

Dystopia Now: Living Inside the Matrix

Episode 1: Riddles in the Dark — Are Hickman's Eggs the Fruits of Slave Labor?

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Welcome to DYSTOPIA NOW, the podcast about LIVING INSIDE THE MATRIX. I'm Kerry Stewart Lengel. Every week, I'm taking a deep dive into one seemingly simple question about the way we live and the choices we make. And because I am a nerd, I'm going to make a lot of pop culture references along the way. Episode 1 is titled RIDDLES IN THE DARK.

[CLIP: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey]

ANDY SERKIS as GOLLUM: Very clever hobbitses. Very clever.

MARTIN FREEMAN as BILBO BAGGINS: A box without hinges, key or lid, yet golden treasure inside is hid.

We begin our journey not in a goblin-infested cavern in Peter Jackson's overbloated *Hobbit* trilogy, but inside your refrigerator, where you just might find a staple item that was produced using slave labor, right here in Arizona.

[CLIP: Dirty Jobs 425 Egg Farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKyTPFjhuoE>

CLINT HICKMAN: And I was told that you're free labor, and we're always looking for that.

Need a hint? OK. It's used a lot in baking, but it's also something you might serve on its own, maybe with breakfast.

[CLIP: The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nxD7ashsWuw>

GOLLUM: I only wish ... to catch a fish ... so juicy SWEEEEEET ...

Not quite, Gollum. But you're getting warm.

[CLIP: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey]

GOLLUM: Ooooh ... Eeehh ... EGGSES!

That's right, Smeagol. Eggses.

[CLIP: News Update: About 165K hens die in Hickman Family Farms fire]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AEkndrYN5Zo>

TV NEWS ANCHOR: In this massive fire at Hickman's Family Farm, 165,000 egg-laying hens were lost.

[CLIP: 'It stinks like decaying flesh': Lawsuits claim Hickman Farms is a nuisance]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVM75kVkj1I>

ANCHOR: For years hundreds of people in Tonopah have been fighting Hickman's eggs after the company built a controversial industrial egg facility in 2014.

RESIDENT: It stinks like decaying flesh.

ANCHOR: The stench, the flies, the air pollution, they are all too much to handle for the many people who left town as property values plummeted.

REPORTER: Lawsuits against Hickman's contend that on certain days the massive plant spews ammonia and particulates for miles that dramatically exceed federal standards, meeting the legal definition of a nuisance.

[CLIP: Dirty Jobs 425 Egg Farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKyTPFjhuoE>

MIKE ROWE: Eggs and poop. Poo and eggs. It doesn't get much better than that.

Are Hickman's eggs the fruits of slave labor? That's my seemingly simple question for Episode 1 of Dystopia Now: Living Inside the Matrix.

[CLIP: Blue Pill or Red Pill]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zE7PKRjrid4>

LAURENCE FISHBURNE as MORPHEUS: Take the blue pill, the story ends, you wake up in your bed and believe whatever you want to believe. You take the red pill, you stay in Wonderland ... and I show you how deep the rabbit hole goes.

Hickman's Egg Ranch, as it was originally named, opened in Glendale in 1944. Now it's run by the founders' grandchildren, with facilities in Buckeye, Tonopah and Maricopa. You may have seen the company featured on TV's "Dirty Jobs" with Mike Rowe.

[CLIP: Dirty Jobs 425 Egg Farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKyTPFjhuoE>

MIKE ROWE: I want to adhere to all the biohazard protocol that you may have.

CLINT HICKMAN: And I was told that you're free labor, and we're always looking for that.

MIKE ROWE: Ain't nothing like free, Clint. But I am a bargain. I'll follow you.

CLINT HICKMAN: Let's go.

Hickman's Family Farms is a hometown success story. Ever since 1995, however, the company's success has depended on cheap labor provided by the Arizona Department of Corrections. Activist groups such as [Mass Liberation Arizona](#) call it modern-day slavery, and that's only one of the reasons they want to abolish prisons altogether. But let's stay in the refrigerator aisle for now.

[CLIP: Nearly 140 female inmates to be housed at Hickman's Family Farms]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GA68wWAyr84>

ANCHOR: This warehouse at Hickman's Farms has now been converted into a prison dormitory and will be the home of over one hundred low-risk female inmates until the coronavirus pandemic is over.

[CLIP: Inmates infected working on farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l8qFAeFhKBo>

ANCHOR: It was the one prison work crew not suspended due to COVID-19.

[CLIP: Hickmans Family Farms - prisoner / work program]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIVY4mkGp7Q>

ANCHOR: Many prisoners in Arizona take advantage of the work program at Hickman's egg farm. Everywhere you look, the orange jumpsuits tell you inmates are on the job. About 20% of the workforce at Hickman's is inmate labor.

[CLIP: Hickman Family Farms expanding re-entry program]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uxJ3KslidwI>

ANCHOR: The company says it's an untapped market with a good workforce. In the summer the company is expanding its re-entry program, giving these ex-inmates everything they need to succeed.

[CLIP: Arizona Correctional Industries - Partnership with Hickman's Family Farms]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4faVtMz0UGg>

PAUL YATES: We now electricians, we have plumbers, we have A/C refrigeration. It's just been expanding and expanding ...

From one perspective, this arrangement is what you call a win-win. In the 1990s, Hickman's was having a hard time attracting and keeping employees, but the state was offering reliable, highly motivated workers for considerably less than the free-market rate for labor.

[CLIP: Dirty Jobs 425 Egg Farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKyTPFjhuoE>

MIKE ROWE: Free labor ...

With their turnover problem solved, Hickman's was able to cut prices and expand market share, and that's how they became the largest egg producer in the Southwest. Don't you just love "free enterprise"?

[CLIP: Hickmans Family Farms - prisoner / work program]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CIVY4mkGp7Q>

ANCHOR: They take on jobs lots of other people might not want in a place that's not right around the corner. They use the money for victim restitution, child support, and upon release, they get the remainder of their money in a lump sum. James Holmes doesn't mind the hard work and is already hoping to make his children's holidays better.

INMATE: We get to send some money to our kids off our spending, which is OK, since the holidays are coming.

[Inmates are paid less than \\$3 an hour](#), and yet these are some of the highest-paying, most-sought-after quote-unquote "job training opportunities" in the state's prison system. Why is that?

[CLIP: Gov. Scott: Let Trump run the country like a business]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tBK5mVEtLlo>

ANCHOR: How does Donald Trump tonight go up there and let everyone know, every single person in America, that he's their guy and he can make their dreams come true.

RICK SCOTT: His race is similar to mine in 2010. I was a businessperson having never run for office before. I talked about what we were going to do. We've cut taxes 55 times, he'll cut taxes. We reduced regulation, we've reduced 4,200 regulations so far in our state. We can do the same thing nationally if we let Donald Trump, elect him and run the country like you run a business.

Arizona law requires inmates to work 40 hours a week, and most of them are paid less than a dollar an hour for job assignments inside the prison. In 2014, that was 10 to 50 cents for cleaning toilets, peeling potatoes or doing laundry. Most of that goes straight back to the state at the overpriced commissary, or for phone calls.

Until 2015, the state charged prisoners 24 cents a minute to talk to friends, family or lawyers. When the FCC capped the rate at 11 cents a minute during the Obama administration, the *Arizona Capitol Times* noted that the decision would result in a quote "financial hit" to "recidivism programs," meaning education and job training for inmates.

[CLIP: Orange Is the New Black]

DANIELLE BROOKS as TAYSTEE: First of all, the hot sauce in the commissary is bullshit.

Arizona Correctional Industries, or ACI, is the boring-sounding name given to the state's rent-an-inmate side hustle. In 1991, lawmakers voted to require ACI not only to pay for its "recidivism programs" but to return a profit to the state's general fund. In 2020, [ACI's annual report](#) projected net earnings of \$10 million on more than \$46 million in revenue. Its Number 1 customer? Hickman's Family Farms, accounting for 7 of those \$46 million.

[CLIP: Dirty Jobs 425 Egg Farm]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AKyTPFjhuoE>

MIKE ROWE: Free labor ...

Arizona's top 10 users of incarcerated workers include one public agency, the Department of Transportation, as well as the private contractor Trinity Services Group, which, [according to the Phoenix New Times](#), delivered boxes of chicken clearly labeled "Not for Human Consumption" to the Perryville prison complex in 2019.

Another "dirty job" for prisoners is telemarketing at a Tucson call center called the Hometown Hero Project. The name makes it sound like a charity, but the company sells advertising to small businesses looking to reach military veterans and first responders. [Numerous customers have complained to the Better Business Bureau](#) about misleading sales pitches that left them paying for monthly subscriptions that were impossible to cancel. Sort of like my LA Fitness membership.

[CLIP: Arizona Correctional Industries - Partnership with Hickman's Family Farms]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4faVtMz0UGg>

PAUL YATES: Hi, my name is Paul Yates. My position, I'm not sure what my title is. We'll call it project director for now. I wear a lot of hats.

Paul Yates was a tool and die maker before he went to prison. He started working on the egg farm through ACI, and how he runs inmate labor for Hickman's. This makes him the perfect spokesman for media interviews and other marketing materials.

[CLIP: Arizona Correctional Industries - Partnership with Hickman's Family Farms]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4faVtMz0UGg>

PAUL YATES: They treat people not if they're an orange or if they're an inmate, they're part of their labor force. And that builds something in a person. Just walking around out here every day, these guys, it shows on their face. They're hardworking. And they may not have started that way, (SCOFFS) but they found that way because it's the only way to go.

"The only way to go." I mean, it's almost like they have no other choice, right? In the academic world, convicted criminals belong to a category of workers known as "the superexploitable." Undocumented migrants are the other obvious example. Without legal protections, they end up working the hardest, dirtiest jobs for the lowest possible wages, because their only other choice is to starve, or watch their children starve.

These workers play a quote "distinct role in globalized capitalist economies," according to a Loyola University Chicago researcher.

WORK CITED: Gomberg-Munoz, Ruth. "Criminalized Workers: Introduction to Special Issue on Migrant Labor and Mass Deportation." American Anthropological Association, Volume XXXVII, Number 1, 2016.

This helps keep wages low for the working class, and yet, even the so-called "working poor" benefit from the superexploitable, in the form of lower prices for necessities like ...

[CLIP: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey]

GOLLUM: Eggses!

But wait, there's more! If you make enough money to pay income tax, then you benefit from inmate labor every April 15th, too, in the form of Republican tax cuts.

CLIP: Arizona Correctional Industries - Partnership with Hickman's Family Farms]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4faVtMz0UGg>

PAUL YATES: I wear a lot of hats.

That's right. You're getting paid coming AND going. You, me, and Paul Yates.

[CLIP: You're the fuckin' warden!]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qfNQMsxelPI>

NICK SANDOW as JOE CAPUTO: Yes, Pearson, of course.

MIKE BIRBIGLIA as DANNY PEARSON: I've asked you not to call me Pearson. You call me Danny, like I've asked you multiple times.

CAPUTO: Yes, Danny, sir.

DANNY: Just Danny, thank you. See you tomorrow, buddy.

CAPUTO: See you tomorrow. ... Actually, I'd like to sing.

GUITARIST: Yeah, let's do it.

CAPUTO:

Hey, buddy

Hey, buddy

You want your back scratched, buddy?

Mouth full of marbles

Mouth full of lies

I can see through you like a window

But you're the ceiling, not the sky

You say you're not the warden

But you're the fuckin' warden

You say you're not the warden

But you're the fuckin' warden

That was a scene from *Orange Is the New Black*. Among the terrifying highlights of my 25-year career in journalism was quizzing one of the stars of that show for an online video. If you're listening, Adrienne C. Moore, I'm so, so sorry that you had to Febreze our interview room.

I worked at *The Arizona Republic* newspaper, also known as azcentral.com. In 2008, I became the theater critic and arts and culture reporter. It was an unplanned career, but I was grateful for the opportunity to engage on important issues.

[CLIP: We Quizzed Adrienne C. Moore (AKA Black Cindy) on "Orange Is the New Black" Actors]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OUWM6XdTrI>

AZCENTRAL: Which Orange Is the New Black actor got her start right here in Phoenix at Valley Youth Theatre?

ADRIENNE C. MOORE: Yeah, I don't be studying Kate Mulgrew's résumé like that, now.

AZCENTRAL: Well, you're not as big a nerd as me, so ...

MOORE: Well, you said it, not me.

On the other hand, the privilege of writing for a newspaper came with a code of ethics that meant putting aside any interest in activism, either in or outside of electoral politics. There were times I felt like I was renting out my First Amendment rights to the Man, which, of course, I was.

[CLIP: NETWORK, Sidney Lumet, 1976 - I'm Mad As Hell and I'm Not Gonna Take This Anymore!]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MRuS3dxKK9U>

PETER FINCH as HOWARD BEALE: I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take this anymore!

No, nothing like that. But I did leave the paper in January 2020, and right now I'm a 49-year-old graduate student at Arizona State University. This podcast started as a student project, which might be why you heard me quoting an academic paper earlier. I'll try to keep that to a minimum.

[CLIP: Back to School Official Trailer #1 - Burt Young Movie (1986) HD]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnvwn8yntok>

RODNEY DANGERFIELD: I'm going to college!

SNOBBISH PROFESSOR: The world's oldest living freshman.

I decided to call my podcast DYSTOPIA NOW only as an indirect reference to *Apocalypse Now*, Francis Ford Coppola's classic about the Vietnam War. I was thinking more about Steven Pinker's book *Enlightenment Now*, from 2018.

Pinker is a cognitive scientist and a great outside-the-box thinker. He points to wide-ranging evidence that, contrary to the doom and gloom of the loudest voices on both left and right, humanity is actually riding an epic wave of progress. Violence from war and crime, death and suffering from disease, extreme poverty, all of these have been falling steadily, improving the lives of billions of people all over the world. Here's Pinker laying out his case in a 2018 TED Talk.

[CLIP: Is the world getting better or worse? A look at the numbers]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCm9Ng0bbEQ>

STEVEN PINKER: Two hundred years ago, 90% of the world's population subsisted in extreme poverty. Today, fewer than 10% of people do. Wars of all kinds have become fewer and less deadly. Fewer of us are killed, assaulted, enslaved, exploited, or oppressed by the others. We've become safer in just about every way. In the 19th century, Westerners worked more than 60 hours per week. Today, they work fewer than 40. The world has never been more Democratic than it has been in the past decade, with two-thirds of the world's people living in democracies.

All of this, Pinker argues, was made possible by not only by rapid technological progress but by the economic engine of global capitalism. He does not deny the costs, particularly to the environment, but he doesn't see ecological collapse as inevitable, especially since world population is now projected to plateau at about 11 billion by the end of this century.

[CLIP: Is the world getting better or worse? A look at the numbers]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yCm9Ng0bbEQ>

STEVEN PINKER: During the decades in which humanity has gotten healthier, wealthier, wiser, safer and happier, the New York Times has become increasingly morose, and the world's broadcasts, too, have gotten steadily glummer. Progress is not some mystical force or dialectic lifting us ever higher, it's not a mysterious arc of history bending toward justice, it's a result of human efforts governed by an idea, and idea that we associate with the 18th-century Enlightenment, namely that if we apply reason and science to enhance human wellbeing, we can gradually succeed.

Pinker may be right about the big picture. But the rest of us live in what we call the real world, which ironically isn't real at all. It is the day-to-day world where Republicans and Democrats are screaming at each other on TV or Facebook while we bust our butts to meet our deadlines, pay the rent, get the kids to soccer practice, fast all day for that colonoscopy tomorrow, and, let's be honest, leave contemplating the nature of reality for another time, maybe.

In that world, whether we live in a utopia or a dystopia depends on your perspective. And as a straight, white he/him/his with a 30-year-fixed mortgage and a 401(k), yeah, it's easier for me to take the long view. But because of who I am—as a writer, as a reader, as someone who “thinks way too much,” as my BFF puts it—I have to try to see that big picture from other points of view, too.

[CLIP: I Have a Dream speech by Martin Luther King .Jr HD (subtitled)]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vP4iY1TtS3s>

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.: However difficult the moment, however frustrating the hour, it will not be long, because the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice.

That's what we all hope. But here's another version of world history since the European Enlightenment, as we learned to call it in school. Stop me when I say something that isn't factually accurate.

Five hundred years ago, a bunch of unbathed religious fanatics decided to invade what they called the Holy Land, even though they themselves persecuted the Ashkenazi and Sephardic Jews who descended from the ancient Israelites.

[CLIP: The Spanish Inquisition - Mel Brooks]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LnF1OtP2Svk>

MEL BROOKS as GRAND INQUISITOR TORQUEMADA: How we doin', any converts today?

SOLDIERS: Not a one, nay nay nay.

TORQUEMADA: We've flattened their fingers, we've branded their buns. Nothing is working—send in the nuns!

The Crusaders brought back a bunch of Arabic texts to Europe that contained lost wisdom from the ancient Greeks—which their fanatical ancestors had suppressed as blasphemy—along with new knowledge from Islamic culture, like algebra.

[CLIP: Monty Python and the Holy Grail - Witch Scene]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rf71YotfykQ>

KNIGHT: Tell me, what do you do with witches?

MOB: Burn them!

KNIGHT: And what do you burn apart from witches?

PEASANT: More witches!

Thanks to a few strokes of historical luck, white Europeans got a technological jump-start that allowed them to essentially conquer the world over a hundred years or so. How and why is the subject of a Pulitzer Prize-winning book by Jared Diamond titled *Guns, Germs and Steel*—the three horsemen of the white man's apocalypse. That's my subtitle, by the way, not his.

[CLIP: We are the Borg]

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyenRCJ_4Ww

EMOTIONLESS VOICE: We are the Borg. Lower your shields and surrender your ships. Resistance is futile.

The slavers and conquistadors did what they did because they could. But unlike the Borg drones on Star Trek, they had to justify it, if not to themselves, at least to their naive loved ones back home. The Pope and an army of missionaries gave them theological cover, but that wasn't

enough to paper over the brutality of the colonial enterprise. In French-occupied Haiti, nearly half of all slaves died after a just few years in the sugar cane fields. It was cheaper to replace them than to treat them as well as a draft horse.

To rationalize these perfectly “legal” crimes against humanity, the colonizers demonized the survivors of their violence and torture. So when Thomas Jefferson wrote those famous words in the Declaration of Independence, about all men being created equal, he didn’t need to tell his readers that he meant all WHITE men. Even though he wrote throughout his life about the evils of slavery, he didn’t believe it was possible for HIS people to enjoy “freedom” without the continued exploitation of an inferior Other.

[CLIP: South Park Cartman's flashback]
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gt7kLWewXow>

THOMAS JEFFERSON: Hello, I am Thomas Jefferson. Take this document to the Continental Congress.

CARTMAN: Wow, the Declaration of Independence Day!

How did Jefferson reconcile these contradictions? The same way you and I deal with cognitive dissonance—by forging an identity, an ideology, a personal narrative that let him see himself as a basically good person doing the best he could in complicated circumstances. One of his psychological defense mechanisms happened to be virulent racism, which is just as clear in his writings as his passion for “liberty” and his conviction that slavery had to end. You know, someday. Just not in his lifetime.

Two hundred years later, we no longer have to dehumanize black people. Not all of them, anyway. We just have to dehumanize CRIMINALS and ILLEGAL ALIENS. You know, the superexploitable.

[CLIP: Los Super Seven, Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)]

JOE ELY (SINGING):

*Six hundred miles to the Mexican border
They treat us like rustlers, like outlaws, like thieves
The sky plane caught fire over Los Gatos Canyon
A fireball and lightning shook all the fields
Who are these friends, all scattered like dry leaves?
The radio says they're just deportees*

So, yeah, maybe this is the best time to be alive in all of human history. But for most of the planet—the black, brown and indigenous planet—the last 500 years have been a dystopian nightmare, following an apocalypse that destroyed, assimilated, marginalized, and erased their cultures.

Enlightenment Now? Dystopia Now? Maybe it's both. That's why I say we are already living inside the Matrix—an artificial universe where culture and ideology, power and privilege shape every single one of us.

Inside the matrix of privilege, what you see depends on where you sit. And in the words of one of my personal heroes, the muckraking journalist Upton Sinclair, “It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it.”

[CLIP: 'It stinks like decaying flesh': Lawsuits claim Hickman Farms is a nuisance]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NVM75kVkj1l>

ANCHOR: Allegations of a sweetheart deal to protect a titan egg company.

REPORTER: The county has not forced Hickman farms to shut down or move. Some residents attribute that to the fact that Clint Hickman is the county supervisor of this very district. He and his brothers run the company. Once-thriving business's like Wirth's resort have suffered. He shut down the community in May. While the lawsuits make their way through court, a proposal at the state legislature would make it much tougher to hold accountable those businesses zoned as agricultural operations, preventing anyone from living a half-mile or further from filing suits and not allowing lawsuits after one year of the company's existence.

The hard truth is, unless you are among the superexploitable, then you personally benefit from their continued exploitation, and that will remain true until we guarantee a basic standard of living to every American citizen and, ultimately, to every human on the planet.

OK, it might take a few years. But in the meantime, the least we can do is pay a few more cents for eggs at the grocery store. And BOYCOTT HICKMAN'S FAMILY FARMS.

[CLIP: The Lord of the Rings - You Shall Not Pass]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mJZZNHekEQw>

IAN McKELLEN as GALDALF: You shall not pass!

There is a boycotthickmans.com website, by the way. The owners are anonymous, probably with good reason. But I do wonder how much traffic they get. And I wonder what would happen if thousands of people starting sharing that website, and this podcast. Maybe someone would point out that all of the major supermarket chains carry Hickman's eggs. Maybe someone would start a campaign to pressure Kroger and Safeway. What if thousands of people showed up with protest signs, the way they did for #BlackLivesMatter or the #RedForEd education funding initiative? Come to think of it, what if someone thought it was important enough to draft a proposition banning inmate labor and started collecting signatures for the 2024 election?

[AUDIO CLIP: Les Misérables | Do You Hear the People Sing?]

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1q82twrd0U>

[STILL IMAGE: Village Theatre Mainstage Production, 2013]

Courtesy of Wikimedia Commons

CHORUS:

*Do you hear the people sing
Singing the song of angry men
It is the music of a people
Who will not be slaves again*

Sorry, it won't be me. Nobody's going to follow me to the barricades. But I do hope you will follow me on Twitter @kerrylengel. I am coming out of social-media hibernation, at least for the next 10 weeks, to do everything I can to spread the word about:

[CLIP: The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey]

GOLLUM: Eggses!

And I hope you help spread the word, too. I'll be back in one week with Episode 2 and a new segment spotlighting some of the great dissenters in U.S. history, from Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman to Nellie Bly and Woody Guthrie.

Guthrie, by the way, wrote the song I played earlier, "Deportee (Plane Wreck at Los Gatos)." That was my favorite version, from the Tex-Mex supergroup Los Super Seven, but it has been recorded by Joan Baez, Dolly Parton, and Bruce Springsteen, just to name a few.

Thank you for listening to DYSTOPIA NOW: LIVING INSIDE THE MATRIX. I'm Kerry Stewart Lengel. For more information, including links to media sources from this episode, please visit my website at dystopianow.info.

Resistance Is Futile ... Yada Yada Yada