

## Trimming the weeds

The proposal is to let rich people control the economy. Not too big a leap, since they already do. Accepting the proposal, what can be done to ensure that the economy works for everyone, not just the people running it?

This question crosses divides. It doesn't attack anyone or make anyone's blood boil. It invites participation on a problem that would be truly exciting to solve.

The question is also just a little bit boring.

Why is it boring? It *should* be more exciting than arguing your point of view—which is commonly perceived as not boring at all. Are you afraid the question can't be answered?

If so, that's reasonable. But you don't have to work on it alone. Think of it as a proposal. Accept the proposal, then discuss how it can be made to work.



## Secret Entrance

*How to Cross Divides*



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## Proposal

The rich becoming richer is good for everyone.

Opera singers sing—and become better singers. Their audiences enjoy better performances.

Not everyone is an opera singer. Some people have a talent for singing. Other people have a talent for money. Exercising their talent, their talent grows. And their talent creates wealth.

If the economy was run by opera singers, there would be a lot of music. Not much else. Instead, the economy is run by rich people. People who have a talent for it.

The economy is as great as the people running it can make it, and it is, without a doubt, very great indeed. Look at what it produces. Pocket sized computers. Restaurants spilling over with food. International airports. Shoes of every size and description.

Opera singers have big voices. Rich people have big money. Opera singers make powerful music. Rich people make powerful economy.

We shouldn't resent rich people for having so much more than we do any more than we should resent opera singers for having such good voices. Nor should we hinder rich people's ability to build the economy by making them pay higher taxes. Or by over-regulating their businesses.

## You've got to be kidding!

Is this really your opinion? Or are you just playing devil's advocate?

I mean, if this is really your opinion, you're completely delusional. An opera singer singing loudly enough to be heard at the back of a large opera hall is in no way the same as a rich person getting richer by turfing people out of their homes, polluting the atmosphere, paying less than their share of taxes, or fiddling laws to make a profit.

## Point Scored

This argument is valid. But it's also too easy. What does it accomplish? Let's try something else.

## Secret Entrance

There's a proposal on the table. One option is to shred it. Another is to use it.

How can you use something that is so obviously wrong?

You can't. That's what wrong means. You have made up your mind. And you aren't flexible.

To be flexible, think of the proposal as a secret entrance. Cloaked in weeds and branching in many directions, it provides a path to where you want to go.