

# GROUND SWELL

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## WHY I WROTE MY BOOK, *AMERICA IS NOT BROKE*

By Scott Baker, New York, NY

(The 356 page hardcover \$29.99 book is available from the Tayen Lane site: <https://tayen-lane.squarespace.com/america-is-not-broke> and on Amazon: <http://amzn.to/1MCxYA2>. It is currently only available in hardcover, but the paperback and ebook should be available in a couple of months.)

Publisher promises never kept...deadlines (theirs) never met...edits done badly or manuscript revisions not accepted...important tables mangled...barely civil exchanges between author and publisher...creeping aging of data while book is awaiting publication...marketing and pricing challenges...design squabbles...virtually non-existent royalty percentages... Why would anyone write a traditionally published book nowadays, especially one ambitious enough to be subtitled: *FOUR MULTI-TRILLION DOLLAR PATHS TO A THRIVING AMERICA*?

*America Is Not Broke!* is on the one hand a book that presents nothing new, since all of the four major solutions that form the core of the book have been tried and proven, at least on a small scale, or are at least accounting issues (the last of the four). But on the other hand it is a gathering and joining of economic policy changes so monumental, so game-changing, that their usual proponents have, and can, claim with some justification, that each of their areas of focus – represented by each of the first four chapters – would improve society radically and sustainably all by itself. *America Is Not Broke!* represents the first time, to my knowledge that all four macro-solutions have appeared in the same book.

I have been an activist-journalist for 6 years now, writing for blogs like the Huffington Post, Daily Kos, Global Economic Intersection, and especially and most critically, for Opednews.com, where my work was first discovered by the publisher Tayen Lane, whose “mission (is) to challenge the status quo by publishing provocative, thought-provoking, beyond-the-mainstream books that engage readers across a range of genres.” When the publisher first contacted me and discussed converting some of my articles on Opednews to an updated and connected anthology dealing with the economy, my first thought was how to get more people to understand the beneficial effects of:

- \* Sovereign Money: Money produced debt-free by the government and not borrowed from a Central Bank.
- \* Georgism: The recapture of privatized site and natural resource value for the common good, commonly epitomized by the philosophy of the Land Value Tax.
- \* Public Banking: Banks funded by local public revenues (e.g. taxes) and serving in the public interest.

### \* Ending Government Financial Asset Hoarding:

Reallocating the trillions in some 200,000 government asset funds to serve the people instead of locking away tax dollars into stock and bond bubbles (e.g. typical pension funds can retain up to 98% of assets, net of annual employee/employer contributions, while paying out only 2% to pensioners. Rainy day funds tightly held by state Treasurers can be large enough to wipe out a state's debt).

I realized before the publisher even contacted me that blog writing, making presentations: <http://newthinking.blogspot.com/>, and having face-to-face meetings with local politicians like I had been doing as president of Common Ground-NYC and as the New York Coordinator for the Public Banking Institute, wasn't going to cut it alone. Other people, with more expertise than I, more experience – some experts in their fields have been working for 40, even 50, years, to enact some of the longer-lived reforms, like Georgism, whose main ideas go back even further than its founder, Henry George ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry\\_George](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_George)) and his 1879 best-selling polemic “*Progress and Poverty*.” Clearly, the old ways weren't working, or at least not working well enough. Occasional victories, like Lincoln's introduction of the debt-free Greenback in 1862-1863, were quickly eclipsed by the elite's taking back of the twin Land and Money power – like the elimination of President Lincoln himself, part of a series of assassinations or attempted assassinations quite probably funded by the banking elites:

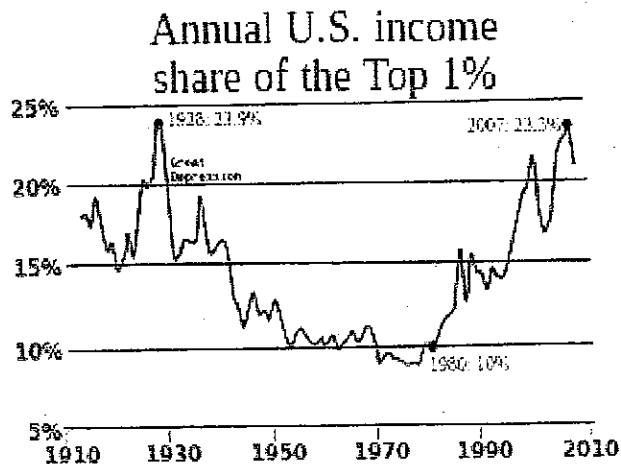
[http://www.heritech.com/ymagchy/mcgeer/conq\\_05.html](http://www.heritech.com/ymagchy/mcgeer/conq_05.html).

Obviously, many books touting “the solution” to our policy-driven economic problems have hit the shelves since “*Progress and Poverty*” and before. What makes mine different, I hope, is that I tried to deliver a series of body-blows to conventional economic thought. A reader can disregard one, or maybe two of the solutions, if either because of a closed mind, or some argument that, try as I might, I failed to consider to her satisfaction...but three...four? That, it seemed to me, requires a real stubbornness, almost a love for the corrupt, destabilizing, and unsustainable status quo. Of course, there *are* such people who think everything is fine; some of them occupy high positions of power.

But the real Occupiers, who gave us the 2-month protest encampment at Zuccotti Park – where I and some members of my group, Common Ground-NYC – handed out flyers by the hundreds, including the flyer “America is Not Broke” which led to the later book – (continued on pg. 15)

## AMERICA IS NOT BROKE! (from page 1)

taught us the enduring lesson that it is not Right vs. Left, but the 99% vs. the 1% that really matters  
([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy\\_Wall\\_Street](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupy_Wall_Street)).



There are nearly as many people offering solutions to our political economy problems as there are people suffering from them. This is mine. I hope you will read it.

Here are some endorsements:

### Recommendations!

Scott Baker is that rare social activist, the holistic thinker who scrutinises all the structural pillars that support the social system. He identifies the points of stress that require urgent remedial action. This volume deepens the debate among the millions of reformers who currently punch below their weight because they isolate themselves in single-issue campaigns. Most significantly, this volume integrates the land-rent and money-creation issues to signpost the policies that really would transform society for the common good.

—Fred Harrison, Research Director of the London-based Land Research Trust, Author, Reporter

*America Is Not Broke! Four Multi-Trillion Dollar Paths To A Thriving America* will take its well deserved place in the literature of an America resurgent, an America in which the vast common wealth of the American people is put to work to take back our stolen economy, politics and future from the parasites in pinstripes."

—Mike Krauss is the founder and chair of the Pennsylvania Project

Scott Baker, a reliable and powerful supporter of the public banking movement, has now taken his writing and activism to the next level in writing *America Is Not Broke!* This book dispels the myths about public banking and our monetary system in general. It is welcome outside-the-box thinking and I heartily endorse it.

—Ellen Brown, Founder, Public Banking Institute, Author of *Web of Debt and The Public Bank Solution*

Scott Baker has written a valuable, important book which offers practical, yet dynamic and untapped solutions that could be major game changers for the US, for struggling states, cities and counties. Better, these solutions serve the 99% and undermine and take away power from big banks and finance companies.

—Rob Kall, Publisher, OpEdNews, Host, The Rob Kall Bottom-Up Radio Show 1360 AM,

Scott is not a fire breathing polemicist, what he does is to supply provable methods to correct the economy that are practical, robust, and persuasive to fair minded people. He demonstrates alternatives to the dysfunctional banking systems that we now have, and ties all of this together with a wealth of documentation and suggestions that would excite any fair minded person to think about the availability of solutions.

—Andrew Mazzone, President, Henry George School of Social Science New York

Our democracy is hanging by a thread. An obscene amount of wealth and power is in the hands of a few multi-billionaires. Will we implode in violence or will we build an economy that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few? The great American political-economist Henry George had this to say many years ago: "When there is correct thought, right action will follow." Scott Baker's book title tells the truth. America is Not Broke! Baker's deep thoughts transcend the political divide. He illuminates several important pathways of right action that are essential for building economic democracy. Let's do it!

—Alanna Hartzok, Democratic Party Candidate for Congress, PA District 9, 2014, Co-director, Earth Rights Institute

*America is Not Broke!* reveals the mess that is our current monetary system, and presents some essential reforms that would allow us to reclaim democratic control over the power to create money.

—Ben Dyson, Founder, Positive Money, U.K.

*America is Not Broke!* promotes land value taxation as a just and viable alternative to our current economic model which taxes labor and encourages rent seeking. Scott Baker has written a convincing and lucid exposé that should be required reading for students of political economy and all those interested in reversing the dangerous trend of wealth concentration in this country and others.

—Alexandra W. Lough, PhD, Director of the Henry George Birthplace, Archive and Historical Research Center

(Scott Baker is the president of the Common Ground-NYC chapter, the NY State Coordinator of Public Banking Institute, OpEdnewsBlogger/Managing Editor, and Huffington Post Blogger.

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