

If you want original thinking do not look to academia f...

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:08 pm

A commentator named Andrew R on this blog [asked yesterday](#) whether there was academic thought and a literature review that supported [the suggestion I have made](#) over the last couple of days that all wars happen as a result of exploitation of an expediently perceived current economic advantage that an aggressor believes that they enjoy at the time that they launch an attack on their opponent.

A part of the comment he made was:

I'm following this with interest, but conscious that there will have been decades (centuries) of study about the causes of war, including economic causes. Any thoughts I have are starting from scratch, but I don't think I want to take an MA in War studies either. Does anyone know of a relevant literature review?

I responded to this one issue as follows:

Let me be clear, I don't care. One of the pleasures of no longer working as an academic is that I will no longer have to do literature reviews.

Nor will I have to fit my arguments into an existing structure of thinking.

Even more so, I will not have to just dot i's and cross t's.

The whole process of academic publishing that now exists is designed to:

- 1) Crush original thinking
- 2) Make current academics the slaves of some past model of thinking that long ceased to be relevant
- 3) As a result, perpetuate the status quo.

Two things follow:

- * a) Academia is the last place to look for original thinking. Academics are trained to not do that: you cannot progress if you do.
- * b) Academia produces the most extraordinary volume of utterly meaningless so-called research. I have seen recent suggestions that at least fifty per cent of all medical papers are simply wrong: they compare a thesis with a null hypothesis that is so absurd that there is no research contribution from the work undertaken, and so no contribution to learning. I saw the same suggested with regard to accounting research last week as well. I strongly suspect that is also right.

I am doing something quite different here.

I am doing original thinking. These are my ideas.

I am taking the risk that they may be wrong. This is a risk I am permitted to take. No one can deny it to me.

And what I stress is that only by taking the risk of undertaking original thinking, free from the requirement to base it in thinking and frameworks that exist solely to constrain such an activity, can progress be made.

If you want to know why the world is stagnating, this is one of the biggest explanations. The supposed world of thinking not only does not think, but it is also trained not to do so. Of course we cannot progress. I am free of having to try to comply with that constraint now.

Let me summarise this: if you want to change the world, you cannot believe that everything thought about it to date is right. Isn't that pretty obvious?

I might, of course, have added that the fact that this is obvious is well known to those imposing the constraint on academics. They are the older academics who have invested their lives in learning, refining and regurgitating to students ideas that might well be wrong. They have no desire for their comfortable lives to be disrupted in the later parts of their careers. Of course they wish to suppress original thinking, and they have set up a system to guarantee that can almost never happen.