jurisdiction is defined as authority, power, and **control**. Ultimately, a thing is owned by whoever controls it.

A citizen is under the **jurisdiction** of the United States. Thus a citizen is under the authority, power, and **control** of the United States. That seems to me like a pretty convincing argument in favor of the conclusion that the government owns the people.

The Lone Raver Writes Again

The definitions might not be entirely persuasive. However, certain behavior of government also supports the conclusion that the people are property of the government. Here are some examples.

County Jurisdiction over Children — Any family court in the country will declare that the county has jurisdiction over all children. Remember, jurisdiction is authority, power, and control. Parents merely have custody. What is custody? Again, consider a definition.

Custody. The care and control of a thing or person. The keeping, guarding, care, watch, inspection, preservation or security of a thing, carrying with it the idea of the thing being within the immediate personal care and control of the person to whose custody it is subjected. Immediate charge and control, and not the final, absolute control of ownership, implying responsibility for the protection and preservation of the thing in custody....
— Black’s Law Dictionary
<underline added>

Notice that when you have **custody** of something, your status is secondary to that of the **owner**. Custody is “immediate charge and control”, and “not the final, absolute control of ownership”. If you have **custody** of something, that suggests that some other party **owns** the thing. In this particular case, we’re talking about children.

Remember that jurisdiction, which every county claims to have over children, is defined as authority, power, and control. County **jurisdiction** over children supersedes parental **custody** of children and suggests that the county owns the children.

Mandatory Public Education of Children — Another example of the government’s behavior that is difficult to explain, except if the government owns the children, is mandatory public education. First, how can the government have a legitimate authority to require anything at all of children unless it owns them? Second, the fact that the government requires children to be educated, and to be educated according to government standards, seems a lot like an effort to improve a product. Indeed, government agents routinely use such phrases as “investing in our children”. Investment is a very commercial concept.

Mandatory Vaccinations of Children — Another example of such behavior by the government is mandatory vaccinations of children. Why else would the government be justified in requiring that children be vaccinated, unless it has some equitable interest in them that it wants to protect?

Such behavior by government can be explained most logically by the conclusion that the children are chattels in which the government has a vested interest and from which it intends to eventually earn a profit.

What about adults? Government efforts to protect the investment are certainly not limited to children. Examples abound, including such things as seat belt requirements, crash helmet requirements, prohibitions on the consumption of substances that might harm people (damage the product), and a whole host of other mandates that purport to protect people from harm or to promote their good health, with or without their consent.

The behavior of the government toward people is exactly the behavior that would be expected of an owner toward valuable property. It isn't necessarily proof that the government owns the people but such ownership is the best way to understand such behavior.

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Shadow Rising

Now he goes along the dark road, thither whence they say no one re-
turns.

—from *Carmina*, l. II
by Gaius Valerius Catullus

Back when I studied with them, the Constitutional Patriots generally opposed the idea that a man is property. Much of their opposition revolved around the notion that a man is a natural human being. Their argument was that a natural human being is inherently free of obligations to institutions of government or commerce until such time as he voluntarily acquires such obligations through negotiation and contract. As a natural human being, he cannot be owned by anyone other than himself. According to such doctrine, a natural human being is a sovereign, equal in status to a government.

The Constitutional Patriots contradistinguished natural human beings from other kinds of persons. At the time, they recognized only two kinds of persons under the law: natural human beings and corporations. By their arguments, people inherently have rights which corporations ought not to have simply by virtue of the fact that people are natural human beings and corporations are not. Regardless of the maundering of the animal's rights advocates, there didn't really seem to be any other kinds of persons besides natural human beings and corporations. However, I believe that another category has arisen without anybody noticing it.

The idea that people might be created by methods other than the immemorial methods of natural biological propagation, to which the human race was previously restricted, is an old one. It has a long and illustrious history. Myth and fiction are riddled with it. However, when we consider the idea of people as chattels, then the idea of manufacturing them raises ugly implications.

The idea of manufacturing people isn't fiction any longer. Human beings are now produced by technological methods that are in stark contrast to natural biological propagation. Various people with various evaluations of the situation might describe the processes variously, even euphemistically. However, regardless of the terminology used there are today at least three categories of persons: natural human beings, corporations, and the new category — manufactured human beings.

The Lone Raver Writes Again

I think that it might be successfully argued, and I'm sure that lawyers are available who will make the argument, that a human being who resulted from some artificial technique — test tube baby, clone, genetically modified person, etc. — can be denied the benefits of the status claimed by a natural human being. As a manufactured product, he will be encumbered from the very outset by an enforceable equitable interest in him, as property, on the part of the institution or institutions that created him or that participated in his creation.

Indeed, this consideration might apply to many people who already exist. Consider that for even such common techniques as in-vitro fertilization, even for children resulting from the use of fertility drugs, a value added concept might apply. That is, if the fertilization would have been impossible without the intervention of a third party, then the process wasn't natural and the resulting person isn't a natural human being. The party that enabled the manufacture of the person, or which actually manufactured him, can claim an equitable interest in the result. Remember, think commercial.

The Constitutional Patriots have long argued that people become property in a sort of intangible sense by the operation of such documents as the parents' marriage licenses and the childrens' birth certificates. It has long been established Constitutional Patriot practice to rescind such documents and then to pretend that the government will respect the resulting status of the undocumented natural human being. The new reality, however, could be a legal situation in which people are designated as property in a highly tangible, inarguable, permanent, and enforceable way. The person so designated would not have any more say in the matter than a washing machine does. His status would have been decided before construction of him even began. Such status could not be changed, even in theory, by such gimmicks as the formal rescindment of documents. The manufactured person would not have any access to the decision process because, by definition, he isn't a natural human being. He is a manufactured human being. He is a product without rights.

Here's another aspect of the manufactured human being idea. How much of a natural human being has to be replaced by artificial components before the man can be involuntarily deprived of the status of natural human being? If a man gradually becomes mostly artificial (first a false tooth, then an artificial hip, then an artificial heart, and so forth), wouldn't there come a point where such a change of status might occur as defined by applicable legislation? How many artificial parts can a man have and still be considered a natural human being? How many endocrines and hormones can be replaced before

even a person's behavior can be regarded as manufactured? Behavior modification by chemical means among such people as psychotics is already a well accepted practice. Psychotics? It's routinely done to elementary school children who are accused of nothing more than being too active!

Also, consider insurance. Much of the legal doctrine of insurance, and all actuarial tables, accept the idea of a natural span of years. After a man's life has been saved by some emergency procedure, without which he would otherwise have died, the lawyers will argue that he has exceeded his natural span of years. After that, why wouldn't the hospital have a vested interest in his subsequent income? After all, such income wouldn't have been possible without the expensive and timely intervention of the hospital. Such a consideration supplies an answer to the problem of uninsured people. A patient who exceeds his natural span, because of the intervention of a medical provider, isn't a natural human being any more. He's a remanufactured human being. Don't bother with insurance. Just give the medical provider an equitable interest in the patient.

Such considerations regarding medical services might be inapplicable if a man pays for medical services and improvements himself. However, when they're supplied by some third party, such as Medicaid, considerations of equitable interest will arise. Consider that Medicaid will already seize a Medicaid recipient's assets, after the recipient dies, on the basis of past services provided. Doesn't that indicate an accrued commercial interest in the person, on the part of Medicaid?

It seems to me that the groundwork is already in place and that people just haven't noticed it. The precedents have already been established and people just haven't recognized them. All that remains is for the people to be given an appropriately receptive mindset (status, rights, liberty, and so forth are less important than security), for the politicians to find an adequate excuse (national security, the greater good, or whatever), and for bureaucrats and corporate executives to be given the go-ahead. Given the present state of things, it doesn't seem too unlikely that we will soon discover that we already exist in a system in which any modification of a human being, either before or after birth, will be used to set aside at least some of the status of natural human being and to establish some lessor status for the person. Incrementalism being what it is, beyond that point there's nothing left but the dreaded slippery slope with the great sucking sound at the bottom. As they say in karate, it's all over but the shout.

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The Dark Years

“Thank you, Sarah, for your courage through the dark years. I can’t help you with what you must soon face except to say that the future is not set. You must be stronger than you imagine you can be. You must survive or I will never exist.”

—John Connor’s message to his mother, Sarah Connor
in the movie *Terminator*

Maybe it doesn’t matter. It almost seems that we’re already there. The status of a natural human being today isn’t much different from the status that I predict for a manufactured human being in the future. A natural human being today already doesn’t have any rights. Almost every right that ever existed has been replaced by a privilege that is now under the control of a government or a corporation. What difference will it make if a man is natural or manufactured? In either case, he’ll be pleading for privileges from one source of authority or another.

Not only that, the status of natural human being will probably become extinct anyway. Once the doctrine is well established, any physical change can be used to terminate natural status. You had a cavity filled in a molar? You had your appendix removed? You had a vasectomy? Welcome to the ranks of the remanufactured human beings. Remember Larry Niven’s frozen *corpsicles*, the so-called *Homo sapiens*.¹

It gets even more complicated. As people become increasingly artificial, how far do we need to go before successive models of people become indistinguishable from the machines which, of course, will become increasingly organic in their capabilities if not in their construction? As I ponder that one, I’m reminded of the movie *Terminator*. In that movie, technological skills had enabled people to make machines that were sufficiently human to understand the idea of dominance. The machines pursued that dominance to our dismal detriment. Those machines, in their campaign to destroy us, learned how to make better machines and then to make machines that were increasingly difficult to distinguish from natural human beings. It’s a very Karmic notion, a dandy fictional example of the wheel coming full circle.

Of course, the consequences of our self-improvements won’t be all bad. As John Connor said in his prophetic message to his mother, the future isn’t set. If the Terminator had encountered a manufactured human being instead of Sarah Connor, then it might have been easily defeated. It might turn out

¹ See *The Defenseless Dead* in the collection *The Long Arm of Gil Hamilton*, by Larry Niven.

The Lone Raver Writes Again

that the most important consideration will be whether we can become machines quickly enough to be able to protect ourselves from our increasingly organic machines, as they become sufficiently human to want to destroy us. What a grim idea.

That considered, maybe the best thing that we can possibly do is to embrace biological technology and promote its widest possible use. Maybe we should achieve the maximum possible diversity among ourselves, including manufactured human beings in the mix. It will be impossible to keep the technology from the hands of evil parties, either individual or institutional. However, if it's equally available to all people then maybe we can manage to create as much good as evil with it. Maybe we can even use it, as individuals, to recover some of our rights. As usual, we'll just have to deal as best we can with the ugly consequences that are an inseparable part of our technological prowess. Therein lies the challenge of enlightenment. We must avoid the *Brave New World* and prevent *1984*. Corpsicles might be inevitable. We must deal with the Terminator, if we inadvertently (or intentionally) create it. We must tread a perilously narrow path between the disasters and the glories that are inherent in our achievements. Through it all, we must somehow maintain our fundamental humanity, or what's the point?

I don't know what the result will be, how we will accomplish it, or how we will survive it. I can only speculate, hope, pray, and rave on.

If you'd like to read the next essay in this series,
then ask for
Raving Over Time.

Glossary

chattel... *n.* **1.** *Law.* An article of personal, movable property. **2.** A slave....

—American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

contradistinguish... *tr.v.* **-guished. -guish•ing, -guish•es.** To distinguish by contrasting qualities.

—American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

Custody. The care and control of a thing or person. The keeping, guarding, care, watch, inspection, preservation or security of a thing, carrying with it the idea of the thing being within the immediate personal care and control of the person to whose custody it is subjected. Immediate charge and control, and not the final, absolute control of ownership, implying responsibility for the protection and preservation of the thing in custody. Also the detainer of a man's person by virtue of lawful process or authority.

The term is very elastic and may mean actual imprisonment or physical detention or mere power, legal or physical, of imprisoning or of taking manual possession. Term "custody" within statute requiring that petitioner be "in custody" to be entitled to federal habeas corpus relief does not necessarily mean actual physical detention in jail or prison but rather is synonymous with restraint of liberty. U. S. *ex rel. Wirtz v. Sheehan*, D.C.Wis., 319 F.Supp. 146, 147. Accordingly, persons on probation or released on own recognizance have been held to be "in custody" for purposes of habeas corpus proceedings.

See **Chain of custody; Custodial interrogation; Protective custody.**

—Black's Law Dictionary

jurisdiction ... **1.** right or power of administering law or justice. **2.** authority; power; control. **3.** extent of authority. It does not lie within his jurisdiction to set you free. **4.** territory over which authority extends.

—Thorndike Century Senior Dictionary

own ... *adj.* Of or belonging to oneself or itself: *She makes her own clothes.* —**own** *n.* That which belongs to one: *It is my own.* —**own** *v.* **owned, own•ing, owns.** —*tr.* **1.a.** To have or possess as property: *owns a chain of restaurants.* **b.** To have control over: *For a time, enemy planes owned the skies.* **2.** To admit as being in accordance with fact, truth, or a claim; acknowledge. —*intr.* To make a full confession or acknowledgment: *When confronted with the evidence the thief owned up.* See Synonyms at **acknowledge.** —**idioms. of (one's) own.** Belonging completely to oneself: *a room of one's own.* **on (one's) own.** **1.** By one's own efforts: *She got the job on her own.* **2.** Responsible for oneself; independent of outside help or control: *He is now out of college and on his own....* —**owner** *n.*

—American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language

Right — Anything that is within your ability, for which you don't need permission, and that is generally or customarily approved or at least condoned.

—Sam Aurelius Milam III

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