

# Welcome to the Syntropy Blog

 Posted on 22 October 2010 by [cjf](#)

I enjoy writing my other blog which is [Managing FOSS \(Free and Open Source Software\) for Business Results](#). But I keep wanting to write about things that are far afield from the computer side of my life, so I thought it was time to start a blog with a more general purview.

Although, as is my wont, this blog is rather ambitiously scoped *to support increasing syntropy in local Universe*, I deeply understand that trial-and-error is the only way we humans learn. So I expect to make a lot of mistakes (the alternative is to learn too little which is less interesting).

With your help, dear reader, and your feedback, I am sure that we can work through any issues and work together “*in support of eternally regenerative Universe*” (a Buckminster Fuller expression that I particularly like).

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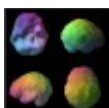
Author: [cjf](#)



- Full Name: **CJ Fearnley**
- Web: <http://www.CJFearnley.com>

## 5 Responses to “Welcome to the Syntropy Blog”

1. [Joshua Pang](#) on 26 October 2010 at 5:53 pm



Hi CJ. Josh Pang here. We’ve met before at some of the BI Events. (this is where I took a picture of myself with Mac Photobooth and tried to drag and drop here, but to no avail.) I appreciate your use of Syntropy, as it is our only meaning to each other. “Seeking feedback” — well, I hope we can collaborate on some pressing

problems in life. Before I head onto comment on Education Automation, I wanted to thank you for your work. I have followed you on your Home Page, the Collaborative, read an article or two from FOSS, listened to your integrity speech, watched all the Syn Coll. videos, followed you on Facebook but I have gotten behind on Ted Talks. Anyway, you've been a great teacher "out in space" and we've been friendly in person.

Au Revoir

-Josh

[Reply](#)

2. [cjf](#) on 26 October 2010 at 6:17 pm

Hi Josh. Great to hear from you! You can use <http://en.gravatar.com> to get a picture uploaded.

I'm surprised more Bucky-inspired people don't talk about Syntropy. I hope I can help change that.



There are too many TED talks! A new one comes out every day. Fortunately they are not all mind-blowing. So I miss a lot of them too.

I'm looking forward to reading your feedback on education.

Thanks for the comment!

[Reply](#)

3. [Dick Fischbeck](#) on 26 October 2010 at 6:43 pm

Hi Chris



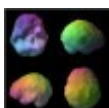
Good to see you sticking your neck out like this! Yet again, I mean. I will be reading ...

Dick

[Reply](#)

4. [Joshua Pang](#) on 26 October 2010 at 11:38 pm

<http://www.gravatar.com/avatar/8c54ce2fee5d7695d82d5c97b81ea3d1.png>



Versus

file:///localhost/Users/Synergy/Pictures/Photo%20Booth/Photo%20on%202010-10-26%20at%2022.34.jpg

[Reply](#)

5. [Don Briddell](#) on 12 February 2011 at 12:36 pm

C.J., you asked me to explain Vedanta. Here is a simple outline of what Asia Vedanta is all about. There are three schools. I have outlined the three for you. The compressed format of this site doesn't look good so I am sending it to your regular email address.

Don

Vedanta Explain 04/10/2010

by Swami Vivekananda (1896) and recorded here, greatly simplified in outline form. Compiled by Don and Moo Briddell

1. Advaitism, the monistic (non-dual) side of India philosophy
  - Minority view
2. Two divisions of Indian Philosophy
  - a. Orthodox – has the Vedas as eternal revelations of truth.
    - i. Sankhyas – failed to form a sect, no info given
    - ii. Naiyayikas – failed to form a sect, no info given
    - iii. Mimamsakas – now dominate. Also called “Vedantists”
  - b. Unorthodox – reject Vedas and stand on other authorities (Jains & Buddhists)
  - c. Heterodox – did not see that Vivekananda described this.
3. Vedantism is the Mimamsaka division of Indian Philosophy that superseded the others.
  - a. Three schools of Vedantism,
    - i. Dualists,
    - ii. Qualified Non-Dualists,
    - iii. Non-dualists
  - b. All believe Vedas are the revealed knowledge of God,
  - c. Creation goes through cyclical changes of growth and decay
  - d. Postulate Akasha is like the ether (aether) in physics.
  - e. Akasha is prana (energy) and produces the universe as a vibration of prana
  - f. Everything is manufactured from Akasha through the agency of prana
  - g. Even thoughts, feelings, as well as matter is a manifestation of prana
  - h. Cycles are started by prana vibration, which act on Akasha to produce form and all forms are derived in a hierarchy.
4. First school of Vedanta is the dualists
  - a. Believe God is the creator and is eternally separate from Nature and
  - b. Eternally separate from the human soul.
  - c. God, Nature and Souls are all eternal but all separate, exists independently
  - d. Nature and Souls change but God remains the same.
  - e. God is personal, has no body, but has qualities,
  - f. God has human attributes such as just, merciful, powerful, willfulness
  - g. God can be loved, approached, prayed to
  - h. The dualist God is a human God
  - i. None of man's evil qualities
  - j. There is an undifferentiated Nature and out of that God creates the universe.
  - k. All Western religion and Biblical religions are dualists since they all believe man is forever distinct from God.
  - l. Conceives of higher spiritual ideas by personalizing them and putting them in terms he can understand, “his own level”. Anthropomorphic universe cosmology.
  - m. Believe God entirely separate from humans.
  - n. God is only good (and man is forever shrouded by evil, DB commentary).



- o. Vivekananda does not agree with the Dualists
- p. Indian dualists did not create of devil, but lay the blame for evil on man.
- q. Vivekananda agrees with item p.
- r. Western dualists think the devil is to blame for evil in the world.
- s. Dualists believe in karma.
- t. Vedantic Indian dualists believe every soul comes to salvation. No one is left out.
- u. Western biblical cosmology has eternal damnation and eternal salvation.
- v. Vedantic dualists postulate an eternal heaven for individual souls, but no hell. Earthly life is hell.
- w. All life forms have a soul, including plants and animals. Souls can evolve through all the forms of life, but life never ends. Even Gods are imperfect and evolve.
- x. What is the bondage, all things? Even Gods die.
- y. Gods are officers, holder of states of being. Anyone can hold god-like offices.
- z. A soul can fill god-like offices. Men desire to be a god and gods can desire to be humans. Salvation is not the product of reward for good deeds. Having higher office is a reward but that is not salvation.
- aa. Only through a human incarnation can liberation occur. Work does not liberation.
- bb. Desires cause reincarnation. Clinging to me and mine are the cause of bondage.
- cc. Protest against praying to God to get material things. Beseech saints and sages for favors but not God. God is only to be adored.

#### 5. Qualified Non-Dualists (QND)

- a. The effect is not different from the cause.
- b. God and the universe are one and the same.
- c. Something can never come out of nothing. (DB: The caused is a fractal iteration of the cause).
- d. Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (the stuff from which the universe is made) are the same thing.
- e. How then can evil and ignorance exist? QND says that good/bad, evil/righteousness are manifestations of God. We have to see it that way. (God is paradox and has to be accepted as such).
- f. Our job is remanifest God qualities. Each of us has to go through a evolution. We are to become God-like. That is our intention and natural instinct. Even our exploration of evil and ignorance is purposeful. We get to see viscerally the folly of those pursuits and hence learn, evolve and become consciousness.
- g. QND can have a personal God.
- h. Souls become God.

#### 6. Advaitism (AD)

- a. The ultimate highest expression of religion. It cannot be argued.
- b. Too abstruse to be a popular religious expression.
- c. Not a “comfortable” religion.
- d. Like the QND, God and universe are the same, except neither exists. AD sees behind God and Universe to see they are delusions.
- e. We dream the God and dream universe. It is vibration, a shimmering reality. Universe has no solid form and neither does God.
- f. Take away all names and all forms and you will find the universe is one. Zen koans take away the form, as “what is the sound of one hand clapping”.
- g. (DB: All knots are on a string and the string is an illusion).

- h. One soul and not two. No absolute reality to the Atman/Para-Atman relationship.
- i. All our ideas of heaven, hell, and earthly life do not exist because reality is not to be understood or known in any kind of temporal or spatial context.
- j. Advaitist overthrows the substantiality of the universe, even God. Truth is beyond even these lofty notions.
- k. I worship myself, say the Advaitist, because only I exist and I am indescribable.
- l. When we get help, it is because we help ourselves.
- m. God is I, I am God, and this little I never existed nor does a separate God exist. This is why word pictures of reality are useless, why mediation, quiet and stillness are supremely powerful.
- n. Illusion arises from illusion, truth arises from truth. Distinguish what is real from what is unreal. Individual being-ness is an illusion, as is the illusion of God imagined by the individual.
- o. I is plural. It is I who am all things. I am the universe. I am not this universe.
- p. "The scriptures of the world are but little maps wanting to delineate my glory." Vivekananda
- q. See it as one for it is one thing only...beingness and has no attributes.

#### Summation

Began with the personal and an external cosmic God, (Dualism)

Then God becomes immanent in the universe. (Qualified Monism)

Ends with the soul indentified with the cosmic soul so the two merge into one and all duality including time and space, individual self and cosmic self disappear for want of distinctions (Monism).

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## • **My Other Web Sites**

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- [Collaborating for Comprehensivity](#)
- [Synergetics Collaborative](#)
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## • **Links**

- **Bucky Blogs**
  - [Resource Center \(blog\) for Collaboration for Comprehensivism](#)
  - [Talking About Systems with Linda Booth Sweeney](#)
  - [Patricia Ravasio's BuckyIdeas](#)
  - [Broad Porch: Plays, Poetry, Politics and Prophecy \(D. W. Jacobs\)](#)
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  - [Kirby Urner's blog: Bizmo Diaries: On the road with Global Data](#)
  - [Kirby Urner's essays on Medium](#)
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- [dMass, Inc.](#)
- [Gil Friend's blog](#)
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- [Linda Booth Sweeney @Medium](#)
- [Curt McNamara's System Education site](#)
- [Maurice Kaehler @Medium](#)
- [Greg Watson's blog: 12 Degrees of Freedom](#)
- [civic synergy: Deploying Social Trimtabs To Steer Systemic Change](#)
- [Scale Independent Thought: Bonnie DeVarco explores the arcs & edges of visual experience](#)
- [Wholemovement](#)
- [Trevor Blake's Synchronofile](#)
- [BLOG: Dymaxion World: Between Utopia and Oblivion](#)
- [Michael Riversong's blog](#)
- [Joo Hock's blog: "Bucky's "University" \(aka University of Life\)](#)
- [Leif Thor's blog: A Conversation about Structure](#)
- [Tools and Notions: The guide to tools, toys, and ideas for a worthy future.](#)
- **FOSS Blogs**
  - [Managing FOSS for Business Results](#)
  - [PLEIA2'S BLOG](#)
  - [apt-get install debian-wizard](#)
  - [Miriam Ruiz](#)
  - [Leigh Honeywell's Blog](#)
  - [JEDIJF - Bread Geek](#)
  - [ChinnoDog's blog](#)
- **Other Sites**
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  - [Eco-Futures Incubator](#)
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  - [Philadelphia Linux User Group \(PLUG\)](#)
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7.

## 1. About

 Posted on 22 October 2010 by [cjf](#)

# About the Syntropy Blog

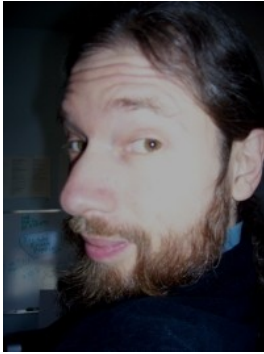
The [second law of thermodynamics](#) discloses that [entropy](#) is always locally increasing. **Syntropy** is [negative entropy](#). Thus, syntropy refers to an energy-consuming process in Universe where structure and order is increased. *Living organisms* and *Earth* itself are two of the principal examples of syntropic systems.

I have been using **syntropy** as part of my on-line identity for a long time. I have been inspired by Buckminster Fuller's use of the word in countradistinction to entropy (Erwin Schrödinger was the first to use the word "syntropy" in this context). For me syntropy inspires the concept that Universe may have local ordering processes that counters the normal effects of thermodynamics to break systems down. My sense of *responsibility* suggests that Humanity ought to be diligently working to aide such processes. Indeed many of us are. I hope to help. In this blog I will attempt (sometimes quite indirectly) to support increasing syntropy in local Universe (mostly for the little SpaceShip



called Earth where I currently live). When those lofty aspirations fall short (and I'm sure they will from time-to-time), my thoughts will simply contribute to the muddle and the babble that normally rages on the Internet 😊

## About CJ Fearnley



CJ Fearnley was an early leader in the adoption and implementation of [Linux](#) and [Free and Open Source Software \(FOSS\)](#) in Philadelphia. In 1993, he recognized the emerging value of the Linux operating system. Through his leadership position in the [Philadelphia Area Computer Society \(PACS\)](#), he began introducing Linux to organizations in the [Greater Philadelphia region](#). At PACS, he organized monthly presentations on Linux and FOSS and wrote 29 columns in the organization's print periodical, The Databus. He then founded and helped build Philadelphia's premiere Linux user group, the [Philadelphia area Linux User Group \(PLUG\)](#), where he continues to facilitate its first Wednesday meetings. After helping to establish a community and culture for Linux and FOSS in Philadelphia, CJ started building his first company, [LinuxForce](#), to be the "go-to" firm for organizations wanting to realize the promise and power of Linux. LinuxForce is a leading technology services provider specializing in the development, implementation, management and support of Linux-based systems, with a particular expertise in [Debian GNU/Linux](#) and [Ubuntu](#). LinuxForce provides remote Linux systems management services to clients including The Franklin Institute Science Museum, and the Aker Philadelphia Shipyard. CJ contributes to a blog on [Managing FOSS \(Free and Open Source Software\) for Business Results](#).

In addition, CJ Fearnley has applied his organizational and leadership talent to building [Buckminster Fuller's](#) legacy. CJ published an essay [Reading Synergetics: Some Tips](#) to help students of Fuller's magnum opus, [Synergetics: Explorations in the Geometry of Thinking](#), wade through that complex, multi-dimensional tome. He started maintaining [The R. Buckminster Fuller FAQ](#) on the Internet in 1994. His work on Buckminster Fuller was featured in an extensive interview published by Dome Magazine in 1999. In 2002 CJ started building the [Synergetics Collaborative \(SNEC\)](#) as an organization to bring together people with an interest in Synergetics' methods and principles in workshops, symposia, seminars, and other meetings. Major events include a symposium on "Synergetics and the Arts" at the Noguchi Museum, symposia on "Morphology" and "Design Science" at Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), and a special event "Revisit Bucky: Exploring Synergetics" held at American University. CJ serves as Executive Director of the Synergetics Collaborative.

CJ is an experienced group conversation organizer, facilitator, and mentor. He has organized more than 130 events exploring diverse topics for the [Greater Philadelphia Thinking Society](#) and more than 50 for [Math Counts](#). He is a co-organizer for both groups. He is also helping to organize [The Philadelphia Eco-District](#).

CJ received his BA in [Mathematical Sciences](#) and [Philosophy](#) from [Binghamton University](#) in 1989 where he was a Regents Scholar and has done graduate work at Drexel University. CJ has continued his education with a lifetime of reading on-line and off and taking more than 80 free on-line courses (mostly in an audit / edutainment mode, but he has earned 13 honor-code certificates of completion

and has studied another 7 courses in depth). CJ was named to the Philadelphia Business Journal's 2006 "40 Under 40" List as one of the region's most accomplished young professionals.

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- Web: <http://www.CJFearnley.com>

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## 2 Responses to "About"

1. [Ravi Limaye](#) on 21 July 2016 at 2:02 am

Dear Sir,

I am a MOOC Researcher and from your excellent blog found you completed several MOOCs.

Can you please answer the following

What is your Motivation for MOOCs ?

What is the Learning form MOOCs done by you?

Is the experience of MOOC learning tough?

What you liked in MOOC ?

What you did not like in MOOC?

Suggestions for improvement in MOOCs

MOCC Reseracher , India

[Reply](#)

• [cjf](#) on 21 July 2016 at 9:11 am



**What is your Motivation for MOOCs?**

I am deeply curious about how the world works, how civilization works,

what scholarship has to say about various subjects. To explore my interests I have so far “completed” 59 free on-line courses from 32 institutions of higher learning. MOOCs are NOT my only interest. I prefer courses where the material is permanently archived so I can share it with my friends. Although I value deadline-driven courses, I feel I can only take one such course at a time and so most of the courses I take are on an audit basis where I skip doing the assignments.

### **What is the Learning form MOOCs done by you?**

I have earned honor code certificates or statements of accomplishment in the following 14 MOOCs:

1. [Statement of Accomplishment from Jennifer Widom](#) for completing the on-line course [Introduction to Databases](#).
2. [Statement of Accomplishment from Scott E. Page](#) for completing the on-line course [Model Thinking](#).
3. [Statement of Accomplishment with Distinction signed by Carol Muller of the University of Pennsylvania](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Listening to World Music](#).
4. [Statement of Accomplishment with Distinction signed by Roger D. Peng of Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Computing for Data Analysis](#).
5. [Statement of Accomplishment signed by Karl T. Ulrich of the University of Pennsylvania](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Design: Creation of Artifacts in Society](#).
6. [Statement of Accomplishment signed by Jeffrey Leek of Johns Hopkins University](#) for completing the on-line course [Data Analysis](#).
7. [Statement of Accomplishment with Distinction signed by Wendell Porter of the University of Florida](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Global Sustainable Energy: Past, Present and Future](#).
8. [Statement of Accomplishment with Distinction signed by Arnold Weinstein of Brown University](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Fiction of Relationship](#).
9. [Statement of Accomplishment signed by Jonathan Tomkin of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign](#) for the [Coursera](#) course on [Introduction to Sustainability](#).
10. [Certificate for successfully completing](#) for the [UTAustinX](#) course [1.01x: Energy 101](#) on the [edX](#) platform.
11. [Honor Code Certificate](#) for the [UTAustinX](#) course [UT.9.01x Effective Thinking Through Mathematics](#) on the [edX](#) platform.
12. [Certificate](#) for the [Santa Fe Institute](#) course [Introduction to Complexity \(Spring, 2014\)](#) with [Melanie Mitchell](#) on the [Complexity Explorer](#) platform.
13. [Statement of Accomplishment](#) for the course [Modern & Contemporary American Poetry](#), [Al Filreis](#) of the [University of Pennsylvania](#) on the [Coursera](#) platform.
14. [Honor Code Certificate](#) for the course [8.MechCx: AP® Physics C: Classical Mechanics](#) on the [edX](#) platform.

I have audited many others.

### **Is the experience of MOOC learning tough?**

Sometimes. Some of the courses were very easy for me. Several of them have been very challenging. Lately I have been taking more challenging courses such as the Modern Poetry and Mechanics courses. I spent something like 40 hours per week on those. Of course, I could have still done well if I had spent less time on them. But if I want to really understand something I want to dig in deeply. I love that that is an option with MOOCs! I audit most courses because I often want to get an overview without investing the time needed for a deeper understanding. It is very important that the auditing option is available in MOOCs.

### **What you liked in MOOC?**

The deadline-driven ones challenge my time management and my learning strategy skills. Although that can be stressful, I value the results. I really like the peer-graded essay format. And I like the at-your-own-pace way of working through the material. It teaches me how my brain works and how it frequently fails to work incisively. It is hard to get such feedback in other ways.

### **What you did not like in MOOC?**

Permanent archiving is important to me and is not yet available. Maybe [archive.org](http://archive.org) could provide such services. Improving the ability to create a local archive of the course would be a stand-in for my current practice of trying to manually archive courses that I take. I want to archive all of my work, all videos, all learning materials, and all discussion threads in which I participate.

Making the videos publically accessible is important to me. I often want to share one or two videos with my friends and I am often unable to do so. I love edX because their videos are permanently archived on YouTube and so I can share them with anybody. That is very important to me. Coursera has disappointed me in this regard and I have been taking fewer of their courses due mainly to this deficiency in their platform.

### **Suggestions for improvement in MOOCs**

See my previous responses.

•  
8. [Syntropy: CJ Fearnley's Blog](#)

9. An "Explorer in Universe" contributing thoughts, seeking feedback, building syntropy

10.