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Jihadism: A Generational and Nihilist Revolt

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

Jihadism as Nihilist Revolt

The destruction of the Islamic State in Syria and Iraq will change nothing about the uninterrupted radicalization of the French youth since the 1990s. Whether these youth were already Muslim or recent converts, this radicalism has exploded their familial environment. Apart from cultural or third-worldist explanations, it is time for French society to grasp this phenomenon in its entirety.

France is at war! Perhaps. But at war with whom or against what? Daesh (ISIS)[1] does not send Syrians to commit attacks in France in order to dissuade the French government from making air strikes. Daesh draws from a reservoir of young radicalized French youth who, whether or not they come from the Middle East, are already dissident and looking for a cause, a label, a master narrative to which they can add the bloody signature of their personal rebellion. The destruction of Daesh will not change anything about this rebellion.

The youth's attraction to Daesh is opportunist: yesterday they were with Al-Qaeda, before that (1995), they formed the substrates of the Algerian GIA or practiced, from Bosnia to Afghanistan by way of Chechnya, their petty nomadism of individual jihad (like the Roubaix Gang).[2] And tomorrow they will fight under another banner, unless death in action, age, or disillusion do not weaken their ranks as was the case with the extreme left in the 1970s.

There are no third, fourth, or umpteenth generations of jihadists. Since 1996, we have been confronted with a very stable phenomenon. The radicalization of two categories of the French youth, namely "second-generation" Muslims and converts who are "homegrown" French. The essential problem for France is thus not the "caliphate" of the Syrian Desert, which will evaporate sooner or later like an old mirage turned nightmare. The problem is the revolt of the youth. And the true question is understanding what these youths represent, whether they are the avant-garde of a war to come or, on the contrary, the noise of history's engine backfiring.

Today two interpretations dominate the scene and structure the televised debates and opinions of journals. Put simply, these are the culturalist and third-worldist explanations. The first puts forward the recurrent and painful war of civilizations: the revolt of the Muslim youth shows the limits of Muslim integration, at least as long as a theological reform has not removed the call to jihad from the Quran. The second constantly evokes postcolonial suffering, the identification of the youth with the Palestinian cause, their rejection of western interventions into the Middle

East, and their exclusion from a racist and islamophobic French society. In short, this is the old refrain: so long as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict is not resolved, revolt will continue.

But these two explanations run into the same problem: if the causes of radicalization were structural, then why do they only affect a small and circumscribed fringe of those who consider themselves Muslims in France—some thousands out of millions? After all, these young radicals have been identified! All of the terrorists who have taken to action have earned their famous "S" designation.[3] I do not address here the question of prevention. I simply note that this information is accessible. Let's then examine who they are and try to draw some conclusions.

Islamization of Radicalism

Nearly all of the French jihadists fall into two very precise categories: they are either of the "second generation," born or immigrated to France as infants, or converts (a group whose number increases over time, but who at the end of the 1990s already constituted 25% of radicals). This means that, among radicals, there are hardly any from a "first generation" (even of recent immigrés), but above all none of a "third generation." Yet, this last category exists and is growing: Moroccans who immigrated in the 1970s are grandparents, and one does not find their grandchildren among the terrorists.

And why would converts who have never suffered from racism want to brusquely avenge humiliation suffered by Muslims? Especially because many converts come from the French countryside, such as Maxime Hauchard, and have few reasons to identify with a Muslim community that only virtually exists for them. In short, it is not the "revolt of Islam" or that of "Muslims," but a precise problem concerning two categories of the youth, mostly those coming from immigrant backgrounds, but also "homegrown" French. It is not a matter of the radicalization of Islam, but of the Islamification of radicalism.

What do the "second generation" and the converts hold in common? There is first of all a generational revolt: both rebel against their parents, or more precisely with what their parents represent in terms of culture and religion. The "second generation" never adheres to the Islam of their parents, they never represent a tradition that revolts against westernization. They are westernized, they speak better French than their parents. All have imbibed the "youth" culture of their generation, they have drunk alcohol, smoked some shit, hit on girls at the night club. A large part among them has spent time in prison. And then one fine morning, they have (re)converted, choosing Salafist Islam, which is to say an Islam that rejects the concept of culture, an Islam that allows them to completely refashion themselves. For they want nothing to do with either the culture of their parents or "western" culture, which have become symbols of their self-hatred.

The key to the revolt is from the beginning the absence of the transmission of a culturally-integrated religion. It is a problem that concerns neither the "first generation," bearers of the cultural Islam of their countries of origin, but which has not managed to be passed on, nor the "third generation," which speaks French with their parents and thanks to their parents have a

familiarity with the modes of Muslim expression within French society: even if this may be conflictual, it is "speakable." If one finds far fewer Turks than North Africans in radical movements, it is without a doubt because, for the Turks, the transition had been assured, because the Turkish state—which had seen its society modernize—took control of the transmission by sending primary school teachers and imams to France (who pose other problems, but allow one to avoid adhesion to Salafism and violence).

As far as they are concerned, the youth converts by definition adhere to the "pure" religion. Cultural compromise does not interest them. They have nothing to do with previous generations who converted to Sufism. They find here the second generation in the adhesion to an "Islam of rupture"—generational, cultural, and finally political rupture. In short, there is nothing to be gained from offering them a "moderate Islam." It is by definition the radicalism that attracts them. Salafism is not only a question of preaching financed by Saudi Arabia, it is the product that suits troubled youths.

As a result, and this is the biggest difference with the case of young Palestinians who commit to the diverse forms of intifada. The Muslim parents of French radicals do not understand the revolt of their progeny. More and more, as with the parents of converts, the parents try to prevent the radicalization of their children. They call the police, they go to Turkey to try to put their children back on track, they fear, with good reason, that the older radicals lead the younger ones astray. In short, far from being the symbol of a radicalization of the Muslim populations, the jihadists explode the generational divide, or, put more simply, the family.

By breaking with their family, the jihadists are also at the margins of Muslim communities: on the contrary, they almost never come from a pious past of religious practice. Journalists' articles are shockingly similar. After each attack, one pokes around those close to the murderer, and everywhere it's "a sense of surprise": "We don't understand, they were a kind boy (or the variant: 'A common petty criminal'), he did not practice religion, he drank, he smoked joints, he hung out with girls… Oh, yeah, it is true, for a couple of months now, he went through a bizarre change, he let his beard grow out and began to absorb religion." For the feminine version, see the plethora of articles concerning Hasna Aït Boulahcen, "Miss Party Girl Jihad." It is useless here to evoke taqiyya or dissimulation,[4] because once *born again*, these youths do not hide and they display their newfound conviction on Facebook. They thus exhibit their new all-powerful self, their will to get revenge on a pent-up frustration, their pleasure from their new omnipotence that provides them with their will to kill and their fascination with their own death. The violence to which they adhere is a modern violence. They kill in the same manner as the mass killers in America or Anders Breivik in Norway, coldly and tranquilly. Nihilism and pride are here profoundly connected.

Isolation

The extremist's individualism is reflected in their isolation with regard to Muslim communities. Few among them frequent mosques. Their eventual imams are often self-proclaimed. Their radicalization forms around a fantasy world of heroes, violence, and death, not sharia law or

utopia. In Syria, they only make war: none of them integrate or hold an interest in civil society. And if they claim sexual slaves or recruit young women on the internet to become the wives of future martyrs, it is because they have no place in the Muslim societies that they claim to defend. They are more nihilist than utopian.

If some of them have come through the Tablighi Jamaat (society for the spread of Mulism fundamentalism), none have frequented the Muslim Brotherhood (the Union of Islamic Organizations in France), none have participated in a political movement, starting with the pro-Palestinian movements. None has taken part in "communitarian" practices: providing meals at the end of Ramadan, preaching in the mosques or going door-to-door in the streets. None has undertaken serious religious studies. None are interested in theology, nor even in the nature of jihad or the Islamic State. They radicalize around a small group of "friends" who meet in a particular place (neighborhood, prison, sports club); they recreate a "family," a fraternity. There is an important dynamic that no one has yet studied: the fraternity is often biological. Frequently one finds a pair of "little brothers" who radicalize together (the Kouachi brothers and Abdeslam, Abdelhamid Abaaoud who "kidnapped" his little brother, the Clain brothers who converted together, without speaking of the Tsarnaev brothers, authors of the April 2013 attack in Boston). It is as if radicalizing siblings (sisters included) was a means of underlining the generational dimension and the break with the parents. The cell tries hard to create affective bonds between its members: often one marries the sister of his brother in arms. Jihadist cells do not resemble those of marxist or nationalist-inspired radical movements (the Algerian FLN, IRA, or ETA). Founded on personal bonds, they are more impermeable to infiltration.

The terrorists are thus not the expression of a radicalization of the Muslim population, but reflect a generational revolt that affects a precise category of the youth.

Why Islam? For the second generation, it is clear: they refashion for themselves an identity that their parents have, in their eyes, mishandled. They are "more Muslim than the Muslims" and in particular, more so than their parents. The energy they expend to (in vain) reconvert their parents is telling but shows just how far off in out space they are (all of the parents have a story of one of these interactions). As for the converts, they choose Islam because it is the only thing on the radical revolt market (to join the extreme left, they would have to read, which does not suit these youths). Joining Daesh grants the certainty of terrorizing.

Notes:

[1] Translator's Note: Daesh is the Arabic rendering of the acronym for the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, often referred to in English as ISIL or ISIS. Many French speakers prefer to use this name to refer to the group, in part because the group itself hates the term. All notes are from the Translator.

[2] Translator's Note: The Algerian GIA is the *Groupe islamique armé*, active in the 1990s

during the Algerian Civil War. The Roubaix Gang was a short-lived criminal group with ties to al-Qaeda, active in France in 1996.

[3] Translator's Note: The classification used by the French state to identify persons over the age of fourteen who might pose a threat to the "safety of the French state."

[4] Translator's Note: The principle, most notably in Shi'a Islam, where one is allowed to hide or denounce their religious devotion for fear of persecution.

This article first appeared in Le Monde, on 24 November 2015 and was translated from the French by Timothy Scott Johnson.

Trumpism is Conservatism: The New Conservative Mainstream

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

With Jeb's attitude, we will never be great again, that I can tell you. We will never be great again.
Donald Trump
December 15, 2015

You must always be doing things and obviously succeeding. The hard part is to keep people always at the window because of the spectacle you put on for them. And you must do this for years.
Benito Mussolini

This fall, in a *New York Times* opinion piece "Have Evangelicals Who Support Trump Lost Their Values?" Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Convention, urged Evangelicals to abandon Republican Presidential candidate Donald J. Trump. Moore's essay was in response to public opinion polls throughout the summer indicating Trump's support among conservative voters as he continues to lead the crowded Republican field.

Despite Trump's success, conservative and liberal commentators believe his campaign will fizzle out once Republican voters pierce through the celebrity and bravado of the candidate and realize Trump, in actuality, does not hold conservative positions on a number of key issues. Trump's popularity among conservative voters has renewed the argument heard in every presidential election about whether the Republican frontrunner, in this case and for the time being, Donald Trump is a true conservative.

The recent arguments of both conservative and liberal commentators, is that Donald Trump is not a conservative. They point to his life-style: a native New Yorker, thrice-married, peddler of the Miss America Pageant and gambling casinos, and his lack of the humility expected of a God-fearing Christian. Add to this his apparent apostasy on conservative positions such as abortion, same sex marriage, his occasionally candid praise of the Clintons, and his endorsement, a position from which he has since retreated, of a single-payer healthcare system.

Despite these disloyalties to conservative positions, conservatives need not worry. Trump is a conservative. Trump's success suggests that we rethink what conservatism is in America and how this current variant came to be so popular as to redefine the ideology of conservatism. In the 20th century, the three pillars of American conservatism were traditionalism, market

fundamentalism, and militaristic anti-communism abroad. Over the course of the 20th century this "conservative fusion", in particular market fundamentalism and traditionalism existed uneasily, in significant tension under the umbrella of conservatism. The writings of conservatism's 20th century intellectuals such as Russell Kirk, Frank Meyer, or George F. Will attest to that. Since the fall of communism in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union and, subsequently, the terrorist attacks of September 11, anti-communism has been replaced by anti-Islamism and racist immigration policy as the defining feature of conservatives' foreign policy outlook. Additionally, there seems to have been a second evolution in the conservative outlook, one which Trump embodies: the marginalization of 20th century conservative traditionalism replaced by a white ethnic nationalism. Thus making –Trumpism — market fundamentalism, white ethnic nationalism, militaristic anti-Islamism, and appeals to bloodlust and vengeance in foreign policy as the conservative's new normal.

Trump's popularity among conservative voters suggests that he has captured a sentiment that is redefining of what it is to be a conservative. At present, conservatism, as the plurality of conservative voters perceive it, has de-emphasized traditionalism and instead re-defined it as market fundamentalism combined with white resentment creating, as Patrick Buchanan approvingly states, "the rebirth of nationalism." Trump, better than his competition, has capitalized on a conservative touchstone – fear, disdain for established social, political and international norms, and the proposition that leadership through strength is the solution to the malaise created by 'soft' liberalism and political correctness. He is tapping into a sentiment that is expressed as market idolatry, hatred of the political, and an existential fear that something is very wrong with America.

Donald Trump declared his candidacy for the Republican nomination for president of the United States in June, 2015. Since then, his campaign has easily garnered more media attention than any other contender for the White House. Given the media's saturation of and lack of critical engagement with the Trump campaign and the record-breaking television viewership of the Republican debates, presumably, conservative voters have had adequate time to get to know the candidate and his policy positions. Conservative voters' support for Trump, and the anemic support garnered by traditional social conservative candidates indicate that their emphasis on traditionalist social conservatism, the belief that Christianity is at the root of the American project, expressed in issues such as teaching creationism in public school science classes, opposition to abortion and same-sex marriage, and an otherwise greater role for Christianity in public life are issues that may no longer be as important to what it means to be a conservative as they once were. To highlight the point, Ben Carson and Ted Cruz, both social conservatives, have spiked in the polls when they refocused their message to bigoted, xenophobic, violent, anti-Muslim rhetoric. Either the conservative voter has abandoned what it means to be a conservative or conservatism, as the conservative voter now sees it, means something different than what we have known it to be in the second half of the 20th century. In fact, the pillars of American conservatism on the domestic front today are not Judeo-Christian traditionalism and market fundamentalism, but market fundamentalism and white ethnic nationalism manifest as white resentment, racism, and militaristic anti-Islam.

Unlike other conservatives seeking the presidential nomination, Trump is without commitment or loyalty to traditionalism. In fact, he ignores the traditionalist pillar of conservatism. Social conservative populists and establishment Republican candidates are market fundamentalists as well as traditionalists pointing to a doomsday on the horizon, whether it be an external enemy or an internal threat that undermines the fabric of the US (think Barry Goldwater, George Wallace, Patrick Buchanan). At least in rhetoric, establishment Republican candidates and social conservative populist appeals drawing on nostalgia for a small-town, middle American Evangelical traditionalism does not resonate with conservative voters today.

Trump: The Orthodox Conservative

Trump is a conservative because he is a market fundamentalist. Market fundamentalism is the belief in a political economy where the market and its values take priority over all others and market results are defined as the "public good." The policies of market fundamentalism include low taxes (especially on the wealthy, who are defined as "job creators"), deregulation, erosion of the welfare state, and fierce anti-unionism. While Trump has yet to release detailed plans on economic issues, his recently released plan on taxation and tax reform are crucial to understanding his views on political economy.

On economic issues, Trump is fully in the fold of conservative orthodoxy. His proposal for tax reform is central to the conservative, market fundamentalist vision. Trump's tax plan is informed by the idea that the most effective way to deregulate the economy and eliminate the welfare state is to starve the federal government of revenue. Trump's tax reform proposal decreases the number of tax brackets from seven to four. The tax rates in the respective tax brackets would be 0-10-15-20% (Currently the seven tax brackets are 10-15-25-28-33-35-39.6%). The top marginal tax rate of twenty percent would be on incomes over $225,001 for heads of households. In addition, Trump would reduce the capital gains and dividends tax to 20 percent, eliminate the estate tax all together, and drastically reduce the corporate income tax to 15%. On the revenue generating side Trump proposes to eliminate tax loopholes, many tax deductions (but not the widely used, popular, and expensive mortgage interest deduction), and offer a one-time tax on foreign profits of U.S. companies held abroad (the aim of which is to encourage companies to return to the U.S.). Despite these revenue proposals, the slashing of individual income tax rates and corporate taxes would be catastrophic for government revenues. The revenue generating side of his proposals would come nowhere near the revenue shortfall that his tax reforms would generate. The federal government would be starved for revenue and forced to eviscerate the welfare state. The end result would be even greater economic inequality than exists today. Indeed Grover Norquist of Americans for Tax Reform, who famously said that he wanted to shrink the federal government to the size of where he could "drown it in a bathtub," gave Trump's tax plan a "ringing endorsement," according to the *New York Times*. In Norquist's words, "as a centerpiece of a presidential campaign, it is pretty cool."

Combine Trump's tax proposals with his other plans to ratchet up the military (and presumably military spending) evidenced by statements like, "I would bring it (military levels) back to

where it was at the height because we're in so much trouble"; and his proposal to militarize the border with Mexico, despite his far-fetched statement that Mexico will pay for the construction of the border wall, there would be very little funds for healthcare, education, income security, infrastructure, housing, scientific research, consumer safety, environmental protection, labor protection, and civil rights enforcement, etc. In Donald Trump's America, as his tax proposals and his other domestic priorities indicate, the welfare state would inevitably wither resulting in the unencumbered rule of the market. The guarantors of economic inequality and wealth need not worry. As Trump's tax proposals clearly demonstrate, despite his populist rhetoric about hedge-fund managers, was indeed merely that, rhetorical flourish. As if that was not obvious enough, within hours of releasing his tax proposal, Trump declared, "I am not a populist."

Despite Trump's market fundamentalism there is something in Trump's economic vision that should make establishment Republicans nervous. He is not a free-trade enthusiast. There are two varieties of market fundamentalism today in American conservatism: "free trade" market fundamentalism and a "nationalist" market fundamentalism. Despite persistent critique from within the conservative movement, free trade has been conservatives' economic orthodoxy for the last few decades. It seeks to eliminate barriers to trade by sharply reducing government's regulatory authority, eliminating existing tariffs and capital controls, privatize government services, eliminate subsidies (especially those of foreign governments), and support strong protections for intellectual property rights. It is the free trade market fundamentalist vision that brought about the World Trade Organization, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Central American Free Trade Agreement and the force behind the yet to be approved Trans-Pacific Partnership supported by Congressional Republicans and President Obama. Free trade conservatism has become so mainstream in today's political discourse that it's the central tenant of the Democratic Party and its brain trust, the Democratic Leadership Council.

On the conservative side, critics of free trade have been those who believe in a nationalist market fundamentalism. This vision is not new. In the latter half of the 20th century it has been at the margins of the conservative movement. Patrick Buchanan has been its most recognizable proponent, and now it seems to be embraced by Donald Trump. The nationalist market fundamentalist vision is protectionist. It argues that through free trade the U.S. has eroded its manufacturing base, has had jobs stolen by foreign competitors and by immigrants, and as a result given away its sovereignty. This vision is critical of transnational corporations (who are without loyalty to country) and of the financial sector. In addition to the priorities of market fundamentalism discussed above, nationalist market fundamentalism seeks to restore manufacturing to the U.S. through protectionism, withdrawal from free trade agreements, and by drastically curtailing legal immigration and expelling undocumented immigrants. It is populist in the sense that it is critical of the financial wealth generated through free trade agreements, yet at the same time it is xenophobic and racist as it scapegoats racial minorities and non-white immigrants. It stokes racial as well as nativist resentment among poor, working, and middle-class whites whose economic position has eroded over the past forty years.

Trump: Conservative Racial Politics in the Post Industrial Era

In this economic context, poor, working class, and middle class whites, to whom this narrative appeals "see" an African-American elected and re-elected to the Presidency, domestic companies hiring Latino immigrants, racial conflict between blacks and police (whites), and a foreign policy that appears to appease other nations and they think that they are losing out. The declining economic condition of working class whites is real and as deeply troubling as are the dire economic conditions of millions of blacks and Latinos. Working class whites see the problem and the solution as a zero-sum game with racial overtones at the core. Then candidate Barack Obama understood the dynamic stating in his 2008 "A More Perfect Union" speech,

Most working and middle-class white Americans don't feel that they have been particularly privileged by their race. Their experience is the immigrant experience—as far as they're concerned, no one handed them anything. They built it from scratch. They've worked hard all their lives, many times only to see their jobs shipped overseas or their pensions dumped after a lifetime of labor. They are anxious about their futures, and they feel their dreams slipping away. And in an era of stagnant wages and global competition, opportunity comes to be seen as a zero-sum game, in which your dreams come at my expense. So when they are told to bus their children to a school across town; when they hear an African-American is getting an advantage in landing a good job or a spot in a good college because of an injustice that they themselves never committed; when they're told that their fears about crime in urban neighborhoods are somehow prejudiced, resentment builds over time.

Donald Trump draws on these resentments among whites, as did Patrick Buchanan in his presidential runs in the 1980s and 1990s. Framing whites' growing economic insecurity as the product of race, immigration, and economic internationalism breeds racial resentment and the politics of Trump promise no specifics beyond the restoration of "a great America." Meanwhile, it obscures an understanding of the real culprit of economic hardship for whites, blacks, and Hispanics, namely, market fundamentalism. And, more importantly, alternatives to it that require a cross-racial class coalition.

The trend toward economic crisis for the vast majority of Americans, both white and those of color, has been nearly fifty years in the making. It is inherent in the capitalist system of competition, the product of corporations drive toward increasing market share and rate of profit, and corporate friendly government policy. The corporate quest for increased profit rates in the face of greater competition led corporations to decimate labor by assaulting unions, driving down wages and benefits, outsourcing, replacing full-time workers with temps and part-time workers, and employing technology to increase productivity while reducing the workforce. The changing conditions of employment, or what David Weil calls "the fissured workplace," has been devastating for American workers whether they be rural whites working in agriculture, blue collar and white collar jobs, or nonwhites working in urban areas across the country. All workers are working longer, experiencing wage declines, placed under surveillance, monitored, and controlled, and in the process producing more for the owners of capital than ever before. Since the Great Recession, corporate profits are at a record levels, as is the disparity between CEO and workers' pay, and wealth inequality is at levels unseen since 1929. Typical of market fundamentalist ideology, Trump ignores the record corporate

profits and levels of income/wealth inequality and the anti-tax, pro-corporate policies that produced them. Ironically, Trump turns the argument on its head and reveals his class loyalties when he declares his opposition to an increase in the minimum wage stating, “wages are too high, we’re not going to be able to compete against the world.”

Trump is the linguistic and logical end result of Tea Party’s anti-establishment politics, right wing race baiting, militarism, xenophobia and the great promise to “take back America” from whomever has stolen it. One of Trump’s most often repeated phrases succinctly summarizes this when he proclaims over and again “We don’t have a country.” Since the 1960s when overt racism was made illegal by law and by custom the racial underpinnings of conservatives’ views and public policies were justified as a commitment to traditionalism. Donald Trump is without the social traditionalist, Judeo-Christian heritage inspired veneer. His incessant demands to see President Obama’s birth certificate; his statement that Obama (perceived to be a Muslim) is waging a war against Christians; his intent to eliminate birth-right citizenship as enshrined in the 14th Amendment; his comment about illegal immigrants (the vast majority of who are not white) being “killers and rapists” (and now terrorists); his proposal to surveil mosques across the country and create a database of Muslims in the U.S; his comment suggesting that undocumented immigrants are well-treated as compared to war veterans; and the framing of foreign policy through the race and religion are blatantly racist. It is not new. In fact it has been part of the conservative narrative for decades, used by conservative luminaries such as George Wallace, famous for his race-baiting oratory (“I draw the line in the dust and toss the gauntlet before the feet of tyranny, and I say segregation now, segregation tomorrow, segregation forever..”); Ronald Reagan in reference to welfare recipients. Such rhetoric, gone unchecked by the media, has consequences. It has already stoked violence as indicative of the vicious beating of a Latino man by two whites in Boston, one of who said, “Donald Trump was right, all these illegals need to be deported.” Additionally, video footage at Trump rallies captures people of color being beaten and violently ejected as Trump himself incites the crowd.

The fact that conservatism has always stoked and capitalized on white resentment that manifests itself as racism does not mean that all, or the majority of Trump’s supporters are instinctual, reflexive racist who want to restore a pre-civil rights movement future. There is no doubt, however, that a portion of Trump’s following are bigots, white supremacists, and racists. The rest, support him not because they are racists themselves, but because they believe that the political and economic system and the establishment political parties have failed to address their deteriorating economic condition. Public policy over the last few decades has failed to address, and in many cases exacerbated the upward transfer of wealth, the power of capital over labor, and the resultant economic crisis afflicting the vast majority of Americans. For them, however, this political economy is framed and understood in cultural terms as the belief that America is not what it once was or what it originally stood for. The existential fear that we’re no longer an American nation.

The critique of the political and economic status quo that has been legitimated by academia, the media, the courts, and the political system has been grounded primarily in identity politics. This is not to say that these criticisms are without merit. In many cases they are. But because

the identity politics-centered critique of existing society seems to be the only legitimate one conservatives have packaged for the white electorate as is evident by their challenges in the courts against affirmative action, the Voting Rights Act, the "one person, one vote" doctrine, and immigration among other issues. Absent alternative narratives, in particular class-based narratives that confront market fundamentalism head-on, identity is left as the primary organizing affiliation, making the politics of Trump, i.e. market fundamentalism and racism an appealing alternative to the status quo. Post industrialism meets conservative politics in the new century.

Trump: Conservatism Beyond the Political

The dominant economic narrative, embraced by both Republicans and to a lesser but still significant degree by Democrats, elevates market values and is premised on the idea that the market alone ought to drive economic development and that the government, at most, ought to provide a minimal social safety net. The only viable countervailing force to the market, with its inherent instability, economic inequality and skewed power relations, is government with its myriad of fiscal and monetary options. When public solutions are de-legitimated, and supplanted by market solutions pitting people in competition with one another in a profit hungry race to the bottom, then racial, ethnic, religious, and sectional differences become the organizing narrative of one's position and relations toward others. This is the result when public political discourse is without a class-based understanding of economic and political life and, related, a loss of faith and de-legitimation of public solutions to social and economic problems. Crucially, throughout the 20th century and into the 21st this has been the conservatives' battle cry; the unrestricted free market is great and class as a social category, which implies unequal power relations, does not exist, yet race is what perpetuates economic hardship among white Americans. How then to explain the insecure and eroding economic condition of the white poor, working and middle classes? Market fundamentalists elevate the significance of the cultural, religious, ethnic and race based distinctions that have always been a part of the American landscape and turn these issues into red hot touchstones (from Wallace to G.W. Bush "line in the sand") currently under attack by some existential source, be it blacks, Latino immigrants, or Muslims. The triumph of the conservative movement's economic vision has done what it set out to do: to remake the American political discourse. In the process the movement accomplished something else that may be the most enduring aspect of Trump's ascendance. Perhaps as an unintended consequence—it remade what it meant to be a social conservative, jettisoning the core social values of the movement and produced a Donald Trump conservative. Many argued that the social conservatism of the movement was doomed to alienate voters over time as it was simply out of step with a socially evolving populace. Trump, who pays no more than lip-service to traditional conservative values, and instead fully embraces the triumph of market values, consumerism, the power of wealth, market fundamentalism and white identity politics, provides a candidate that personifies conservatism's evolution. Trump, if ultimately unable to win his party's nomination, no less than the presidency has already succeeded in moving the Republican Party towards a nativist, xenophobic, pro-business, anti-government populism with overtly bigoted and racial overtones. While establishment Republicans have criticized some of Trump's most outlandish statements

regarding refugees fleeing the conflicts in the Middle East, it is indicative of how mainstream bigotry and xenophobia is in the Republican Party was when the "establishment Republican" Jeb Bush proffered to institute a religious test to determine which refugees he would admit into the U.S. which presumes that all Muslims are terrorists.

Trump-conservatism is not an aberration nor is it likely to fade away even if Trump himself does. His anti-establishment market solution demagoguery mixed with a disregard towards political norms and the process of governing is the latest answer to middle American resentment. By continuously rejecting the norms of politics, as the ebb and flow of competing ideas balanced against the rule of law, the balance and interplay of executive, legislative and state power is a sign of the potential for the potentially despotic / unilateralist / fascistic within the American political project. As Trump becomes more compelling one must start to consider the reality of his vision, however vague and extraordinarily unquestioned he remains as a political candidate. Would the 14th Amendment become meaningless; long standing foreign policy protocols disregarded; the power of the veto elevated to new heights; an executive with no understanding or tolerance for the legislative process? Trump continues to lead in the polls, despite or more accurately, as his racist policies have come into focus. We might ask of the conservative movement, what hath ye wrought? Like a magician or a dark knight, the conservative movement, to borrow a phrase from Karl Marx, has become "like the sorcerer, who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells." If Trump endures, or even if his apolitical rants, clownish and hostile persona, and racist vision remains compelling to enough Americans, what does this mean for political discourse in the near future? Here we might consider the poet Donne's famous line, "any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee." In the end, Trump's New York roots have served him well. Madison Avenue marketing meets George Wallace bigotry for the new generation. Extolling the virtues of market fundamentalist, fanning the flames of racial tensions and pointing to enemies abroad who seek to ruin "our once great nation", Trump has emerged as Conservatism's knight in shining armor.

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Very inconvenient truths: sex buyers, sexual coercion, and prostitution-harm-denial

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***Globalisation has further tilted the imbalance of power between the male punter with his wallet and the woman who rents her vagina for a fee. In France, 85 per cent of prostitutes are immigrants, many without papers, vulnerable to exploitation. In Germany, with its legal super-brothels, it is about two thirds. If demand is not tackled, more will come. Is that something any Western nation should be proud of: an underclass of poor women from Thai villages and Ukrainian towns, imported to service First World penises?* – Janice Turner, 2014. [1]**

Some pimps, some sex buyers and some governments have made the decision that it is reasonable to expect certain women to tolerate sexual exploitation and sexual assault in order to survive. Those women most often are poor and most often are ethnically or racially marginalised. The men who buy them or rape them have greater social power and more resources than the women. For example, a Canadian prostitution tourist commented about women in Thai prostitution, "These girls gotta eat, don't they? I'm putting bread on their plate. I'm making a contribution. They'd starve to death unless they whored." [2]

This self-congratulatory Darwinism avoids the question: do women have the right to live without the sexual harassment or sexual exploitation of prostitution – or is that right reserved only for those who have sex, race or class privilege? "You get what you pay for without the 'no,'" a sex buyer explained.[3] Non-prostituting women have the right to say "no." We have legal protection from sexual harassment and sexual exploitation. But tolerating sexual abuse is the job description for prostitution.

One of the big lies is that most prostitution is voluntary. If there's no evidence of force, then her experience is dismissed as "voluntary" or "consenting." A sex buyer said, "If I don't see a chain on her leg, I assume she's made the choice to be there." But most prostitution today is what German abolitionists have named poverty prostitution. That means she's hungry, she can't find a job, and she doesn't have alternatives. The john's payment does not erase what we know about sexual violence, domestic violence and rape. Whether or not it is legal, prostitution is extremely harmful for women. Women in prostitution have the highest rates of rape, physical assault, and homicide of any women ever studied. In a Dutch study, 60% of women in legal prostitution were physically assaulted, 70% were threatened with physical assault, 40% experienced sexual violence and 40% had been coerced into *legal* prostitution. [4]

In the past decade, after interviewing hundreds of sex buyers in 5 countries (USA, UK, India, Cambodia, and Scotland), we're looking more closely at behaviors and attitudes that fuel the misogyny of prostitution and we have started to understand some of their motivations. Normative sex buyer behavior includes a refusal to see one's own participation in harmful activities such as dehumanizing a woman, humiliating her, verbally and physically sexually harassing her, and paying her money to coerce her to perform sex acts that she otherwise would not.

Objectification and commodification are at the root of the violence in prostitution.

Sex buyers don't acknowledge the humanity of the women they use for sex. Once a person is turned into an object, exploitation and abuse seem almost reasonable.[pullquote]Sex buyers don't acknowledge the humanity of the women they use for sex. Once a person is turned into an object, exploitation and abuse seem almost reasonable.[/pullquote] In interviews with sex buyers in different cultures, some chilling examples of commodification were provided. Prostitution was understood as "renting an organ for ten minutes."[5] Another US sex buyer stated that, "Being with a prostitute is like having a cup of coffee, when you're done, you throw it out."[6] Sex buyers commodify and select women on the basis of race/ethnic stereotypes via ethno-sexualization. [7] "I had a mental check list in terms of race," said a London sex buyer, "I have tried them all over the last five years but they turned out to be the same."[8] In Cambodia, prostitution was understood this way: "We men are the buyer, sex workers are goods, and the brothel owner is a vendor." [9] A woman who had prostituted in Vancouver for 19 years explained prostitution the same way that sex buyers did, "They own you for that half hour or that twenty minutes or that hour. They are buying you. They have no attachments, you're not a person, you're a thing to be used." [10]

Sex buyers' lack of empathy

Using his own special logic, the sex buyer calculates that in addition to buying sexual access, money also buys him the right to avoid thinking about the impact of prostitution on the woman he uses for sex. [11] His fantasy is the hassle-free girlfriend who makes no demands on him but is willing to satisfy his sexual needs. "It's like renting a girlfriend or wife. You get to choose like a catalogue," explained a UK sex buyer. [12] Sex buyers seek the appearance of a relationship. A number of men explained their desire to create an illusion for other men that they had acquired an attractive woman without payment. "I want my prostitute not to behave like one, said a London sex buyer, "I want them to role play to be a pretend girlfriend. To a third person it looks like we're in love." [13] Some men who buy sex want to playact the kind of relationship that they are unable or unwilling to have with non-prostituting women. He may pretend emotional intimacy but the relationship with a woman in prostitution always stops short of emotional mutuality. If they construct an imaginary pleasant emotional relationship with the woman they buy for sex, then they can then retain their opinion of themselves as nice guys. However these men demand extensive and exhausting lies from prostituted women. A survivor wrote to the 'nice' sex buyer,

> *The truth, that you're so desperate to flee from, is that you are just like a gentle rapist. Your attitude and demeanour does not mitigate what you do. The damage you're causing is incalculable, but you tell yourself you're doing no harm here, and you use the smiles of the women you buy as some kind of currency; they allow you to buy your own bullshit…I didn't want you close to me, never mind inside me. Your arms around me made me want to puke more than your penis ever did…Every moment with you was a lie, and I hated every second of it. Rachel Moran, 2014. [14]*

Like other sexually aggressive men, sex buyers lack empathy for women in prostitution. In Scotland, researchers found that the more often men bought sex, the less empathy they had for prostituted women. "I don't want to know about her," said a john, "I don't want her to cry or this and that because that spoils the idea for me." [15] Men create a sexually arousing version of what a prostitute thinks and feels that has little basis in reality. [16] Against all common sense, most of the johns we interviewed believed that prostituting women were sexually satisfied by the johns' sexual performances. Research with the women, on the other hand, shows that women are not sexually aroused by prostitution, and over time, prostitution damages the women's sexuality. [17]

One of the few differences between domestic violence and prostitution is that in prostitution, perpetrators profit from sexual exploitation. Because of the money, prostitution is much more organized than one man's individual battering of one woman. Beckie Masaki who was director of the Asian Women's Shelter in San Francisco, spoke about the shock waves that went through the agency when they began to accept women who had been trafficked into prostitution. Previously, they had worked individually with battered women. Now, they were taking in a dozen women at a time. The Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean organized crime groups were not happy with the loss of income. This necessitated increased security precautions for the Shelter.

Sex buyers and sexual coercion

Men's favorable opinion of prostitution is one of a cluster of attitudes and opinions that encourage and justify violence against women. [18] Attitudes of entitlement to sexual access and sexual aggression, and attitudes of superiority over women are connected to men's violence against women. Research shows that sex buyers – like other sexually aggressive men – tend to prefer impersonal sex, fear rejection by women, have a hostile masculine self-identification, and are more likely than non-sex buyers to rape if they could get away with it. [19] In Chile, Croatia, India, Mexico and Rwanda, sex buyers were more likely than other men to rape.[20] Men who used women in prostitution were significantly more likely to have raped a woman than men who did not buy sex. [21] In Scotland we found that the more often a john used women in prostitution, the more likely he was to have committed sexually coercive acts against non-prostituting women. [22]

Denial of harms of prostitution

Strip clubs never have mirrors positioned where sex buyers can see themselves, a pimp who managed strip clubs for many years explained. [23] What do they not want to see? Do they want to look away from their predatory maneuvering with the women? Do they not want to see their own foolish suckerhood? Do they want to close their eyes to the lie that the women are attracted to sex buyers? Do they not want to know that while they see themselves as players, men who choose not to buy sex see them as losers? The truth about prostitution is inconvenient for men who buy sex.

A London sex buyer who observed Eastern European women and their "bodyguard," was an active participant in what was very likely sex trafficking. He commented,

> *The relationship looked very professional, like a business. Still he instructed them to do things they weren't entirely happy with. A stern look on his face and a slight raised voice, made me slightly uncomfortable. But after the girl had been talked to by him, she put on a professional face and got on with it. My uncomfortable feeling went away because she did it – she could have walked away from the job. Melissa Farley, Julie Bindel, Jacqueline M. Golding, 2009. [24]*

Sex buyers see, and yet at the same time refuse to see, the fear, disgust, and despair in the women they buy. If she didn't run out of the room, screaming "help, police! trafficking!" then the sex buyer concludes that she chose the prostitution. Knowing that women in prostitution have been exploited, coerced, pimped, or trafficked does not deter sex buyers. Half of a group of 103 London sex buyers said that they had used a woman in prostitution who they knew was under the control of a pimp. As one man explained, "It's like he's her owner." Another man said: "The girl is instructed to do what she needs to do. You can just relax, it's her job." [25] In Romania, researchers interviewed sex buyers, women in prostitution, pimps, and police officers, all of whom agreed that sex buyers "are not interested if the girls are actually trafficked or not but are rather more interested in satisfying their sexual needs." [26]

Rationalizations for legalizing or decriminalizing prostitution

Laws against sex buyers and pimps are barriers to the business of sexual exploitation. Legalization and decriminalization zone prostitution into areas where it is legal to buy, sell, and be sold for sex. Under these laws, the interests of men who buy sex are represented and pimps are protected.[27]

The argument that legalizing prostitution would make it "safer" is the primary rationalization for legal or decriminalized prostitution. However, there is no evidence for this. Instead, we hear self-serving claims and strongly worded assertions without empirical data. The aftermaths of legal prostitution in the Netherlands and Germany have shown just how bad it can get. As of 2016, 80% of German and Dutch prostitution was under the control of criminal mafias.[pullquote]The aftermaths of legal prostitution in the Netherlands and Germany have shown just how bad it can get. As of 2016, 80% of German and Dutch prostitution was under

the control of criminal mafias.[/pullquote] After legalization in the Netherlands, organized crime spiraled out of control and women in prostitution were no safer than when prostitution was illegal. Mayor Job Cohen closed much of Amsterdam's legal prostitution in response to organized crime. [28] After legalization in Victoria, Australia, pimps established 95 legal brothels but at the same time, they also established another 400 illegal brothels in Victoria. [29] Instead of decreasing violent criminal involvement, legalization of prostitution has resulted in increased trafficking according to research from 150 countries. [30]

Anyone who knows about the daily life of those in prostitution understands that safety in prostitution is a pipe dream. Advocates of legal and decriminalized prostitution understand this but rarely admit it. Still, evidence exists, for example the Sex Workers' Education and Advocacy Taskforce in South Africa addressed distributed a list of safety tips including the recommendation that while undressing, the prostituting individual should "accidentally" kick a shoe under the bed, and while retrieving it, should check for knives, handcuffs or rope. The SWEAT flyer noted that fluffing up the pillow on the bed would permit an additional weapons search. [31] Understanding the lethal violence directed at women in prostitution, a Dutch legal pimp told a journalist, "You don't want a pillow in the [brothel's] room. It's a murder weapon."[32] A San Francisco organization advised, "be aware of exits and avoid letting your customer block access to those exits," and "shoes should come off easily or be appropriate for running in," and "avoid necklaces, scarves, across-the-body shoulder bags or anything else that can be accidentally or intentionally be tightened around your throat." [33] Specifications in the Australian Occupational and Safety Codes (OSC) for prostitution illustrate their concern about its dangers. The Australian OSC recommend hostage negotiation training for women in prostitution, utterly contradicting the notion of prostitution as just your average job. [34] The panic buttons in massage parlors, saunas, and brothels can never be answered quickly enough to prevent violence. Panic buttons in legal brothels make as little sense as panic buttons in the homes of battered women.

The public's health is a significant component of the safety alleged to be present in decriminalized prostitution. In the 1980s, groups such as the New Zealand Prostitutes' Collective (NZPC) capitalized on the AIDS epidemic by focusing on HIV education and harm reduction among those in prostitution. [35] This focus brought in massive funding to the prostitute unions who used it to lobby for decriminalized prostitution.[36]The harm reduction approach of these groups to HIV prevention seems to be based on the assumption that if enough male condoms are distributed then life will be better for everyone. In reality, women want harm elimination (exit from prostitution) as well as harm reduction. And a majority of johns across the globe refuse to use condoms. Epidemiologists have found that high risk for HIV is caused by rape and a large number of sex partners. Neither factor was addressed by prostitute unions.

Although it was promoted as a law protecting sex workers, the NZ government's own evaluation of its law concluded that after prostitution was decriminalized, violence and sexual abuse continued as before. [37] "The majority of sex workers felt that the law could do little about violence that occurred" and that it was an inevitable aspect of the sex industry. [38]

During one year, 35% of women in NZ decriminalized prostitution had been coerced. [39] The highest rate of sexual coercion by sex buyers was reported by women in massage parlor prostitution who were pimp-controlled (described as "managed" by the government). The social stigma of prostitution and mistrust of police persisted after decriminalization. Most women in prostitution did not report violence or crimes against them to the police after decriminalization. [40] Gangs of pimps have waged turf wars over control of prostitution in Auckland, [41] and NZ street prostitution spiraled out of control with some reports of a 200% increase post-decriminalization. [42]

Public misconceptions, rationalization, and denial about prostitution

Public misconceptions about prostitution stem from sex buyers' and pimps' cover narratives for the violence perpetrated against women in prostitution. Men's justifications for other forms of violence against women are remarkably similar to their justifications for prostitution. They blame the victim, viewing women in prostitution as intrinsically different from other women and as morally deficient. Batterers justify beating women by declaring that she asked for it or provoked it. Sex buyers justify prostitution by telling us that she's getting rich or that she's simply doing an unpleasant but necessary job like factory work. Sex buyers and sex trade advocates may acknowledge a fraction of the abuse and exploitation in prostitution, but they justify the abuse because the women are alleged to make a lot of money. Once paid for, exploitation, abuse, and rape are disappeared. "All of them are exploited. However, they also have good incomes," said an Italian sex buyer. [43] A sex buyer described the rapes of a woman by her pimp. But, he said, it was only "Every once and a while, not every week." [44] If men's sexual expectations are unmet, rape and prostitution are assumed to be inevitable. Women who fail to provide the sex acts demanded by their partners are then blamed for their partners' use of women in prostitution. "If my fiancee won't give me anal, I know someone who will." [45]

Words that conceal its harm lead to confusion about prostitution: *voluntary prostitution* which implies that she consented when she had no survival alternatives; *forced trafficking* which implies that somewhere there are women who volunteer to be trafficked into prostitution; *sex work,* which defines prostitution as a job rather than an act of violence. The term *migrant sex worker* implies that both prostitution and trafficking are acceptable. Strip club prostitution has been reframed as *sexual expression* or *freedom to express one's sensuality.* Brothels are referred to as *massage parlors, saunas,* and *health clubs.* Older men who buy teenagers for sex in Seoul call it *compensated dating.* In Tokyo prostitution is described as *assisted intercourse*. Men who buy women in prostitution are called *interested parties*, pimps are described as *managers.*

Pimps and traffickers facilitate denial by misrepresenting it as an easy, fun, lucrative job for the women in it. Women as well as men are pimps. A number of prominent advocates identify themselves publicly only as "sex workers," although they are managers of women in the sex trade, some are pimps, and some have been arrested for pandering, brothel managing, or trafficking. There is a blatant conflict of interest when individuals who are management/owners/pimps are in the same organization as those who are under their control.

The misrepresentation is even more unethical when the brothel owners, managers, and strip club board members hide their affiliations, claiming to represent the interests of sex workers. Hiding beneath the banner of labor unions, pimps appeal to the Left's sympathies. Yet groups such as the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective, the International Union of Sex Workers (UK), Red Thread (the Netherlands), Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee (India), Stella (Canada), and Sex Worker Organizing Project (USA) – while aggressively promoting prostitution as work – do not resemble what most of us think of as labor unions. They do not offer pensions, safety, shorter hours, unemployment benefits, or exit services (which is what 90% of women in prostitution say that they want). Instead, these groups promote a free market in human beings who are used for sex. [46] We have located 12 people from 8 countries who publicly identify as sex workers or sex worker advocates but who have also sold others for sex or who have been implicated in the management of sex trade businesses in various specific ways. All of them promote decriminalized pimping. Many have been arrested for running brothels and escort agencies, trafficking, pandering, interstate prostitution, or living off earnings of prostitution. [47]

How can we respond ethically and appropriately to the existence of prostitution?

The existence of prostitution anywhere is society's betrayal of women, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable because of their sex, their ethnicity, their poverty, and their history of abuse and neglect. Prostitution is sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, often torture. Women in prostitution face a statistical probability of weekly rape, like domestic violence taken to the extreme.

The complicity of governments sustains prostitution. When the sex trade expands, women are less likely to compete with men for jobs. When prostitution is incorporated into states' economies, governments are relieved of the necessity of finding employment for women. Blood taxes are collected by the state-as-pimp in legal and decriminalized prostitution. Banks, airlines, Internet providers, hotels, travel agencies, and all media are integral to the exploitation and abuse of women in prostitution tourism, make huge profits, and are solidified as part of the economy.

If we listen to the voices and analyses of exited survivors – those who are no longer under pimp or sex trade control – they direct us to the obvious legal solutions. Men who buy sex must be held accountable for their predatory aggression. Those in prostitution must be offered real alternatives for survival, and never arrested. Those who profit from prostitution – pimps and traffickers – must also be held accountable. A human-rights based approach to prostitution, recognizing it as sexual exploitation, like that of Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Northern Ireland, would provide safety and hope. In this abolitionist approach to prostitution, sex buyers are criminalized (as are pimps and traffickers) and people in prostitution are decriminalized and are also provided with exit services and job training. But first we have to move past the pimps' and profiteers' lies about prostitution. I know we can do that.

To summarize:

1. The truth about prostitution is often concealed behind the lies, manipulations and distortions of sex trade pimps, managers and others who profit from the business. The deeper truths about prostitution are revealed in survivors' testimonies, as well as in research on the psychosocial and psychobiological realities of prostitution.
2. At the root of prostitution, just like other coercive systems, are dehumanization, objectification, sexism, racism, misogyny, lack of empathy/pathological entitlement (pimps and johns), domination, exploitation, and a level of chronic exposure to violence and degradation that destroys the personality and the spirit.
3. Prostitution cannot be made safe by legalizing or decriminalizing it. Prostitution needs to be completely abolished.
4. Prostitution is more like being chronically sexually harassed, endangered, and raped, than working in a fast food restaurant. Most women in prostitution suffer from severe PTSD and want to get out.
5. Sex buyers are predators; they often engage in coercive behavior, lack empathy and have sexist attitudes that justify abuse of women.
6. A solution exists. It is called the Swedish model and it has been adopted by a number of countries including Sweden, Norway, Iceland, and Northern Ireland.The essence of the solution is: criminalization for johns and pimps; decriminalization for women, and the provision of resources, alternatives, safe houses, rehabilitation.
7. Prostitution affects all of us, not just those in it.

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[26] Dragomirescu, D.A., Necula, C., & Simion, R. 2009 "Romania: Emerging Market for Trafficking? Clients and Trafficked Women in Romania." in A. Di Nicola (ed.) *Prostitution and Human Trafficking: Focus on Clients*. New York: Springer. p. 160

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unionization. Its goal is to remove criminal sanctions from all actors in the sex industry so that prostitution becomes as legitimate as any other mode of livelihood." Catharine A. MacKinnon (2011) Trafficking, Prostitution, and Inequality. *Harvard Civil Rights-Civil Liberties Law Review* 46: 701-739.

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[34] Sullivan, M. (2007) *Making Sex Work: a failed experiment with legal prostitution.* Melbourne: Spinifex.

[35] Priscilla Alexander noted that the AIDS epidemic brought with it certain fiscal advantages to those promoting prostitution. Alexander, P. (1996) Foreword. Priscilla Alexander in N. McKeganey and M. Barnard (Eds.) *Sex Work on the Streets: Prostitutes and Their Clients* Philadelphia: Open University Press.

[36] Jenness, V. (1993) *Making It Work: the Prostitutes' Rights Movement in Perspective.* New York: De Gruyter

[37] Prostitution Law Review Committee (2008) *Report of the Prostitution Law Review Committee on the Operation of the Prostitution Reform Act 2003*. Wellington, New Zealand. https://www.justice.govt.nz/prostitution-law-review-committee/publications/plrc-report/index.html*:157*

[38] Prostitution Law Review Committee (2008), pp.14 and 57

[39] Prostitution Law Review Committee (2008), page 46.

[40] Prostitution Law Review Committee (2008), *122*.

[41] Tapaleao, Vaimoana (2009, May 4). City takes prostitute dilemma to the top. New Zealand Herald. https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10570143.

[42] The New Zealand Prostitution Law Review Committee, 2008, p 118 noted that street prostitution in Auckland more than doubled in just one year, 2006–2007. Other reports in the press place the numbers much higher. "Estimates indicate that the number of street workers in Manukau City may have quadrupled since June 2003…." Manukau City Council, Report of Manukau City Council on Street Prostitution Control https:// www.manukau.govt.nz/uploadedFiles/manukau.govt.nz/Publications/ Plans_&_Poli cies/mcc-report-on-streetprostitution-aug-2005.pdf.

[43] Di Nicola, A., Cuaduro, A., Lombardi, M., Ruspini, P. (editors) (2009) *Prostitution and Human Trafficking: Focus on Clients*. New York: Springer.

[44] Farley, M., Schuckman, E., Golding, J.M., Houser, K., Jarrett, L., Qualliotine, P., Decker, M. (2011) Comparing Sex Buyers with Men Who Don't Buy Sex: *"You can have a good time with the servitude" vs. "You're supporting a system of degradation"* Paper presented at Psychologists for Social Responsibility Annual Meeting July 15, 2011, Boston.

[45] Farley, M., Schuckman, E., Golding, J.M., Houser, K., Jarrett, L., Qualliotine, P., Decker, M., 2011.

[46] Cecilie Hoigard (2015) *The Presence of Pain in the Debate on Prostitution*,Women's Front of Norway. Available at https://kvinnefronten.no/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Two-Articles-on-Prostitution.pdf

[47] **Norma Jean Almodovar, USA**, International Sex Worker Foundation for Art, Culture, and Education, Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics (COYOTE), convicted of pandering. The executive director of COYOTE/Los Angeles, Norma Jean Almodovar, was convicted of pandering. See AP report in Spokane Chronicle September 27, 1984, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1345&dat=19840927&id=PldOAAAAIBAJ&sjid=jfkDAAAAIBAJ&pg=7010,2487624&hl=en; See also AP report in the Register-Guard Eugene Oregon, https://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1310&dat=19840927&id=Aa1jAAAAIBAJ&sjid=iuEDAAAAIBAJ&pg=6617,6534751&hl=en;

Terri Jean Bedford, Canada, sex worker advocate, convicted of running a brothel. Bedford was one of three applicants, describing themselves as sex workers, who challenged the Canadian laws on prostitution with the goal of decriminalizing prostitution in Canada. See https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/dominatrix-found-guilty-1.165890 for a description of her 1994 arrest; Also see Toronto Star Archives, Paul Moloney (1994) Sexual bondage parlor raided in Thornhill. Toronto Star Sept 17, 1994 https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2011/06/13/the_making_of_abad_girl.html for a description of her arrest for running a bawdy house. "York Region police have seized an astonishing array of sexual bondage paraphernalia in a raid on a modest Thornhill bungalow advertised as Madame de Sade's House of Erotica. Along with assorted whips, chains, spanking paddles,

handcuffs, masks, wigs and boots, police seized a tall throne, stocks, spanking benches, and a black wooden cross with tie-downs for head, arms and feet. Two "dominant" and one "submissive" attendant – 'Mistress Marie,' 'Mistress Morgan' and 'Princess' – provided sessions which allowed for sexual gratification, mostly masturbation, investigators said;"

Claudia Brizuela, Argentina, Association of Women Prostitutes of Argentina, Latin American-Caribbean Female Sex Workers Network, charged with sex trafficking. Claudia Brizuela, a former leader of Asociacion de Mujeres Meretrices de Argentina (AMMAR) and a founder of the Latin American-Caribbean Female Sex Workers Network, was arrested and charged for sex trafficking in 2014. Both sexworker groups were funded by UNAIDS and referenced by Amnesty International in support of its decriminalization advocacy. See Ex dirigente de Ammar procesada por liderar red de trata.(source Anna Djinn) https://thefeministahood.wordpress.com/2015/08/24/what-amnesty-did-wrong/;

Maxine Doogan, USA, Erotic Service Providers Union, charged with running an escort agency. Mary Ellen (Maxine) Doogan pimped women out of an escort prostitution agency in Seattle, WA, Personal Touch Escort Service, where she was charged with felony promotion of prostitution and money laundering. She pled guilty to a lesser charge of pimping and was convicted in 1994 of second degree promotion of prostitution. Nature of Action: Prosecution for second degree promotion of prostitution by the statutory alternative means of profiting from prostitution. Superior Court: The Superior Court for King County, No. 93-1-04076-4, Anthony P. Wartnik, J., on August 8, 1994, entered a judgment on a verdict of guilty;

Robyn Few, USA, Sex Workers Outreach Project, convicted of conspiracy to promote interstate prostitution. Robyn Few was convicted of violating a federal law, conspiracy to promote prostitution. She founded Sex Workers Outreach Project. https://www.swopusa.org/about-us/founder-robyn-few/; Jesse Jardim (2004) Ex-Prostitute Hits the Streets to Decriminalize Prostitution. Daily Californian Jan 29 2004. https://archive.dailycal.org/article.php?id=13940;

Douglas Fox, UK, International Union of Sex Workers, arrested for living off the earnings of prostitution, advisor to Amnesty International, co-manages escort agency. Douglas Fox was a founder of the International Union of Sex Workers. He has been arrested for living off the earnings of prostitution in a police sting at the escort agency Christony Companions. Julie Bindel (2015) "What you call pimps, we call managers" Byline July 21 2015. https://www.byline.com/column/7/article/188. Investigative journalist Julie Bindel concludes that the purpose of the International Union of Sex Workers appears to be "to normalise pimping, lobby for an end to laws that criminalise the exploiters in the sex industry, and ultimately to sugar-coat prostitution and present it as a job like any other." See Bindel, J. (2013) An Unlikely Union: Julie Bindel investigates a world of workers, pimps, and punters. *The Gaze.* April 2013. https://www.gaze-amodernreview.co.uk/contributors.html (also available from the author);

Eliana Gil, Mexico, Global Network of Sex Work Projects, Latin American-Caribbean Female

Sex Workers Network, convicted of sex trafficking. Eliana Gil was arrested in 2014 and convicted in 2015 of sex trafficking. https://www.sinembargo.mx/22-02-2014/912026. According to victim testimony, with her son she pimped about 200 women in Mexico City. The Latin American-Caribbean Female Sex Workers Network was affiliated with and funded by United Nations Program on HIV/AIDS, affiliated with World Health Organization, and cited by Amnesty International https://www.faber.co.uk/blog/a-human-rights-scandal-by-kat-banyard/

Pye Jakobsson, Sweden, Rose Alliance, Global Network of Sex Work Projects, decade-long board member of a Stockholm strip club where she was also paid to organize the club's schedule and place new women into the club's schedule. She engaged in similar scheduling of women and quasi-management activities at a second club (Erostop). Pye Jakobsson acknowledges being on the board of the strip club Flirt Fashion from 2001-2012. "Founder also on board of strip club" January 14, 2013 Kajsa Skarsgård Commentary https://www.dagensarena.se/innehall/frontfigur-ocksa-i-styrelse-for-strippklubb/; Gerda Christensen (Translation to English: Annina Claesson) "Swedish Rose Alliance – a fraudulent organization," 2013 Newsletter of Kvinnofronten, the Women's front in Sweden https://kvinnofronten.nu/eng/Newsletter/debate-rose-alliance.htm. A survivor who approached Jakobsson at Rose Alliance stated that Jakobsson recruited women to work at the strip club. https://bibbidibobbidibutthole.tumblr.com/post/125394583276/womensliberationfront-gerda-christenson-of
Jakobsson was interviewed by a reporter while she was at Erostop, where again her work was described by a reporter as "handling schedules:" "Pye Jakobsson, 32, handles schedules and other things around the strippers at Erostop."https://wwwc.aftonbladet.se/nyheter/0006/24/sexklubb.html A sex buyer's review of Erostop from 2007 described acts of prostitution at the club where Jakobsson handled schedules and other things: "Private Show where the girls show pussy and you get jerk off your cost $ 500." https://www.flashback.org/t2831p3;

Jackie McMillan, Australia, Sex Workers Outreach Project, pornography producer, dungeon club manager and promoter. Jackie McMillan stated that she produced pornography for 10 years https://www.facebook.com/WomanSaySomething/posts/782787211765971. McMillan also manages a fetish club in Sydney with her husband Craig Donarski where the Hellfire Club's employees provide a dungeon/kink experience with bondage, domination, sadism, submission. https://www.au.timeout.com/sydney/adult/features/11813/bdsm-in-sydney; https://www.linkedin.com/in/jackiemcmillan; Donarski and McMillan received a business award for the Hellfire Club in 2014.
https://australianpridenetwork.com.au/sydney-lgbti-community-honours-its-heroes/;

Maggie McNeil, USA, Sex Workers Outreach Project, owner of New Orleans escort prostitution agency. Maggie McNeil stated, "I owned an escort service. I was a madam." https://maggiemcneill.wordpress.com/2011/11/17/across-the-pond/#comment-15832 and "I was the best agency owner in New Orleans"
https://titsandsass.com/haters-gonna-hate-even-when-youre-both-sex-workers/#comment-3022;

Tanja Sommer, Germany, sex worker advocate with Berufsverband erotische und sexuelle Dienstleistungen (BesD), Business Association of Erotic and Sexual services. Manages a dominatrix sex studio and rents out rooms to others in prostitution. Tanja Sommer, in a leading position at the BesD https://berufsverband-sexarbeit.de/en/contact/ also runs her own dominatrix studio in which other women prostitute. Der Spiegel, "Uncovered" March 28, 2015: https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-132909484.html
Her colleague Holger Rettig is leader of the UEGD (Unternehmerverband Erotikgewerbe Deutschland- Business Association of Erotic Business in Germany). This organization, consisting only of brothel-owning pimps, helped to found and works closely with the BesD. https://www.spiegel.de/spiegel/print/d-132909484.html;

Margo St James, USA, COYOTE, arrest for running a brothel. For a biography of Margo St. James life and arrest, see Alison Bass (2015) *Getting Screwed: Sex Workers and the Law*, documenting St James' arrest via interview with her, describing police officer's statement that she solicited him, her conviction for running a "disorderly house" i.e. brothel, her statement that her roommates were prostituting but St James herself was not prostituting at the time of the arrest.

How the Left Gets Prostitution Wrong

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

Earlier this fall, delegates from various Amnesty International branches gathered in Dublin to establish their official policy on prostitution. In the resolution that emerged, the human rights NGO stated its plans to "develop a policy that supports the full decriminalization of all aspects of consensual sex work."[1] Furthermore, the policy also "[calls] on states to ensure that sex workers enjoy full and equal legal protection from exploitation, trafficking and violence."[2]

This decision to endorse decriminalization was largely supported by the broader American Leftist, liberal, and progressive movements, although many feminists were vocal in opposition. In the weeks before the AI delegates met, more than four hundred different women's groups and individual activists signed their names to an open letter condemning the organization for its stance and encouraging the adoption of what feminists refer to as the Nordic Model.[3]

The Nordic Model is a general approach to prostitution law first adopted by Sweden in 1999. Under this system, sometimes known as the "End Demand" approach, the sale of sex remains legal while the purchase of sex is criminalized.[4] It is difficult to track illegal industries with perfect accuracy; however, evidence indicates that the Swedish approach has successfully diminished the size of the Swedish sex industry, increased social stigma against the purchase of sex, and countered the growth of organized crime and human trafficking.[5] Other nations have since instituted prostitution law based on the Nordic Model, including Norway, France, Canada, and most recently Northern Ireland.[6]

Despite its measurable success, the Nordic Model has been rejected by large portions of the North American Leftist movement in favor of the decriminalization model.[pullquote]Despite its measurable success, the Nordic Model has been rejected by large portions of the North American Leftist movement in favor of the decriminalization model.[/pullquote] The journal *Jacobin*, for example, has consistently published attacks on supporters of the Nordic Model,[7] apparently unaware of their striking departure from previous generations of Marxists who held prostitution as a contemptible expression of capitalist exploitation.[8] Many established left-liberal institutions have also thrown their weight behind decriminalization. Of particular note is *The Economist*, whose staggering output of pro-prostitution articles provides a beginner's course in the common arguments made on the Left today.[9]

Of these many defenses, three have become most common: That decriminalization is the desire of women in prostitution; that decriminalization provides employment; and that decriminalization allows for women in the industry to claim labor protections. Unfortunately, all three fail to justify prostitution on Leftist grounds. Perhaps more importantly, these arguments hold worrisome implications for other established Leftist positions. It is my hope

that this article will illuminate these contradictions, and that they will be resolved in favor of abolitionism rather than the abandonment of Leftist politics.

Leftists who come to support prostitution often frame their position in terms of "listening to sex workers," the implication being that women in prostitution universally desire decriminalization.[10] However, it is obvious that women in prostitution are not a monolithic whole possessing a singular opinion. Many women, both currently in the industry and formerly prostituted, oppose the legalization or decriminalization of prostitution.[11] Recently, I interviewed Chelsea, a woman working in one of New Zealand's many legal brothels. "The brothels still work the same way they did when it was illegal," she told me. "We get the worst of both worlds."[12]

According to her, decriminalization has been an abject failure. Laws mandating condom use are rarely enforced and women who refuse to let men ejaculate on or inside them struggle to find clients. Should a man harass, abuse, or assault a woman, management can refuse to give out the offender's name, making prosecution impossible. Chelsea is herself a supporter of the Nordic model, saying, "If we had the Nordic Model, I'd call the cops on all of them the second I get my money, before they get to rape me. If I called cops under [decriminalization] they would say, Did you accept the money? If say yes, they say, boom, consensual." This perspective is not unique among prostituted women; however, it is a voice that Leftists often refuse to hear.

Moreover, Leftists have traditionally understood that discussions of public opinion, far from functioning as a free and equal "marketplace of ideas," tend to reflect and reinforce the ideology of the powerful. Those who are most likely to align with the dominant narrative are given greater access to culturally sanctioned methods of expression. Traumatized indigenous women being sold for sex on South Dakota oil fields and middle-class white escorts may both be equally capable of communicating their experiences with prostitution on an individual level, but to argue that those experiences will be equally represented to the public through the media infrastructure is both naive and in conflict with traditional Leftist analysis. Inside a system that privileges the voices most likely to validate power, "listening to sex workers" often means uncritically accepting the public statements of a small minority of women in prostitution – most of whom are likely to be white, middle-class, young, and able-bodied.

But even if we were able to objectively gather the opinions of every prostituted woman, a larger issue still remains: Many, if not all, of the systems of exploitation Leftists unequivocally oppose would be vindicated in a popular vote of the exploited themselves. The increasingly conservative Republican Party, for example, finds firm support from the white American working class,[13] while the majority of Americans in general report a positive view of capitalism.[14] Yet few, if any, Leftists would argue that these general trends in opinion are enough reason to abandon support for socialism so as to best align with the self-reported policy demands of the proletariat. Nor are Leftists routinely criticized for speaking over, disregarding, or otherwise betraying the working class when advocating for socialism, despite many members of that very working class holding to the belief that socialism is a dangerous and destructive ideology.

Leftists have long understood, following Marx, that one's worldview is shaped by the dominate ideology, which develops in relation to specific structures of power in society.[15] It is not surprising that those who upon whom an exploitative economic and political system rests may develop a social consciousness that obscures, ignores, or even validates those systems.

While the issue of "false consciousness" and the root of social understanding is a complex topic that exists beyond the scope of this essay, it is worth contrasting the general Leftist position on capitalism with the specific defense provided for prostitution. "Listen to workers" is not a common slogan for anti-capitalists, likely because most anti-capitalists are aware that the political ideology crafted solely from workers' self-reports would often carry strong conservative or neoliberal influence that contradicts the Leftist position. The primacy of individual self-reporting as a basis for political theory is widely rejected in cases other than prostitution, where the dominate ideology reflected in that self-reporting happens to coincide with the predetermined position of many Leftists who desire a robust sex industry.

Leftism as an ideology is incompatible with the idea that self-reported policy demands are the only acceptable base for one's politics. Many of the laws universally seen by Leftists as victories – among them, legislation against child labor and the creation of the minimum wage – are not even settled issues among the working class in America. Unskilled laborers often accept employment at less-than-legal wage out of desperation, while families often exist in such poverty as to make the employment of their children a necessary decision. There is little doubt that Leftists would not "listen" to child laborers and those working for five dollars an hour, should those workers ask for their employment to be legalized. Yet it becomes difficult to see how common Leftist justifications for prostitution decriminalization would not decriminalize these practices as well.

Leftist defenses of prostitution are awash in these unintended implications for other exploitative industries. For example, many on the Left argue that without decriminalization, women in prostitution are unable to claim health benefits and other labor protections. But this is also the case with those who work illegally for less than minimum wage. While the Fair Labor Standards Act[16] is technically designed to allow all employees to request worker's compensation and overtime pay, under-the-table workers (especially immigrants, young adults, and unskilled laborers) are often unable to claim these benefits as a result of their gray legal position.

In response to this, it could be said that lowering or abolishing the minimum wage would allow these workers to come out from the shadows and claim FLSA protections, much as decriminalizing prostitution is said to do the same. Yet very few Leftists would argue that the abolition of wage laws is an acceptable way to ensure workers' safety, even if the removal of those wage laws would allow them to claim protections afforded to others.

Leftists similarly claim that legislation against men who purchase sex deprives women in prostitution of their livelihoods and may, in some extreme versions of this argument, lead to homelessness, starvation, and death. It should be noted beforehand that this claim seems to

contradict the equally popular Leftist notion that prostitution is most often a voluntary choice made by a woman, free from coercion or desperation. By linking the abolition of prostitution with starvation and death, defenders of decriminalization implicitly acknowledge that working in the sex industry is often a last barrier between a woman and crushing poverty. This objection also fails to align with the common Leftist claim that laws aimed to curb prostitution are ineffective, as their ability to prevent women's employment would be evidence of the sex industry's successful reduction.

Contradictions aside, the Left has rarely supported the existence of other industries solely because their abolition would result in impoverishment or loss of employment. For example, a 2013 investigation into Tennessee Timber and Lumber found a fourteen year-old child regularly operating a table saw.[17] The legal response – a fine against the employer and a demand for the immediate cessation of the dangerous task – mirrors the approach of the Nordic Model, and it falls generally in line with the Leftist position on child labor.

In cases like these, it would be extremely unlikely for anti-capitalists to demand child labor be allowed to continue so as to avoid impoverishing the minor or his family. Nor have Leftists had issue with demanding the abolition of so-called sweatshop labor in Third World countries, despite the closure of such factories often resulting in unemployment and poverty for Third World workers. In fact, it is difficult to identify a single industry beyond the sex industry that Leftists have defended solely on the grounds of securing consistent employment inside capitalism. This tactic is far more common among conservative capitalists, who often use "job creation" as an argument against government intervention and regulation.

A more extreme example of this double standard is the Leftist opinion towards illegal organ trafficking. As the BBC reported in October of 2013, there is a rising trend of Third World laborers resorting to organ sales as a means to pay back microfinance loans.[18] More recently, Turkish news sources reported the arrest of an Israeli businessman on charges of arranging for the harvesting and sale of organs from Syrian refugees.[19] On the surface, the sale of human organs fulfills all the criteria for decriminalization given by Leftists: It is currently illegal, meaning that labor and health standards do not apply, and there are currently individuals engaged in the trade who would suffer economic hardship if their ability to sell organs was removed through legislation. Decriminalization, then, would allow workers' protections to be more consistently applied, as well as securing economic benefit for those engaged in the trade. It is odd, then, that *Jacobin* has yet to denounce opponents of legalized organ harvesting as paternalists, dead-set on denying Syrian refugees their bodily autonomy.

All sarcasm aside, it is undeniable that support for decriminalization comes in some part from a legitimate belief in its short-term benefit for women in prostitution. But regardless of whether or not this is actually the case, Leftists calling for legal sanction as a method of harm reduction endorse a dangerous logic: That oppressive systems must be sustained solely because the oppressed depend on them to survive. In other cases, the inability of workers to survive without entering into a wage relationship is provided as evidence of a system's inherently exploitative nature. Wage labor itself is often identified by Leftists as oppressive specifically

because it is a system under which alternative means of survival are unavailable. It is unclear, then, why Leftists have inverted this logic to determine that the ethical value of prostitution as an industry is derived in relation to, and not inversely from, the necessity that drives workers into it.

Those whose stated purpose is the end of oppression and exploitation should consider the implications of refusing action against a system because too many individuals inside it rely on that system to survive. On this logic, the Left would be *less likely* to agitate for a system's abolition the greater its exploitation becomes. Many universally condemned historical systems, from antebellum slavery to the shirtwaist factories of the Gilded Age, would likely have escaped criticism had activists of the day adopted this harm-reduction framework. It is certainly the case that many of these objections presented by Leftists – that getting rid of prostitution will drive women into even worse conditions, for example, or that the real issue is violence against individual prostituted women and not the system itself – are uncomfortably similar to those made by Southern slave owners and Northern moderates at the height of the abolitionist movement.

These arguments undoubtedly mirror the individual desires of many women in prostitution – the "sex workers" that proponents of decriminalization claim to listen to – who are focused on short-term survival at the expense of long-term social change. This position does not result from stupidity, thoughtless, or a lack of moral courage. Rather, it results from the specific conditions of an oppressive system that leverages desperation into increased engagement with the mechanisms of exploitation. Capitalism has always relied on this Faustian bargain, crafting its policies on the constrained demands of individuals and then placing the blame on their shoulders when they fail to transcend their conditions. The traditional role of Leftists has been to upend these constraints through organized confrontation with power, not simply to mollify their harshest effects. If Leftists believed that the individual decisions of either the powerful or the coerced would cohere unaided into positive social change, they would not be Leftists but instead libertarians.

To be clear, these conflicting standards are not highlighted to claim that prostitution is generally comparable with under-the-table restaurant work, child labor, organ trafficking, or capitalism in general. Rather, it is simply to demonstrate that adherence to self-reported policy positions, the extension of labor standards, the guarantee of employment, and even the short-term reduction of harm are not, by themselves, convincing reasons for Leftists to support prostitution – and, further, that the logic underlying such arguments quickly reduces to a defense of libertarian capitalism. To put it another way, these arguments are either unsuccessful or *too successful,* in that they justify not only prostitution but other positions that Leftists cannot hold without compromising the coherence of their ideology. It is my hope, then, that those who realize this contradiction resolve it in the direction of abolitionism, and not a further abandonment of robust and effective Leftist politics.

Notes

[1] https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2015/08/global-movement-votes-to-adopt-policy-to-protect-human-rights-of-sex-workers/

[2] Ibid.

[3] https://catwinternational.org/Content/Images/Article/617/attachment.pdf

[4] https://www.government.se/articles/2011/03/legislation-on-the-purchase-of-sexual-services/

[5] https://www.government.se/contentassets/3f21caa844a14c1fbf5884c21b3e0c6e/press-releases-20062010—cristina-husmark-pehrsson

[6] https://www.niassembly.gov.uk/assembly-business/legislation/current-non-executive-bill-proposals/human-trafficking-and-exploitation-further-provisions-and-support-for-victims-bill-/human-trafficking-and-exploitation-further-provisions-and-support-for-victims-bill-/

[7] https://www.jacobinmag.com/2013/08/prostitution-law-and-the-death-of-whores/

[8] Consider, for example, Engels' *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, which can be read here: https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1884/origin-family/. Lenin, Mao, Castro and other figures in Marxist-Leninism were also adamant in their opposition to prostitution, for varying reasons.

[9] Many of these articles can be found here: https://www.economist.com/topics/prostitution.

[10] For an example of this approach, see: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/03/prostitution-sex-workers-amnesty-meryl-streep-lena-dunham For a rebuttal, see Helen Lewis' response in the same paper: https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/aug/09/listen-to-sex-workers-but-which-ones.

[11] Organizations of formerly prostituted women organizing in favor of the Nordic Model include SPACE (Survivors of Prostitution-Abuse Calling for Enlightenment), EVE (formerly Exploited Voices Now Educating), and many others.

[12] These quotes were provided by Chelsea in a series of interviews done over email in August of 2015. I first spoke with Chelsea last year through various abolitionist groups, where I was able to confirm her story with information she provided me about her time at the New Zealand brothels.

[13] https://www.people-press.org/2012/04/17/section-1-general-election-preferences/

[14] https://www.gallup.com/poll/158978/democrats-republicans-diverge-capitalism-federal-gov.aspx

[15] Marx's position on the role of material conditions in creating ideology is best summed up in the preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*.

[16] https://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/

[17] https://www.dol.gov/whd/media/press/whdpressVB3.asp?pressdoc=Southeast/20130320_2.xml

[18] https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-24128096

[19] https://www.ynetnews.com/articles/0,7340,L-4735121,00.html

Left Dogmatism, Charismatic Authority, and the Uninitiated

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> ***"Who is more powerful: the one who calls another a dictator with impunity or the one so-called?"— Saint-Just (Andress, 375)***

During the two and a half hour stretch of Andrzej Wajda's 1983 historic drama *Danton*, we watch Robespierre degenerate from a composed, well-dressed statesman, arguing on behalf of Enlightenment ideals into a megalomaniac, who would kill his close friend (the titular Danton) to maintain power.

Yet more haunting then the main plot is the opening shots of Robespierre's son, numbly repeating revolutionary maxims from Robespierre's "The Rights of Man," then being wacked by his mother upon messing up. The tour-de-force antics of the crazed revolutionary leader shock little in comparison to the child spoon-fed zeitgeist politics in a climate where the definition of revolutionary changed so swiftly that Robespierre too was hoisted by the tribunal's petard.

Danton served as a potent and, at the time, highly controversial commentary on the violence of Eastern European communism and socialism (Frey, 62). But more generally, the film illustrates that famous critique of Rousseauvian democracy's ties to totalitarianism, offered most potently by Hannah Arendt—for the general will (*volonté générale*) to manifest, it must crush the will of the people (the individual, the minority) in the name of the people (the majority, the ruler). Education is a particularly visible site to view the way the general will is inflicted onto the uninitiated. Wadja does not shy away from presenting the grotesquery of this process.

Despite the disturbing pathos of the instruction of Robespierre's son, the boy is not pictured as a clichéd pitiable, dumb, innocent, supple child being inaugurated cruelly into paternalistic rule. Rather, the child is indifferent, ambivalent, and relatively enigmatic, never seen speaking with his own words, and barely flinching from his mother's whacks. This brings the film out of a mere critique of Rousseau's political philosophy and into a critique of Rousseau's liberal education Ur-text *Emile*. Famously, Emile's instructor purports to instruct towards the right, natural, pure, and uncorrupted. But at every turn, he is seen to mediate and facilitate the results of very specific moral lessons that help inaugurate Emile into a strictly fixed set of rules of the competitive, patriarchal marketplace.

Emile's private desires are eventually vanquished in favor of public civility. But ingeniously, at the start Emile is initially taught to cultivate a primal love of self (*amour de soi*). Only after he's been satiated as an individual can his selfishness be critiqued and surpassed. Finally, his

desires can turn outwards towards the world, the collective, and the general will. In loving himself through the veil of the other (*amour propre*), he skirts wickedness but also makes necessary steps towards civil life. Departing from Hobbesian cynicism, Rousseau suggests that the originary passions of the heart can be led towards an uncorrupt compassion…but only if the proper leader is in place. In the woods, with only one authority, there are few variables to interfere with Emile's Pygmalion development.

Today's liberal education from Montessori to charter schools is indebted to Rousseau, and almost always billed in opposition to the method where the child is tied to the chair and beaten into knowledge. There is no need to push the child, since he will rather naturally do what is right on his own, guided only by his amorous affection for his teacher. Mutual recognition creates an exact identity between teacher and student, so there is finally no need for education or manipulation or mediation—a bloodless, divine education. What is right simply falls into place. Much as the ruler and ruled ought to be equivalent in a perfect Rousseauvian society.

The romantic imagination of Rousseau saw the placid early years of the child's life as having a primal inherent goodness that is lost as the child matures. It is easy when critiquing liberal education to fall into this trap—seeing Emile as a once pure and playful creature, cruelly morphed into an obedient citizen by a megalomaniac father. This is a bit simple, for in this fiction, there is no "real" Emile that is in need of being rescued. But one must not turn all the way around and say that children are inherently under a state of biopolitical subjugation from birth (the child in capitalism is liable to be raped, sold drugs and soda, monetized, etc.), a view that would render all analyses of education to be futile, sentimental, and trivial, compared with the macro-level politics of the state. The myth that changing the macro-level of economics of the state will create an unparalleled freedom for the child, liberating him from the family romance, competitive industry, and consent laws, is a mirage that seems to entice radical Leftists as diverse as Firestone, Edelman, Foucault, and Žižek. To say nothing of the Norman O. Brown-style cult leaders of 60s and 70s utopian collectives, where child abuse ran rampant. Ultimately, this utopianism flips back to the uncritical romantic effort to save the child from one bad regime by placing them into a better regime. The reality is that once the child is liberated from serving a father or monetized system, he is only "free" to serve the general will, here meaning the will of whichever person or tribunal lords over the child at that moment.

Danton is one of many important films in the second half of the twentieth century that powerfully allegorize the horrors that hedonism, fascism, and extreme leftism visits upon youths, other films include: *Salo or 120 Days of Sodom, Candy, Wicker Man,* and *Pink Flamingos.* These films have reversed the totalizing false linkages of modernism that tended to produce affirmative and unqualified tributes to Leftist revolutions. However, even in the wake of ever-richer evidence on the terrors of Mao and Stalin, the totalizing mise-en-scene of unqualified revolutionary enthusiasm continues. Rather than affirming tyranny as if it were factually successful in any given locatable reality, today tyranny is proposed as a stunning Ideal alternative to the slow grind of bureaucratic "crippled" systems and false inclusion/tolerance. The very same aggravation with the slow system leads some to support Neo-Cons like Donald Trump, who on the surface has little in common with such as Slavoj Žižek, Alain Badiou, and

Sophie Wahnich. Their overlap is not a shared vision for the future but rather an identical anger at the present; all pointing to the same current state of emergency—that of an inefficient, "crippled," childish, deferential, indecisive, tolerant liberal capitalism.

These arguments update the powerful critique of parliamentary democracy laid out by German political theorist Carl Schmitt, particularly *The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy* (1923), which helped set the scene for the German Fuhrer, but also became revered as a realpolitik masterpiece by many prominent postmodern Leftist academics. This is not too puzzling, since Schmitt offers nothing less than an all-purpose complaint against traditional rule that can serve anyone (with any politics) who wants to become a charismatic authority. The so-called crisis is only solved by resolute top-down decisionism, and the creation of a national enemy, a move towards dictatorship Schmitt found to take partial shape in the otherwise liberal Republican Rousseau.

Like Freud's primal father, the charismatic authority (as conceptualized by Max Weber in the early 1920s) stands outside the rules of the civilization he rules. His whims are not considered arbitrary fancies but are seen by his flock as a necessity for proper governance, serving their needs as much as his own. The arbitrary, rhetorical, fanciful, hedonistic, and sadistic are considered necessary and natural. In *Emile*, after the titular student grows up, the teacher is always a hermetic poetic uncle in the background, who as an outsider inflicts top-down measures upon the family with "impartiality." And Rousseau, himself, lived hermetically, with an up-and-down relationship with the French public, who eventually ostracized him.

Today's charismatic authorities claim to be "outside" the chain of capitalism while playing the game of capitalist *realpolitik*, yet always appearing to be deconstructing and critiquing the system for an ultimately altruistic utopian premise. This "outsider," steps into the slow bureaucratic world, claims that it faces a state of emergency, and then offers his own solution. A fairly nice example is Žižek, after his entrance in American universities in the 1980s, as a Slovenian, he claimed to know American culture better than Americans, and as an unorthodox Lacanian, he also knew Lacan better than the Lacanians.

By now, Žižek has cunningly developed a profitable persona, which seems to stand outside the stuffy rules of academic life, and yet profits from the academy, its students, and its various ventures into publishing and pop culture. To make an example of him is not to scapegoat him as an exceptionally complicit hypocrite, nor to outline how the rules of academic publishing, American pop culture, and Western industry constrict any attempt at Left radicalism, but rather to show how the archetype of charismatic authority functions in radical Western Leftism today.

Charismatic authorities do not need to realize their proposed utopia in order to satiate their appetites for money, fame, and power. Likewise, they do not have to exist in a Communist nation to receive the privileges of being a Communist leader. To attain the prized "booty" of charismatic authority, all you have to do is rhetorically protest profane,

rational, bureaucratic, traditional, patriarchal, patrimonial rule. One does not have to alter it in any real ways: much as the religiously pious in the *Canterbury Tales* will spin any moral discourse for a buck, and the hippy gurus in the satirical film *Candy* will claim any poetic-mystical tradition as their own if it means seducing the young, sexy, and impressionable protagonist.

Rather than foster radical or even ameliorative change, the charismatic authority instead triumphs by launching complaints into a frenzy that becomes finally, "justifiably," violent, which is what Badiou naively valorizes as the "event" (a radical break from the status quo). Weber's catch is that such a break from tradition is followed inevitably by normalization—though Badiou would prefer to say that the period after the radical event is when the subject is formed through a fidelity to the moment of break/inception. In this period of routinization, the "anti-economic" politics are "altered" (Weber, 369)—much as when avant-garde breaks inevitably forge *Norton Anthology*- sanctioned canons. Whether or not the radical break is constructive, destructive, or subtractive—assimilationist or separatist—it is guarded and guided by a charismatic authority, who inevitably profits from this "event."

By Žižek's Hegelian-Lacanian-Marxist formula, after negating the big Other of traditional authority, you can traverse the fantasy (without "killing" it) and then occupy its place, in a less "feminine, crippled" manner: now with Hegel's absolute knowledge, a *realpolitik* backbone. Žižek, like all charismatic authorities, is not against normalization, despite being anti-normal and anti-professional. Rather, he decries the regulated normalized decaffeinated antagonism of democratic ID politics (the frivolous, fanciful, and arbitrary) in favor of the hierarchically structured harmony that thrives on antagonism (the Maoist ideal).

Dictatorship becomes an easy pill to swallow after Žižek equates it with an ultra-authentic ideal of democracy, where the uncounted for *demos* stands up against the "ruling class." Allegedly, his utopia of proletarian dictatorship *would be* democratic, despite the fact that his masses are all lumped via a Hegelian-Marxist flight to "harmony" that is enforced with top-down measures—thus deriding any particularity—a Christian universalism against a Jewish particularism.

What Christian Universalist Freemasons miss is that despite their claims against factionalism and identity politics, they remain a faction of crusaders defending their identity. Like Badiou, Žižek claims to always be fighting for the "uncounted," as when he states, the "dictatorship of the proletariat [means] the direct empowerment of universality, so that those who are 'part of no-part' determine the tone" (Žižek). What he is proposing is only a top-down speedy universalization of the particular that has no cogency. If democracy is the master-signifier that claims to have eradicated master-signifiers, then Žižek's Communism is the transparent will-to-power of charismatic authority.

The will of the charismatic leader is not the will-of-all, and the two can never be forced into perfect equivalence—even if dissent and contradiction are incorporated into the regime, as with Maoism. But before we get ahead of ourselves, Žižek's celebration of Mao is not quite

what it seems: he is far less concerned with wrangling control of the state and more with publishing contracts, middle-class students, and cultural capital.

Where Mao or Pol Pot moved urban intellectuals to a farm, Žižek, queer theorists, and post-colonialists, only ask the reader to split-off from the part of themselves that is complicit and mindlessly, happily, engaging in Western capitalism. This bad, feminine, crippled, childish mind is sent to the work camp to be reformed, much as sensitivity training is given to comedians and politicians who "fuck up." There is no demand to change fiscal habits or to move to a commune. Just be smarter, cooler, and more with it.

Žižek's trick, following Rousseau's in *Emile*, is to let you enjoy the capitalist simulacrum (*amour-de-soi*) for long enough to traverse the fantasy, with him as your master-analyst guide. Eventually, you'll recognize that your quest for satisfaction is un-enjoyable, and that you can find more enjoyment by critiquing this quest, and surrendering your mental convictions too. As if the Coca-Cola injunction to enjoy were some stupid capitalist demand, while the academic injunction to *critique* enjoyment was holy radicalism.

What Žižek neglects to mention is that the only way to soar out of the phallic jouissance of capitalistic gambling and to enter the feminine jouissance of utopian love, is to hold all the chips. Much as free speech is only free if you have a voice. The crystallization of Žižek's charismatic tactics is his controversial support of terror. Following a claim that the US "war on terror" is bad because it uses state interference to quench true war, war of the people, war of individuals acting in their own interest, Žižek's position is not unlike Ayn Rand's anti-statist libertarianism or Carl Schmitt's argument that there can be no world peace or neo-Nazis decrying the self-righteous attempt to punish Germans for "war crimes." From Foucault to Žižek, unmediated violence is praised for not relying on decorum and polity. Foucault and Žižek and libertarians share an idea that liberty means access to originary violence and/or sexuality unmediated by the biopolitics of the state. Without his utopia being realized, the only practical politics Žižek performs is that of the libertarian freedom to say what he thinks within a competitive economy, to advocate for the violent causes he supports, and to remain protected by academic presses, institutional positions, (guns perhaps), and cultural/fiscal capital—despite the fact that he seems to be anti-individualism.

What Žižek calls a passion for the real, like Rousseau's passion for a just society, is governed always by the very primal father figure he claims to expose, one-up, denounce, and then sabotage. By suggesting that "fair and balanced" politics neglects to mention the society of control that covertly governs like a hidden maternal superego, he continually advocates a more authentic governance of real violence: nothing more than an impossible fantasy of philosopher-kingdoms. The closest thing we have is the EGS (European Graduate School).

Žižek paints a clear picture of how the game works—this is a game played across the spectrum of political leanings. All you need is the desire to have a charismatic rule. What makes Žižek exceptional is that his particular double-talk is exaggerated due to various contradictions in his career, persona, and writing—many of these contradictions showcase an acute and humorous

self-awareness of his role as capitalist charlatan, which he plays up in gags, interviews, and movies.

Žižek's gift for self-conscious humor does not make him unique or a genius. Rather, it adds a component to his artistry that is endearing to the American public because an ironic awareness of contradiction is a routine part of pop culture. But politically, this allows *us* to know that *he* knows his "passion for the unmediated real" is mediated while at the same time not allowing the shared awareness of this fact to stop it from having purchasing power. Or via Lacan, even if the big Other is inconsistent and voided, he is never dead.

Žižek remains stuck in the vacuum of Western politics that resulted from the tearing down of traditional authorities (feudal, rural, religious, and patriarchal) and resulted in the reign of arbitrary discourses competing not at the level of functionality, but rather at the level of rhetorical flourish. His only way out of this mess is to assert a realer real than the rest. He even claims his real is even less "forced" than his friend Badiou's. His claimed stake of the real requires a faith from devotees that only a charismatic authority can solicit. In his attempt to surpass decadent cynical atheism and postmodern language games, Žižek reverts to the cult of Supreme Being.

> *"So what about Robespierre's rather ridiculous attempt to impose a new civic religion celebrating a Supreme Being? Robespierre himself formulated succinctly the main reason for his opposition to atheism: "Atheism is aristocratic." Atheism was for him the ideology of the cynical-hedonistic aristocrats who lost all sense of historical mission." (Žižek)*

Despite his vested interest in despotic charismatic rule, Žižek will opportunistically use any example to further his cause. A rhetorical game that he has made light of by noting that he has not watched several of the films he writes about. But in full sincerity he references Percy Shelley's fanciful poethical anarchy as a claim that "the Imaginary" is necessary for revolution. His appropriation of lyrical poetics for his cause is as forced as Badiou's rather safe evocations of Mallarmé. Caught in a historical-linguistic slip, Žižek fails to realize that "the Imagination" to the Romantics would have meant the category of God-given truth that Coleridge endorsed and Shelley protested. It is this sort of despotic Imagination that Žižek endorses, the sliding metaphors of Shelley are out of his particular neurotic circuitry. Similarly, Badiou ought to ignore Mallarmé's use of chance operations to produce a pure art out of moments of inspiration, since his "events" are part of an inevitable dialectic that has no room for such aesthetic fancy—especially in its un-redemptive "art for arts sake" varieties.

And yet Žižek must as a rhetorician rely on fanciful stretched metaphors to invite readers into his stale Hegelian system. He knows that terror, or "the imposition of the new on the old," can never manifest simply through abstract ideals. Instead, revolutionary terror must be the reformulation of human life itself, as in Christ's manifestation of the Idea in mortal form (to be soon universalized by Žižek's patron Saint, Paul). Language games must be surpassed and

unmediated realness must prevail. That is, after they are self-consciously acknowledged. But in *Danton*, this fantasy breaks down when the child cannot repeat his father's maxims properly. The ruler and ruled cannot become truly equivalent. No wonder the Polish Left slammed the film upon its release (Frey, 62).

Sophie Wahnich's (Žižek-sanctioned) *In Defense of the Terror* makes clear that it was not "pity" for the suffering "bare life" of the child and peasant that motivated the revolution, but rather a passion for political rights. This is alleged to be a rebuttal to Arendt's (and later Agamben's) complaint that the sentimental and abstracted appeal to "bare life" has been used to justify whatever violence a radical tribunal orders. But what it reveals is that Wahnich, in the spirit of revolutionary terror, is not interested in diverse plights but only in abstracted ideals. The trouble Arendt is raising with "pity" is not that one should *not* care but rather that one should care more precisely than what propaganda affords. Wahnich then throws out pity altogether, one-upping French revolutionary discourse, and makes her political myopia all too clear.

Arendt makes a complex critique of deferring to the private 'pathos' of the poor, which she finds leads to extreme subjectivism and solipsism, as opposed to civil discourse. It does not invite people to speak in their oppositional and diverse plurality but stifles this public action in favor of abstract speech and ideals.

"Only where word and deed have not parted company, where words are not empty and deeds not brutal, where words are not used to veil intentions but to disclose realities, and deeds are not used to violate and destroy but to establish relations and create new realities " (HC, 200).

Wahnich and Žižek opt instead for a justice that is for the greater good of all people…and when the people don't know what's good for them, it is beaten into them. This is the terror that they call virtue, the *imposition* of the new on the old. In contrast stands Arendt's praxis, *opening* up to the *novum* through action and thought, as uneventful and slow as that may seem to dictatorial minds.

To those seeking charismatic rule, uninformed children are as gullible as the other inert masses waiting to be sculpted into an ideal Platonic form. Or as Mussolini put it, "Everything depends on mastering the masses like an artist" (Chytry, 43). Liberal education can provide a foil, where the "guiding hand" of the teacher remains concealed.

Unfortunately, in the marketplace of American liberal arts education, one can easily purchase the "praxis" model or the "disciplinary" model. The two can mix, so that students are tested on Paolo Friere after reading Spark Notes. What retreats into a matter of shopping preferences is the historical and psychological stakes of education tout court. There are endless attempts to switch to a more fluid, playful, creative, integrative, safe classroom. But what wins out is the mentality that ranks schools through statistical assessments of student pleasure and post-graduate income. Ironically, some of the most competitive and expensive schools in America are globally prized because they are places to chill out and not compete, while some of the least pleasurable schools are prized for churning out moneymakers. But in the promotional

catalogues of all liberal arts schools, we see students living a dream of leisure that's as free as a stroll through the forest of Rousseau's *Emile*. The guiding hand remains concealed even after it is revealed.

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If Climate “Changes Everything”, Why Does So Much Remain the Same?

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Introduction

Unlike #occupy and anti-austerity politics, the movement organized around the demand for “system change, not climate change”—the climate justice movement—has only continued to grow. For many, most prominently the Canadian author Naomi Klein in her new book, *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. The Climate*, this development places climate justice at the center of attempts to revive the project of the Left.

But with commitments by both China and the U.S. to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and a Papal encyclical that equates climate change with spiritual degradation, one is left with the distinct impression that discontents around climate change are readily being integrated back into the status quo. In fact, in the E.U., decarbonization of the economy became a feature of political stability long ago, and action on climate change figures nowhere in the current E.U. crisis, which centers on debt, austerity and a refugee crisis. Consequently, sustained activity around climate change seems poised to join other post-2008 protest movements which fell well below their aspiration for “changing everything.”

Clearly, one dimension of this failing is the opportunistic character of Democrats, E.U. politics, popes, etc. But as Adolph Reed Jr., writing in the 1970s about the ultimate failure of the Civil Rights movement to sustain itself beyond the 1960s (“Black Particularity Reconsidered” *Telos* 1979), reminds us: “The opposition must investigate its own complicity.” What then does the Left’s orientation around the climate justice movement fail to investigate about itself? Why hasn’t the Left managed to advance through a socioecological crisis of capitalism, even though the contemporary environmental movement and its critique of affluence has been a permanent fixture of political life for over forty years? And how might the Left’s conceptualization of capital-induced ecological degradation and the discontents surrounding climate change be implicated in its inability to (really) put revolutionary politics on the agenda?

Return to Marx

While asymmetrical flows of energy and resources from the Global South to the Global North (what scholars call “ecologically unequal exchange” and activists term “climate debt”) is a defining *effect* of neoliberal global capitalism, we must be clear: processes of uneven and combined development, unequal ecological exchange, and so on are not the cause of the problem of capitalism (and, by extension, environmental degradation) but rather its effect.

Similarly, Naomi Klein's latest work takes the manifold features of neoliberalism, including climate change, income inequity and the decline of public services, as being the central guiding structure of neoliberalism rather than the surface phenomena of a deeper social dynamic. For neither concrete exploitation (of land and labor) nor [Klein] can explain the structure of the system itself and its alien developmental logic, which, despite current efforts, no one controls and to which all are subject. While there have been numerous surface-level changes in capitalism since the nineteenth century, below we discuss how, at the general theoretical level, Marx remains essential for making sense of these changes, including their link to the deeper social dynamic of capitalism. Part of the problem associated with Klein's approach is that she treats discontents surrounding climate change (which we take as "surface-level" phenomena) as if they were somehow directly indicative of a more fundamental, underlying social dynamic—namely, the production of value (discussed below). Consequently, Klein cannot understand climate change discontents as a feature of capitalist society that nevertheless points beyond this deeper social dynamic toward a post-capitalist world.

It is for this reason that the Left has persistently been unable to link environmental politics across other forms of discontent with capitalism.[pullquote]. . . the Left has persistently been unable to link environmental politics across other forms of discontent with capitalism.[/pullquote] Instead, Klein defers to an unwavering commitment to new social movements, a consistent theme in her writing beginning in the 1990s around the anti-globalization movement. But as Klein is well aware, such movements proved largely disconnected in their challenge to neoliberalism in the 1990s. Yet, with climate change she takes these interests to now be increasingly unified and progressing towards change in what she characterizes as "blockadia." But Klein fails to contextualize this so-called 'progress' in relation to the transition (from post-Fordism to neoliberal global capitalism) within which it emerged and, as a result, is unable to register how political currents within society can change without, however, rendering capitalism more coherent. For Marx, on the other hand, discontents mean very little if not in relation to the crisis of bourgeois society—a form of society that becomes increasingly contradictory with the industrial revolution. Klein simply adapts to the seeming "coherence" of the political phenomena she encounters and assumes their "progressive" character. Of course, Klein calls for the valorization of labour etc. and may seemingly have much in common with Marx. For Klein, recovering Marx's point of departure would mean simply siding with the labor movement against corporations and climate change. But Marx saw much more at stake in the politics of the working class in the nineteenth century than an ongoing battle with corruption and the elite (e.g., the democratic concerns of the earlier French and American Revolutions). What Marx discerned was how the crisis being provoked by the working class was drawing attention to the possibility that the social currents during his time, which were actively undermining the ground of traditional forms of society, might themselves be transitional. The working class could change everything but only to the extent that it clarified the basis of this transition—namely, the crisis of bourgeois society—in what he came to understand as capital ("Capital in History" Cutrone, C. *Platypus Review* 2008).

Capital, history, and alienated labor

The conventional conceptualization of class identifies the exploitation of labor, hidden by the market exchange of commodities, as a defining feature of capitalist society. However, labor exploitation and markets existed well before the formation of classes under capitalism. If class is conceptualized solely in terms of concrete exploitation, then we have no way of distinguishing it from other historical forms of social organization. It is this inability to determine what is historically specific about capitalism that leads Klein, for example, to assume the problem of ecological degradation extends back to the Enlightenment. Yet, such an account is unable to explain how the accelerated pace of ecological degradation is so specifically related to the rise of capitalism, as well as how, within the historical developments of capitalism itself, inequity could possibly be reduced (i.e., as it was in most industrial countries in the two decades following WWII).

In the *Grundrisse,* Marx is very clear about what distinguishes capital in history—as something new—namely, a form of abstract, impersonal social domination: "*Personal independence* in the framework of a systematic *objective [sachlicher] dependence*" (quoted in Postone, 1993: 125 [translation amended]). This form of abstract domination is structured by a historically specific form of labor (what the early Marx called "alienation," which he later specified at various levels of social mediation).

As prominent Marxian scholar Moishe Postone emphasizes: "The nonpersonal, abstract 'objective' form of domination characteristic of capitalism (…) refers to the domination of people by abstract, quasi-independent structures of social relations, mediated by commodity-determined labor" (*Time, Labor, and Social Domination,* 1993: 125-6). If labor is bonded in traditional society and becomes a social bond in bourgeois society, it becomes *the* form of social domination with the advance of capitalism.

Treadmill of production of surplus value

According to Marx, commodity-determined labor is characterized by a historically-specific double character in the form of abstract value-creating labor and concrete useful labor. The double-character of labor constitutes a form of abstract domination, which structures the two dimensions of the value-form of the commodity (e.g., use-value/exchange-value; concrete labor/abstract labor; wealth/value, etc.) that characterize the social forms in capitalism.

More specifically, the two dimensions of the social forms in capitalism are related through the commodity form of labor as a function of time. The exchange-value of a commodity, including labor, is determined by the time socially necessary for its reproduction. The structure of modern capitalist society, according to Marx, is determined by the drive to produce surplus value and capitalize on labor (measured in socially necessary labor time). Hence, the constant need to produce value above the exchange-value of the labor employed (i.e., surplus value). Following Marx, it is important to bear in mind that the reference point for socially necessary labor time, as the determination of a commodity's magnitude of value, is society as a whole.

Figure 1 below depicts the production of relative surplus value and its expansion required by

capital. This process—initially theorized by Marx—has been elaborated most fully by Moishe Postone in his book, *Time, Labor, and Social Domination* (1993). Postone explicates a dialectic of labor and time, whereby the social labor hour and base level of productivity are moved forward in time, giving rise to a particular "treadmill" dynamic, which we refer to as *the treadmill of production of value*. Our use of the "treadmill" metaphor is also an intention allusion to the well-known "treadmill of production" (ToP) concept advanced by the American environmental sociologist Allan Schnaiberg. However, Schnaiberg focuses solely on the production of *wealth*, which he specifies in relation to the environmental impact of increasing use-value output. Our metaphor of the ToP of *value*, on the other hand, emphasizes the temporal dimension of Marx's concept of capital as self-expanding value (more on this below), which, in turn, redirects focus toward the growing contradiction between *wealth* (measured in terms of the quantity and quality of products produced) and *value* (whose magnitude is a function of the expenditure of abstract labor time).

Figure 1. Treadmill of Production of Value

In fully developed capitalism, once the working day has been limited, relative surplus value is effected by increasing productivity (so as to yield a larger output per hour worked). But, as Postone explains, this is only effective indirectly, for once a given level of productivity becomes general at the level of society as a whole, this then becomes the basis against which a new socially necessary labor hour is measured: although increases in productivity turn out greater quantities of material wealth and reduce socially necessary labor time, these developments do not change the total value produced per abstract time unit because the "constant" time unit itself is determined by productivity as a function of the use-value dimension of commodity-determined labor (292). In this sense, the social labor hour, although constant, undergoes what Postone refers to as a "substantive redetermination"—that is to say, "with increased productivity, the time unit becomes 'denser' in terms of the production of goods" (292). However, the retention of direct human labor in the production process, as that which underlies the value form, becomes increasingly anachronistic in the face of the immense wealth-producing potential of industry. As Marx notes in the *Grundrisse,* "The theft of alien labor time, on which the present wealth is based, appears a miserable foundation in the face of this new one, created by large-scale industry."

Although the wealth/value contradiction points beyond capital, it does not automatically undermine the necessity represented by value, for each "new" hour (and, by extension each increase in productivity), produces and is reproduced by our actions (i.e., the necessity of work in capitalist society). It is in this sense that the social necessity of socially necessary labor time is quasi-objective—that is, an "external" social necessity which we're forced to enact (i.e., alienation as self-generated domination). Similarly, although the environmental impact and uneven distribution of the ToP of *wealth* is becoming increasingly obvious, contrary to Klein's claim that that climate change changes everything, the underlying process at work remains

concealed because the ToP of *value* is not immediately apparent at the "surface-level" of society.

According to Marx, capital is "self-expanding value" which '*preserves* itself only by *constantly multiplying itself*' (*Capital, Volume 1).* The ToP of value is propelled forward by capital and as such, dictates the form economic growth must take. The temporality of the ToP of value is characterized by accelerating productivity growth so as to produce as many commodities as possible as rapidly as possible. This so-called "capital time," in turn, demands accelerating biophysical throughput. The nature of the contradiction between material *wealth* (measured in terms of the quantity and quality of products produced) and *value* (whose magnitude is a function of the expenditure of abstract labor time) therefore calls attention to how the social-ecological tensions underlying modern society are structured by a historically-specific form of human activity (commodity-determined labor).

Dialectic of Transformation and Reconstitution

In the *Grundrisse*, written over 150 years ago, Marx identifies a tension that is strikingly similar to our current ecological predicament—namely, the perpetuation of a self-destructive form of social organization in the face of the objective imperative to do otherwise: "Capital itself is the moving contradiction, [in] that it presses to reduce labour time to a minimum, while it posits labour time, on the other side, as sole measure and source of wealth." The growing disparity between the accumulated historical potential of humanity and the production of value does not, however, automatically undermine the necessity represented by value. While strands of environmentalist thought since at least the 1972 study, *The Limits to Growth*, have posited finitude (of natural resources) alongside a critique of the expansionary logic of economic growth—that is, a critique of the ToP of *wealth* (increasing levels of use-value output), the logic of the treadmill itself can only be grasped in light of the *value* dimension. Without such critical recognition we risk enabling capitalism to advance, precisely because we are unable to recognize what it is.

The most insidious aspect of the treadmill, which has eluded green thinkers of all persuasions, is the dynamic process whereby the necessity of value is continuously established in the present (Postone, 1993). Following Postone, the necessity of value is continually established in the present through a dialectic of transformation and reconstitution of the two dimensions of the commodity form. We alluded to this previously when, in discussing the treadmill of production of value and capital time, we mentioned the dialectic of labor and time, whereby the social labor hour and base level of productivity are moved forward in time. At the level of totality (i.e., capital), Marx's analysis of the valorization process, including what we call the ToP of value, "involves a dialectic of transformation and reconstitution that results from the dual nature of the commodity form and from the two structural imperatives of the value form of wealth—the drive toward increasing levels of productivity and the necessary retention of direct human labor in production" (Postone, 1993: 308).

Following Postone (308), Figure 2 depicts the ToP of value with regard to: 1) ongoing

transformations at the surface level of immediate appearance (the concrete, material wealth dimension) and 2) the continual reconstitution of the underlying conditions necessary for the production of value (the value dimension). In Figure 2 the twofold character of labor—the active mediation between the material wealth and value dimensions—is indicated by the solid lines, whereas the two structural imperatives of the value form of wealth (the drive toward increasing levels of productivity, on the one hand, and the necessary retention of direct human labor in production, on the other) are indicated by the dashed lines.

Figure 2. Dialectic of transformation and reconstitution

Neoliberalism and contemporary environmentalism

The Marxian critical theory framework outlined above allows one to gain a better understanding of the spread of neoliberalism and the concomitant growth of environmentalism. The onset of neoliberalism in the 1970s marks a transition from what Friedrick Pollack termed "state capitalism." In state capitalism the precipitous decline in industrial output that plagued the 1930s was overcome through state planning and coordination of the economy. This shift resulted in tremendous advancements in productivity and related forms of accumulated knowledge that fueled the post-WWII spike in environmental degradation; an approach to development that environmentalist critics characterize as productivism. These developments also entailed massive transformations in social life. The technologies associated with the productivist dimensions of state capitalism, for example, allowed the mass production of commodities, which in turn allowed a decline in prices and facilitated a mass consumer market. The discontents articulated by the environmental movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s expressed the fact that a productivist industrial society is not adequate to the well-being of the natural environment.

But precisely when it became possible to question the ecological impacts of the capitalist work regime during the 1970s, the necessity of this regime reasserted itself: as unemployment rates skyrocketed, "work" became a matter of increasing social necessity. Although the early environmentalist criticism was articulated at a time when the material expansion of the post-WWII regime had developed to such an extent that it became possible to question its necessity, the development of contemporary environmentalism did not correspond to a related shift in how society was organized. In fact, the exact opposite happened as the growth of environmentalism during the 1970s and 1980s corresponded to the advent and continuation of neoliberalism.

The crisis of state-centric capitalism (measured by a general decline in the rate of profit) during the mid-1970s incited a sweeping restructuring of capital that continues to this day. We have already mentioned the spike in unemployment and the resurgence of the necessity of work that accompanied this economic downturn. Other important developments include trends commonly associated with "neoliberal" capitalism: financialization, the shift toward monetary, supply side economics bolstered by the nation state, the transformation of business and labor,

and the creation of an infrastructure conducive to the formation of a global economy. The restructuring of capital in neoliberal form is an attempt to reconstitute the underlying structural preconditions for the capitalist production of value discussed above.

The Left's inability to organize discontents around ecological degradation arise from confusion over two issues, which have dogged progressive forces since the 1960s—namely, productivism and its connection to the problem of redistribution. The Left's orientation around the climate justice movement, for example, foregrounds the issue of redistribution (e.g., "carbon debt," "ecologically unequal exchange," etc.) but opposes redistribution predicated on productivism. While such an approach correctly identifies the great ramping-up of ecologically destructive patterns of development that took form in the 1930s, the notion that socialism would reconcile the capitalism-nature antithesis by decoupling productivism from redistribution is highly suspect. Such an approach misses the historical connection between socialism and state capitalism (1930s), the crisis of state capitalism and the emergence of contemporary environmentalism (1960s), as well as the failure of the Left to advance this crisis (the emergence of a New Right in neoliberalism) (see "When was the crisis of capitalism" Cutrone, C. *Platypus Review* 2014). Consequently, the Left's orientation around the climate justice movement appears backward-looking; as both as an attempt to defend the vestiges of "state capitalism"—under changed circumstances—as well as a reflection of how productivism is transformed under neoliberalism. The Left is unable to bring about "system change" through climate change because it is unable to make historical sense out of the ways in which ecological degradation and discontents are intimately connected to the transformations that have taken place within capitalism itself. Rather than conceptualizing these discontents as somehow "outside" capital-induced ecological degradation, the Left would need to regard how such discontents are bound up with, yet nevertheless point beyond, capitalism. What the strategies and possibilities for this type of action might be cannot be directly predetermined by the research at hand, but certainly the contradiction between wealth and value, particularly the ambivalent meaning of the "superfluousness" of labor in capitalism, needs to be (re)considered in light of the foregoing discussion.

Pulling the emergency brake

Last winter in *New Politics* the prominent ecosocialist Michael Löwy pointed out that by the 1930s socialists had adopted a narrow focus on productivism and redistribution of industrial surpluses in state capitalism. Although state capitalism (particularly the 1940s to the 1960s) effectively reduced income disparity in industrial countries to levels not since seen, Löwy is correct to draw attention to Walter Benjamin's call to pull the "emergency break" on this form of historical development. But Löwy, paralleling Klein, takes the "emergency brake" that Benjamin is calling for as one centered on the "locomotive" of productivism, rather Benjamin's actual focus, on the problematic approach that Marxists took to history in the 1930s. What Benjamin is taking for granted (a feature largely obscure in the present) is that Marxists in the early twentieth century had assumed a linear and progressive notion of history (characterized under various terms—'revisionism', 'economism', 'reformism', etc.), and hence a progressive concept of the advancing necessity for socialism. Although this notion was effectively

challenged by a younger generation who viewed themselves as being Orthodox to Marx (Lenin in Russia and Rosa Luxemburg in Germany) resulting in a revolutionary upsurge after WWI, Benjamin wrote of the "emergency brake" (1940) after it was clear that this challenge had entirely collapsed.

Löwy and Klein's approaches may carefully steer clear of productivism, but they do so in a manner that recapitulates (in a far weaker and less political form) progressive notions of historical development characteristic of 1930s Marxism: both (mistakenly) assume a straightforward, rather than dialectical, relation between discontents, climate justice and neoliberalism. Indeed, this is what allows them to envision a growing social basis for revolutionary social transformation. The nexus of this transformation, according to this perspective, does not lay at the heart of capital, but among those displaced by its relentless logic (e.g., the actors of "blockadia" such as indigenous people, small-land holders and dwellers of massive urban slums with no prospects of employment). In the same way, Marxists in the 1930s felt confident that the deepening misery associated with the economic crisis would bring about a renewed wave of revolution and not the deepening of state capitalism.

What Walter Benjamin may be trying to indicate to us—exactly seventy-five years later—is that we must pull the "emergency brake" on the notion that discontents lead automatically to "system change." As a distant and weak ghost, he is reminding us of the catastrophe that attended the proliferation of vulgar one-sided conceptions of capitalism. This would include pulling the emergency brake on the various "economistic" arguments that motivate the climate justice movement, in which neoliberalism is narrowly conceived as the victory of the economy over "values."

If climate change indicates anything, perhaps it's a reminder of Benjamin's insight that the Left changes very little in the present, precisely because we fail to consider capitalism dialectically. He reminds us that we will only create new horrors unless we task ourselves with understanding and practically taking hold of the complex and dynamic character of capitalist society. Klein's assertion that climate change "calls for strategy, clear deadlines, dogged focus— all of which are sorely missing from most progressive movements at the moment" (134) is invariably essential to political action, but it parallels the calls for urgent and concerted action that Benjamin could foresee as heading off a cliff. We urgently need a better conception of how ecological degradation and political change are integrated if the Left is to consciously provoke a social crisis that could truly put "system change" back on the agenda.

Capitalism, half-Bildung and Social Inequality

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

According to conventional thinking, the task of the educational system is to educate the next generation. This assumption is both true and not true. On the one hand, it is true, because after the implementation of state educational institutions pupils were taught how to use language, to speak and to write, to do math, and to learn other competencies thought to be useful to "survive" one's everyday life. Language is not just a crucial matter in order to homogenize a nation, but using language is a necessity to participate in a given formation of society. To read the Bible and to sing the psalms, it was necessary to have the capability to read; to understand the principalities' regulations that have been hung out, it was necessary to be able to read; and, later on, to read instructions in order to operate industrial machines properly, it was (and still is) necessary to be able to read.[1]

The same applies to math. After the introduction of money as general exchange value, people had to be able to carry out at the minimum easy calculations, in order to participate as buyer and seller of commodities on the market place. Later on, in the course of industrialization, the increase of administration, and the more rigid calculation of structured production processes, mathematical procedures were increasingly necessary to pave the way towards conceptualizing and constructing the organization of society.

On the other hand, it is not true, because one crucial goal of formal education has always been to serve the interests of the leading elites. This can be observed throughout the ongoing trajectory of Western history. Quantity (the number of people being educated) and quality of education (the minimum extent of education and knowledge to be able to function) was and is essentially dependent on the exercise of maintaining the social status quo, i.e. structuring and legitimizing societal power. In this context; language is more than just a technique or a tool to communicate: it is the manifestation of social class conditions constituted by the formal institutions of education, distributing life chances.[2] The middle-class is the target-group of schooling and therefore education is constructed in the way to deal with children and juveniles from that societal group. One major constituent of school success is, besides the (social acknowledged) habitus formation[3], the way in which pupils and students are capable of expressing themselves which, following Bernstein, concerns the use of elaborated and restricted codes. Using restricted language codes refers to coming from a lower-class background. Restricted language lacks the necessary context and thus conceals the meaning of the conversation for outsiders, i.e. people that are not using these group-specific codes. Enciphered by specific wording, and the absence of relatedness, meaning is just insinuated but not actually expressed. The organization of schooling is manufactured to support elaborated

language codes, which is communication that is spoken and written by both the teaching staff and middle class children and juveniles. It is about functionalized language, i.e. the communicative competence to serve the demands of the labor market. This kind of utilized language must be well proportioned.

On the one hand, restricted language codes do not serve the means of general understanding and on the other hand, the language of poems and “dead languages” (Greek and Latin), do go beyond the sphere of direct utilization, as well as bear the danger of intellectually inspired resistance against economic abuse. When language can be understood as a class-related constituent, mathematics appears to be an objective expression of science. As such, numbers are the abstracted representation of categorized reality, thus having a direct impact on our way of thinking. Or as Adorno and Horkheimer puts it in the Dialectic of Enlightenment:

“Mathematical procedure became a kind of ritual of thought. Despite its axiomatic self-limitation, it installed itself as necessary and objective: mathematics made thought into a thing—a tool, to use its own term.”[4]

Instrumental and methodological reason based on quantification and categorization of the world that is used to order, administrate, and dominate contemporary knowledge-based competition, actually impedes and hinders intellectual development.[pullquote]Instrumental and methodological reason based on quantification and categorization of the world that is used to order, administrate, and dominate contemporary knowledge-based competition, actually impedes and hinders intellectual development.[/pullquote] This kind of reasoning, coordinated with the filter of quantifiable performance, is the regression of curiosity driven interest in knowledge. Everything that is not applicable to categories and modes of thinking perpetuating the process of commodification, production, and the sphere of consumerism is undesirable, lacking assent and legitimation from the profiteers and administrators of the contemporary formation of society.

The bond between domination and knowledge is obvious throughout history. Knowledge upholds and supports the ruling classes by the means of technical possibilities, promising progression as a guarantee for linear societal advancement, securing the social status quo, and thus existing social power relations. At present, with the inauguration of labor market focused institutions of education, the organization of formal education has been concerned with the realization and legitimization of social selection procedures aimed at reproducing the given class formation. This is done by adjusting and disciplining new generations to learn and cultivate given social values and norms, internalizing and accepting the given power constellation.

The task of education is irrevocably related to the social promise of modernity, i.e. to follow the path of enlightenment in order to dominate nature, guarantee physical survival, and to strive for a democratic and, humanist society. The decay of the latter aspect is hidden behind the success of the domination and exploitation of nature and the majority of the population — the working class. Even if the working class appears today to be vanished, it is still in existence.

The fine separation between differentiating categories like white and blue collar worker and the exchange of the wording “class” in favor of social milieus serves to embellish social relations in a capitalist formation of society. The means of production, the stock market’s share proportions, and economic profit are still in the hand of a few individuals, whereas the majority of society is occupied in making a living. Class-relations still exist; they are just a hidden social fact. To change structural social inequality, based on the exploitation of the majority of the population by the few, it is necessary to reveal the hidden curriculum of education serving the (re)production of societal elites and power holders.

Already in 1976, Bowles and Gintis revealed the primacy of the economy within the educational system, pointing to the hidden curriculum of formal education legitimized by the concept of meritocracy, IQ, and the readiness to accept the given social order. In this context, they made clear that institutional (state) education is middle-class socialization, (re-)producing the given societal power formation. Controlled social mobility within the range of the middle class strengthens the myth of the American dream by continuous repetitions of the promise that assiduity pays off and good performance will be rewarded with just wages.[5] Confusing the economic organization of society with political governance by claiming that capitalism and democracy are naturally related, denigrates and silences all serious attempts to critique ongoing social inequalities based on capitalist class contradictions, expressed in property rights and disposal over the organization of the means of production. Even if democracy and capitalism are supporting a

> *kind of freedom in distinct realms of social life (…) they are sharply contrasting rules regulating both the process of human development and the historical evolution of whole societies: the one is characterized by the preeminence of economic privilege based on property rights, the other insists on the priority of liberty and democratic accountability based on the exercise of personal rights.[6]*

There is nothing like exploitation with a human face. In favor of technological progress in order to attain the illusion of unlimited consumption, the “quest for the good-life” promised by the Enlightenment has been shelved. Capitalism and democracy are inevitably led by mutually conflicting interests. Education, thus, is trapped between these two antagonistic positions. On the one hand, education has to educate to labor, enabling a human’s capacity to satisfy basic needs. On the other hand, education has to keep the promises of enlightenment and emancipation, i.e. to set up the intellectual and ethical foundation to provide self-determination and a happy life within a democratic formation of society. Education *appears* to balance the political and the economic system’s claim to leadership. But the vision of a truly democratic formation of society, constituted by cultural values representing humanistic ideals, has already been neglected or delayed. Instead of supporting humanity and solidarity, the education system — as one of the major agents of socialization — is utilized by the existing ruling classes and the dominating Western culture in order to develop individuals towards becoming functioning members of capitalist society. The aim is the the acceptance, internalization, and mediation of

social norms and values perpetuating the status quo. The guiding principles of education to fulfill the dream of a life without oppression and coercion have been curtailed. What is left is the pure political and economic exploitation of education.

The ongoing deterioration and economic instrumentalization of education is a focus of Adorno's theory of half-Bildung. The theory seeks to address the aspects of alienation and reification concealed in contemporary education. To grasp the lack of intellectual action, it is crucial to understand the tendencies towards anti-enlightenment which constitute today's educational institutions, making critical consciousness impossible. In this respect, Adorno writes that the state of "Bildung", that is the German conception of education defined as aiming towards maturity in the sense of social judgement, political consciousness, reflexivity and competence of action[7], has declined into half-Bildung (*Halbbildung*).

> *What Bildung has turned into, sedimented as a sort of negative objective spirit, and not only in Germany, was itself derived from social laws of movement, even from the concept of Bildung itself. It has become socialized half-Bildung, the ever-presence of the alienated spirit.[8]*

According to Adorno, half-Bildung is a socialized regression of culture.[pullquote]According to Adorno, half-Bildung is a socialized regression of culture.[/pullquote] Half-education is not the mathematical absence of a percentage of Bildung as such. The state of half-Bildung is worse than not-knowing at all. The latter state of mind bears still the opportunity to gain a critical consciousness via the appropriation of the antagonistic societal realities, whereas the first state of mind is already reificated, i.e. a process of the withering away of revolutionary potentials, visible in the rejection of critical consciousness. It is the reification of human consciousness, the submission of Bildung under the rule of production and consumption processes. The latter aspect refers to the incorporation of all matters of education in order to train for labor and technical innovation, creating profit as well as ensuring conformity to the social status quo within the given society. Turning education simply into an instrument means education is to be the driving force to enable individuals to compete on the labor market, generating a higher income by collecting "useable" knowledge. The first aspect, i.e. the coagulation of culture, can be described as a musealization of culture, i.e. is the fixation and fragmentation of cultural elements serving the categorization of social "habitus formations." This kind of culture is a part of feudalist and bourgeois' history, separated from everyday life and thus not being related to the matters of the working class. It is historically connected to the consumption sphere of the upper class profiting from the time stolen from the working class in order to create added-value. Following Adorno, "half-Bildung is the spirit that has been captured by the commodity's fetish character".[9] In its double character, half-Bildung expresses both, the contemporary alienation of the working as well as the bourgeois class' consciousness. Half-Bildung is the destruction of all what Bildung is and thus the promises of enlightenment; the emancipation of mankind from submission, exploitation, and class domination based on a just distribution of all of society's wealth. Education should be about the opportunity for self-realization, not only

providing the pre-condition of possibility, but actual opportunities for self-realization in non-alienated work. Being aware of the nearly impossible task of Bildung, Adorno concludes in the "Theory of half-Bildung":

> *If in the meantime the spirit only does what is socially correct, as long as it does not dissolve into society in an undifferentiated identity, anachronism is upon us: clutching to Bildung after society has destroyed its foundations. But it has no other means of survival than critical reflection on half-Bildung, which becomes essential for it.[10]*

The alienated consciousness solidifies and consolidates the societal economic relations concealing social contradictions. It is thus the objective production of the subjective condition, making the objective possible understanding impossible.[11] Also critique is instrumentalized, for the half-Gebildete ("half-educated" person) uses shrewdness, i.e. degenerated critique being above all improvement and better understanding, as a mean to attain a better social position.

The analysis of the conditions of the ongoing decay of Bildung is a first step to (re-)gain critical consciousness by the means of reviving Bildung as potential liberation of man from societal coercions within the capitalistic formation of (Western) societies. In that sense overcoming the state of half-Bildung might serve as a possibility for critical awareness and consciousness in order to (re-)discover its original task of self-determination and thus human development.

Notes

[1] von Friedeburg, Ludwig (1989). *Bildungsreform in Deutschland. Geschichte und gesellschaftlicher Widerspruch*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

[2] Bourdieu, Pierre/Passeron, Jean Claude (1971). *Die Illusion der Chancengleichheit: Untersuchungen zur Soziologie des Bildungswesens am Bespiel Frankreichs*. Stuttgart: Ernst Klett Verlag; Bowles, Samuel/Gintis, Herbert (1978). Pädagogik und die Widersprüche der Ökonomie. Das Beispiel USA. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

[3] Bourdieu, Pierre 1998: *Die feinen Unterschiede: Kritik der gesellschaftlichen Urteilskraft.* Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

[4] Horkheimer, Max/Adorno, Theodor W. (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment. Philosophical Fragments.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, (p. 19)

[5] Bowles, Samuel/Gintis, Herbert (1978). *Pädagogik und die Widersprüche der Ökonomie. Das Beispiel USA*. Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp.

[6] Bowles, Samuel/Gintis, Herbert (1986). *Democracy and Capitalism. Property, Community,*

and the Contradictions of Modern Social Thought. New York: Basic Books, (p. 3)

[7] See Sünker, Heinz (2006). *Politics, Bildung and Social Justice. Perspectives for a Democratic Society. Rotterdam/Taipei: Sense Publishers.*

[8] Adorno, Theodor W. 1997: Theorie der Halbbildung, in: Adorno, Theodor W., Gesammelte Schriften 8. .(pp. 93-121) Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp , (p. 93)

[9] Adorno, Theodor W. 1997: Theorie der Halbbildung, in: Adorno, Theodor W., Gesammelte Schriften 8. .(pp. 93-121) Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp , (p. 109)

[10] Adorno, Theodor W. 1997: Theorie der Halbbildung, in: Adorno, Theodor W., Gesammelte Schriften 8. .(pp. 93-121) Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp , (p. 121)

[11] see Adorno, Theodor W. 1997: Theorie der Halbbildung, in: Adorno, Theodor W., Gesammelte Schriften 8. .(pp. 93-121) Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp , (p. 117)

Hollywood and the “Forever War.”

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

In his book length journalistic accounts of the Iraq war (2003-2011) and the Afghanistan war (2001-the present) Dexter Filkins, who covered those conflicts for the New York Times and now writes for The New Yorker, referred to them in his title as the “Forever War (2008)” Clearly, that is how those wars must feel to the American public, which in various polls have overwhelmingly shown a desire to be free of those foreign entanglements. But there seems little likelihood at this horrific moment, when ISIS has spread their terror into the streets of Paris that this will happen. The wars will continue and probably intensify, and refugees will proliferate without an end point.

Unlike Filkins and the American public opinion polls, our popular culture, especially our films have not caught up to those feelings in term of representing those wars. And like the era of the Vietnam War, Hollywood, perhaps because of the divisive feelings arouse by those wars, (See our *How the War Was Remembered: Hollywood and Vietnam [1988]*) have ventured very few efforts to depict those wars. However, in recent years there have been a few films such as *Zero Dark Thirty (2012), Lone Survivor (2013),* and *American Sniper* (2014) that have begun to portray the “Forever War.”

The team of Kathryn Bigelow and Mark Boal, who directed and wrote the Academy Award winning Iraq war film *Hurt Locker* (2009), produced *Zero Dark Thirty* (Special Ops speak for 12:30 AM). They begin their film with an especially chilling moment of a totally dark screen over which we hear the desperate calls for help of people trapped in the inferno (some making final cellphone calls to their loved ones) of the World Trade Center towers on 9/11. The film then moves ahead years to a scene in which a CIA agent, whose name is Dan (Jason Clarke), is seen torturing a captured Muslim, Amir (Reda Kateb). Seated in the room is Maya (Jessica Chastain) a CIA rookie, who has come to train at this CIA black site, somewhere in the Middle East. Uneasy but deeply involved, the red haired, alabaster-skinned, beautiful Maya sits with arms folded and attention riveted on the scene and ignores Dan’s admonition that “There is no shame if you want to watch from the monitor.”

Yet shame is exactly what many critics of the film felt when they denounced the film’s putative support of torture. Dan proceeds to water-board and confine the sleep deprived, cowering prisoner to a small box and taunt him by saying, “I own you, you belong to me.”

This kind of film critique, however, only confuses dramatization with endorsement. As a matter of fact throughout the film there are numerous examples of arguments that torture does not work. And even the hardened, torturer extraordinaire Dan, who has no reservations about what he does, says to Maya, “You don’t want to be the last one holding the dog collar when the

oversight committee comes."

Clearly, left-leaning documentarian Michael Moore, no apologist, for American policy and tactics in Iraq, saw the film very differently from those who condemned it's seeming collusion with torture: "It will make you hate torture. And it will make you happy you voted for a man (Obama) who stopped all that barbarity." He also quotes Bigelow as calling torture "reprehensible." Though Moore is aware the average person still may take the film wrong, seeing it as an endorsement of CIA tactics.

But the film, centers on Maya, who is monomaniacal in her relentless quest to capture or kill Osama Bin Laden. Unlike other Hollywood thrillers, the film doesn't grant the tough-talking, severe, utterly professional Maya the least bit of a backstory or even the remotest hint of romance—nothing to mute her doggedness. As a matter of fact the only relationship the socially awkward Maya has in the film is a friendship with a fellow female CIA operative Jessica (Jennifer Ehle), whose death in a terrorist attack (a seamlessly constructed, tension-ridden scene) only increases Maya's desire to realize the goal of getting Osama Bin Laden.

Since, the film's focus is both on Maya's quest and on the successful assault on Bin Laden's hideout—shot from the point of view of the Navy Seals— it would take an audience member who was already skeptical about the CIA to look critically at the film's use of torture. What makes that more difficult is that the final section of the film is a striking set piece where we watch through the Seal's green night vision glasses the unfolding attack (a hand held camera giving us a genuine feel of their entering the compound) and killing of Bin Laden. It's a sequence that leaves you sitting anxiously on the edge of your seat, and provides audiences with a real payoff—the death of Bin Laden.

This narrative has become the official version of the death of Bin Laden. Recently it has been challenged by celebrated investigative reporter Seymour Hersh in an article in the *London Review of Books* (May 21,2015) and the issues raised by him in a review article that recently appeared in the *New York Times Magazine* (October 18, 2015)

Zero Dark Thirty does not explicitly endorse torture, but it doesn't denounce it either. Still, there is no avoiding being repelled by the powerful mages of the CIA's use of torture that open the film. However, Bigelow has made a film whose political perspective is totally subordinated to the primacy of its narrative; action taking precedence over reflection. and analysis.

The film's politics on the deepest level may rest with the fact that it's directed by a woman (Kathryn Bigelow), produced by a woman (Megan Ellison), distributed by a woman (Amy Pascal, the co-chairman of Sony Pictures), and starring one. The narrative is ultimately about an agency dominated mostly by men, who tend to be dismissive of women, where one driven, uncomfortable woman brings about one of its greatest triumphs.

In contrast to *Zero Dark Thirty* Peter Berg's (*Friday Night Lights*) film *Lone Survivor* (2013) is about another manhunt that goes disastrously and tragically wrong. Based on Marcus Lutrell's book of the same title, Berg's account depicts a raid by Seals in Afghanistan, to capture or kill a

Taliban leader, Ahmed Shah. Of the 19 men sent out in the operation, as the title of Luttrell's book tells us, only one survived.

Berg's film is not about politics but about how men deal with battle. At the beginning of the film we are introduced to the four main characters, Matthew "Axe" Avelson (Ben Foster), Danny Dietz (Emile Hirsch), Michael Murphy (Taylor Kitsch), and Marcus Lutrell (Mark Wahlberg), as they banter casually before the mission. They are never really individuated—though Lutrell is depicted as the most morally sensitive of the group–unwilling to kill prisoners who if let go would inform the Taliban. The men are just fearless, committed soldiers that inhabit an all-male universe built on a sense of loyalty–"my brothers."

Once the attacks begin the men demonstrate their courage and professionalism. Surrounded by the Taliban, they keep fighting despite grievous wounds and a forbidding, mountainous terrain. As one by one the team succumbs to their wounds, despite repeated assurances to the question, "Can you still fight?" the film gives off of a sense of tragic inevitability. For despite their bravery, and the film's generally patriotic vision, it emphasizes the suffering of the men as much as their heroism.

It's a film where non-stop action is central, and dialogue is secondary. *Lone Survivor* is an extremely visceral work, with sound effects tracing a bullet's impact on flesh and bone and bullets ricocheting off rocks, blood spurting from wounds, and fluid cutting capturing the Seals falling down a rocky, jagged mountainside.

The film's most sentimental sequence is when a sympathetic Pashtun villager—handsome and noble– finds the severely wounded Lutrell, and protects him from the Taliban. It may have happened that way, but throwing the man's liquid-eyed, watchful, totally sympathetic young son into the mix—he helps save Lutrell from a Taliban killer— is all too much. (Lutrell embraces and even kisses him on the head to offer thanks.) One of the film's final scenes where the American troops and helicopters come to save the day—reminds one of films where the cavalry arrived just in the nick of time to save the settlers from the Indians.

If the film has no overt political point, it does tell us despite obvious technological advantages (though the film criticizes the operation planning involved) the Americans were ill equipped to confront an implacable enemy amidst an alien culture that inhabited a harsh environment. It also repeats what is self-evident, ordinary soldiers fight much less for ideology than because of their bond to their comrades.

One of the biggest grossers of 2014, in addition to receiving six Oscar nominations, Clint Eastwood's controversial *American Sniper* (2015) took a stab at depicting the human costs of war — psychological and physical — while still leaving us cheering its war-loving hero. Eastwood follows a long tradition of American war films that gave us *Sergeant York* (1941), the story of the Tennessean who killed 38 Germans and captured 132 in World War One, and *To Hell and Back* (1955) the story of Medal of Honor winner and future movie star, Audie Murphy, who killed hundreds of Germans in World War Two.

Eastwood's central figure and hero is the emotionally low key, tightly wrapped Chris Kyle (Bradley Cooper), the Navy Seal whose 160 confirmed kills over four tours of duty in Iraq made him a "legend" to American troops–the deadliest sniper in U.S. military history.

In the film Kyle is a Texas rodeo cowboy raised by his macho father to love guns, and to be in his father's words a 'sheepdog"—a warrior and a hero who can use guns to protect his fellow citizens—instead of one of the non-violent sheep who need protection from the predatory murderous wolves that must be defeated. These are simplistic categories to define life by, but Eastwood's Kyle is neither a complex thinker nor at all self-reflective, and once in Iraq fully embraces his role as sheepdog.

Kyle goes through an arduous training that shapes men into fearless, indomitable fighting machines. Once "in country" Kyle becomes engaged in urban warfare in Fallujah by lying prone with a rifle on a rooftop providing cover for troops on the ground that are involved in house –to-house fighting. He is unerring in his marksmanship, but he still must decide whether the people he shoots are either terrorists or innocents. He pauses especially when children are involved, but he usually follows orders without hesitation. Kyle has no doubt that he is fighting for his country, his notion of God and for protecting his brother soldiers. He manifests almost no guilt about what he has done, though one knows that among his victims there are innocents as well as genuine terrorists.

Kyle is clearly worn down by the relentless combat he engages in, but is not capable of understanding what he feels. It is left for a fellow soldier Marc Lee (Luke Grimes), to express skepticism about the war, which an ideologically rigid Kyle has no time for, and in response reflexively asks: "Do you want them to attack San Diego or New York?"

But Eastwood still gives Lee's skepticism a significant place in the film. At Lee's funeral his mother reads the last letter that Lee sent home expressing criticism of the war: "Glory is something that some men chase and others find themselves stumbling upon, not expecting it to find them. Either way it is a noble gesture that one finds bestowed upon them. My question is when does glory fade away and become a wrongful crusade, or an unjustified means which consumes one completely?"

However, these are sentiments that Kyle has no room for. And Eastwood himself never raises questions about why we invaded Iraq and destroyed so many lives, including our own, in the process. It is a given in this ahistorical film that the war is a just and necessary one, and the enemy are "savages." In fact, shooting the film from the point of view of Kyle and the other Americans convinces us that the enemy is barely human. In fact, there are no innocent Iraqis depicted in the film (except interpreters) — they are either murderous insurgents or collaborators.

Eastwood nevertheless avoids totally sanitizing Kyle and his fellow soldiers experience in Iraq. He conveys what the war does to Kyle, who on his return to civilian life is totally disoriented and depressed. The sounds and images of war consume him, and he finds it hard getting back

to being a father and husband.

Nevertheless, Eastwood's film views Kyle as a hero. His alienation from civilian life is seen only as temporary, and he finds his way back by helping in the rehabilitation of other vets who lost limbs or were emotionally scarred by the war. His return to normality and to being a caring father comes too easily, the film never probing too deeply into Kyle's disorientated state.

Still *American Sniper* does convey that the Iraq war has its horrors and that no one come out unscathed (Kyle's being shot and killed by a disturbed veteran, who he is trying to help, exemplifies what the war did to many soldiers). However, the dark side of the war that Eastwood touches on is subsumed by his paean to the heroic and intensely patriotic Chris Kyle, and the film's uncritical take on the political basis of the Iraq War. There is no mention in the film of the Bush administration's big lie about the weapons of mass destruction that got us involved, or the fact that Iraq had nothing to do with 9/11. For whatever inner price Kyle suffered in Iraq, what's indelible for Eastwood is the heroism of this warrior with a rifle.

However, Eastwood's film also reminds of the proverb that, "In war all suffer defeat even the victors." And except for the brief victory of the killing of Osama Bin Laden in *Zero Dark Thirty*, the "Forever War "films provide little to give us any comfort or insight. Most significantly except for the brief evocation of 9/11, also in *Zero Dark Thirty,* there is very little to tell us about why we have engaged in this continuous struggle. This is hardly uncommon in films that try to portray unpopular wars while those wars are ongoing. But with the "Forever Wars" one wonders if the end will ever come. There are moments that the quagmire seems eternal. Or if as a woman dressed in a burka in Afghanistan once said to Dexter Filkins, "We are stuck here in this cursed place**.**"

Steve Fraser, The Age of Acquiescence: The Life and Death of American Resistance to Organized Wealth and Power. New York: Little, Brown. 2015.

By | 2016: vol. 15, no. 1

Steve Fraser has taken a bold, sweeping look at US history, ultimately seeking to answer the question of why there has been so little resistance to the great increase in economic dislocation and income inequality during the late 20th-early 21st centuries. A provocative and vexing question. Fraser believes that by plumbing the American experience from especially the Civil War to the Great Depression, he could find useful clues that, when applied to the post-1973 US, would provide, or at least suggest, answers. He first notes the great 'production explosion' during the later part of the 19th Century:

> *Already by 1886, America turned out more steel than Britain; by the end of the century its steel output exceeded that of the United Kingdom and Germany combined. Broader comparisons were even more striking. The value of what American manufacturers produced was twice that of the United Kingdom and half as great as that of the whole European continent. Between 1850 and 1880 factory output in Britain rose by 100 percent; in America by 600 percent. There were more miles of railroads and telegraph lines than all of Europe. The United States led the world in the production of virtually every strategic industrial commodity, including steel, coal, gold, timber, silver, oil, telephone, telegraph, electric lighting, machine tools, hardware, and locomotives.(pp. 34-35).*

Fraser notes the human cost to this production. First, the pre-industrial societies had been destroyed, with all of the social destabilization it engendered: people went from living by the seasons and living by nature's "clocks" and being responsible primarily to themselves and their families, to becoming "proletarianized," working in 24 hour environments, oblivious to nature, and responsible to one's supervisor, the foreman, while exchanging nature's bounty for a paycheck. Native Americans were driven off their land, former slaves basically re-enslaved (after Reconstruction) by debt-peonage, and many farmers (of all racial groupings) subject to the whims of bankers. The costs to labor were bloodily high.

> *During this formative stage of industrialization, 35,000 workers died each year in industrial accidents, many of them skilled mechanics. In 1910 one-quarter of all*

> *workers in the steel industry were injured at least once, partly because of management's failure to install safety devices and shorten the hours at work. Two thousand coal miners died each year on the job. . . . the railroads, for example, became a killing ground. Between 1890 and 1917, 158,000 mechanics and laborers were killed in railroad repair shops and roundhouses. In 1888-89 alone, of 704,000 railroad employees, 20,000 were injured and nearly 2000 killed (56).*

The increasing concentration of wealth and corporate power resulted in depressions and recessions: "there were major ones beginning in 1837 and reoccurring in 1857, 1873, 1883, 1893, and 1907" (60). These economic contractions destroyed many small businesses and farmers, who did not have the capital to withstand the onslaught, leaving the large corporations and investors more powerful every time. Yet, as Fraser correctly points out, many people came to understand the much of this social destruction was caused by economic change. And he details their consequent willingness to strike, engage in insurrections (such as the Great Railway Strike in 1877) and to mobilize against the bankers and big business. And he applauds this resistance:

> *… all of these movements—the Knights, Nationalist clubs, populism, anti-monopoly organizations, local labor, and Greenback Labor parties—frequently interacted, drew energy from the mass strike, and together formed a culture of opposition. As a persuasion, that culture concerned itself with more than economic organization, extending its reach into ethical matters, the built environment, and the art of virtuous government, all in one way or another tethered back to the labor question. . . .[and] it unmistakably opened up the prospect of a new society founded on principles at odds with the tooth-and-claw struggle for self-advancement so celebrated in many precincts of social Darwinism America (126-27).*

Fraser well captures in the first half of his book the dual processes of industrialization and resistance that make the Gilded Age so fascinating. And so I looked forward to how he'd approach the Depression and aftermath, which is where things dramatically changed. Key to this is his Chapter 7, "The End of Socialism," which sets up the rest of the book. Skipping World War I, he jumps to1919, which he says, "marked the beginning of the end of the long nineteenth century" (181). He notes the Seattle General Strike, the police strike in Boston, and Palmer raids, and then the nationwide steel strike. He notes the race riot in Chicago that summer. He argues it was the "labor question that then had the power to call into question everything else" (187). The "labor question" was, arguably, key to understanding social developments in this country. And it is used by Fraser to do so.

Just at that time when working people were collectively igniting—the revitalization of the United Mine Workers in Eastern coal fields, the 1934 national textile strike, the general strikes during 1934 in Akron, Minneapolis and San Francisco, and the 1935 emergence of the CIO (Committee, and then after 1938, the Congress of Industrial Organizations)—Fraser argues,

approaching things from the perspective of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, that a "new culture … had begun to flourish inside the union" and that it "might be called bureaucratic modernism" (189). As he shifts to Roosevelt's "New Deal," he recognizes that, "the labor movement of that earlier era had been as much of a freedom movement as the abolitionist movement had been or the civil rights movement would become" (194) – but he neglects workers struggles of the 1930s (and '40s). Yes, he mentions "an insurgent labor movement" (197), but fails to develop the point. Nonetheless, things have changed since then: "What is undeniable is that the depositions left behind by that great freedom struggle, whether initiated from above or below, no longer carry the same emancipatory charge" (195).

This is the fulcrum of Fraser's analysis, and it cannot hold the weight. At best he pays lip service to the labor movement. Yes, he mentions the 1936 (and '37) strike by the UAW (United Auto Workers) against General Motors, but there's no mention of the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre in Chicago where 10 men were killed by police, with another 90 or more—including women and children—wounded. He doesn't seem to understand what it really took to unionize most of basic industry, and that it wasn't fully accomplished until 1942 or '43. He doesn't mention bad working conditions in the factories and workplaces in this country during World War II, where more Americans were injured or killed at work than were killed in battle during World War II prior to D Day (June 6, 1944). And he doesn't mention the nationwide uprising during the first year after the war, where strikes took place in auto, steel, electrical parts and meatpacking, and more major strikes arise in trucking and among West Coast lumber workers, and general strikes in Oakland, California and Stamford, Connecticut; over 116,000,000 days of production were lost during the largest strike wave in this country's history.

Ignoring all that, Fraser glides along to the conclusion:

> *For a labor movement compelled to circumscribe and censor its ambitions, there were other costs as well. To begin with, it split apart [an interesting passive construction-KS] under the hammer blows of anticommunism. It's linguistic and programmatic purging was accompanied by a real purging of left-wing-led unions across a range of industries, including some of the movement's most dedicated cadres. The choice was to surrender to ideological intimidation or risk the wrath of a fear-induced political firestorm. The movement surrendered (201).*

A good story—and it reads well—but it is flat wrong.

Does it make sense? Here is a labor movement that controlled 80 percent of the country's industrial work force, a workforce determined not to accept a post-war depression like that after World War I, and a workforce that had just deprived the capitalists of 116 MILLION days of production: does that sound like a labor movement "compelled to circumscribe and censor its ambitions"? No, the labor movement did not split apart, with no agent of the split to be named. There was a struggle within and among unions of the CIO over the direction of unionism: would they advance "business unionism," which limited its concerns and actions to

advancing the interests of the most powerful members of the union—often, skilled, white male workers; or would they advance what is now being called “social justice unionism,” which saw unions as fighting for their members both on the shop floor and in the community, and for working people as a whole? Unfortunately, business unionists—people like conservative Philip Murray and the liberal Walter Reuther, of the steelworkers and autoworkers, respectively—managed to defeat left-led unions such as the United Electrical workers, and their victory was pyrrhic. Using “anti-communism” as a rationale, they expelled 11 of the most dynamic and innovative unions, losing between 750,000-1 million members, in order to remove approximately 16,000 Communists, as reckoned by the FBI.

The reality is that the business unionists were not defending the labor movement from “the communists” but were expelling unions led by rivals who had a larger vision of what trade unionism could be, and had a vision of a more egalitarian, most socially just society. These were men and women who thought outside of the business unionism “box,” who could not be controlled by Labor’s “new men of power.” Yes, some had been members of the Communist Party USA, but most were small “c” communists, Trotskyists, anarchists, black nationalists, former members of the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), and good old-fashioned working class militants. The labor movement has yet to recover from its internal disembowelment at that time.

By expelling its own left wing,, as an unintended byproduct, the labor movement enabled the McCarthy period to gather strength and to exert a terrible impact on American society. Fraser then jumps from the McCarthy period to the mid-1970s, ignoring the Civil Rights/Black Power movements, the women’s movement, the youth movement, the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender) movement, the environmental movement, the anti-Vietnam War movement and the anti-Vietnam War movement *inside* the US military. Whatever one wants to say about the period from about 1955 to 1973—loosely referred to as “the sixties”—it was not acquiescent. These movements affected US society in many ways continuing today, albeit not in all ways many hoped. Acknowledging the influence of this period would have strengthened Fraser’s ultimate argument.

Where Fraser really delivers is in his account of the economic devastation that wracked this country since the mid-1970s. In a powerful account, painful to read but accurate, Fraser’s Chapter 8, “Back to the Future: The Political Economy of Auto-cannibalism,” should be required reading, and especially in our high schools. It is simply the single best compendium of the economic devastation imposed on this country that I have seen, and it is something we as Americans have to understand and confront. Fraser points out the acute contradiction during this period of the trope of “businessman as populist hero.” Here he is particularly strong in showing the absurdity of the notion. Yet, he also falters seriously, in that he never asks how this fable, as he calls it, got propagated: there is no discussion of the corporate media in this country, and the key role it played in propagating the mythology so well developed by business “insurgents.” Stories circulating among the exclusive club members soon become cultural “truths.”

Fraser's chapter, "Journey to Nowhere: The Eclipse of the Labor Movement," is a stunning indictment of the labor leadership, especially since 1980. Yet Fraser presents the attacks on working people and the unions by business and the government, and reports their cumulative impact on working people—devastation, depression, defeat—without pausing to wonder *why* they passively took it again and again. Labor "leadership" always feared loss of control to those with a wider and more militant vision. Failure of imagination and lack of determination, joined with connivance (supporting US elites), as well as hierarchical control within too many unions, all but ensured demoralization, demobilization and defeat.

Fraser ignores this aspect—implicitly writing off working people and assuming all workers are white (and generally male), ruing their consumerism, lack of "class consciousness" and racism—and is resigned to their passive march into perdition. However, he ignores our real history, such as when rank-and-file militants in the majority white United Packinghouse Workers of America, supported by progressive leadership, instituted anti-racial discrimination clauses in every contract signed by the union by 1962, and whose Local 347 in Armour's Chicago packing plant forced Armour to desegregate its Birmingham plant in 1953, two years *before* Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on that Montgomery bus. He ignores the 1997 Teamster strike against UPS, which defeated the corporation's dividing up work into parts, dismembering workers' lives and wages. He mentions the 2011 uprising in Wisconsin—ignoring its disembowelment by major labor leaders as they channeled mass protest into electoral politics—but ignores the 2012 Chicago teachers' strike or the month long protests against NATO leaders, capped by military veterans disgustedly throwing their medals away in protest against the wars and political leaderships that led them into those nightmares. This is hardly acquiescence. It can be called "too limited," "too unimaginative," or one may note that its fails to expand beyond certain sites and actions, but it is not acquiescence.

Fraser devotes a chapter to the "new right," tracing its origins back to Henry Ford but mostly concentrating on it's trajectory from Barry Goldwater forward. He goes on writing as though there is no labor movement, nor does he care to consider that *if* the "social justice" wing of the labor movement prevailed in 1949 instead of being evicted and eviscerated by the majority of the remaining unions—only the International Longshore and Warehouse Union on the West Coast and the United Electrical workers, two of the 11 unions expelled, remain—there is a good chance that labor would have challenged the white supremacy of our social order, undermined the white resistance that emerged when African Americans rebelled between 1955-75, resisted the war in Viet Nam, and at least tried to confront the many limitations of capitalism, including its horrendous environmental devastation. In other words—although we'll never know—it is conceivable that with better leadership, much of which had been purged, Labor would have stood up for working and poor people of all colors, precluding the ascent of the "new right."

Accordingly, this reviewer is quite frustrated with *The Age of Acquiescence.* It is bold, very well written, with powerful descriptions, especially of the economic and social devastation that's taken place since the mid-1970s. Yet there is much to criticize in its analysis. So, I will make some concluding comments ranging far beyond Fraser's project in order to challenge many "progressive" authors who have the skills, connections and luck to obtain publishing contracts

to reach a mass market, who go beyond the limited forums of academia or “the left.”

We cannot limit our analysis to just production — an economistic approach—even if one adds a deft Gramscian touch and include cultural aspects, as Fraser does. We cannot ignore the impact of long cultural wars within our class society. We also cannot disregard struggles against oppression, such as that the labor movement waged from 1933 to 1949, the Civil Rights/Black Power movements, the women’s and LGBT movements; we cannot ignore struggles against imperialist wars, such as Vietnam; and we certainly cannot ignore the emergence of a movement inside of the US military against imperial adventures.

Three key issues come to mind. First, Fraser begins his analysis after the Civil War, and he concentrates on the ‘explosion’ of economic production that took place in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. And it was an explosion. But *where* did the capital come from that financed it? We must address the establishment of white supremacy, not only to create profits for slave owners, but as a means to keep poor whites and poor blacks from uniting, a la Bacon’s Rebellion in Virginia in 1676 against white elites. Most Africans in Virginia arrived as indentured servants, not chattel slaves, as did most whites. After suppressing their rebellion, the Virginia elites did not raise the status or economic situation of poor whites, but rather *lowered* those of blacks below whites, taking away their rights, liberties (through chattel, lifetime slavery) and eventually their right to vote by 1723. Accompanying that was a widespread propaganda campaign to convince whites of their innate superiority to blacks through church-based Sunday Schools, joined with monetary rewards for return of escaped slaves and the establishing of state-based militias to ensure maintenance of white supremacist social order.

Accompanying this was westward expansion of cotton, and the escalating intensity of production, based on the brutal treatment of African-American slaves. The slave system, however, was not limited to the South. The productivity of slaves was so great that they produced more than could be domestically consumed, so cotton had to be exported. It fed the English textile industry, which mechanized and exported products around the world. To export meant that ships, insurance (in case of loss at sea), and the establishment of business relationships overseas had to be procured, and great profits were made off of these, especially in those far-Southern cities of Boston, New York and Philadelphia. The slave-based cotton system was a *national* system, not just a Southern one.

Elites, North and South, made massive profits from the cotton industry and, especially in the North, invested those sums, and what could be borrowed to enhance those sums, into industry. Without the slave-based cotton system, and its profits, the US would not have industrialized so quickly and extensively. (Overseas investors helped industrialization, but the starting point was cotton.) This had global ramifications, especially in Europe and Russia. Without industrialization and its’ massive need for hands, the US would never have absorbed the millions of immigrants from overseas, allowing European governments to solve their demographic problems by exporting excess populations. One wonders what the results of the post-World War I revolutions in Europe would have been had these people not found a place to

migrate to…. Or what would have happened in the United States without them…? Slavery was not an aberration or a minor regrettable detail in the history of this country: it was central and it served as the basis for the incredible pace of industrialization in a short time. We must center African-Americans in the larger American story, and we must confront the white supremacy that refuses to do this.

Second, we can no longer confine analyses of the United States to the national level. The arrival of Europeans to this hemisphere made exploration and colonization a global process, which it remains. Tied to that, going back to 1898, and definitely since the end of World War II, the US has tried to establish a dominant role in the world. This, unlike the Roman Empire, was not necessarily through territorial acquisition but through political and economic control. While its global ambitions existed earlier, it was only with the devastation of competing capitalist countries during the war, while remaining unscathed itself and building the strongest Navy and Air Force the world had seen (joined by the CIA), developing and using the atomic bombs, and then adding the Bretton Woods System (International Monetary Fund, Word Bank, General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, and a US-based global monetary system) to ensure its control that the US was able to, in fact, establish an Empire. The US was able to dominate the world with the exception of that part dominated by the Soviet Union, although that limitation had ended by 1991, leaving the US in charge and unchallenged until 9-11 and Bush's subsequent invasion of Iraq. We cannot limit our understanding of the United States to its territory: we must understand the 50 states as the heartland of the US Empire, and that we must analyze the whole and not just a part.

Tied in integrally is American nationalism, which Fraser barely mentions. Beginning in the early 1900s, we have been subjected to an amazing propaganda campaign: the Fourth of July, for example, only began being celebrated around 1915. It was an effort to transform immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe into Americans, and it continues. For example, compare the number of flags on display in this country as compared to those displayed in any other country. American nationalism does not exist in a vacuum: it is based on a myth of superiority that we are the "Shining City on the Hill," the "indispensible nation" or cant like that. Building off a range of opportunities not usually available to citizens or recent arrivals—but the result of ripping off raw materials and the peoples of the world—our elites claim that "everyone" wants to come here, as if this is the finest place on Earth. What gets ignored is the relentless propaganda worldwide, but in reality these opportunities are limited to a few, and usually only those with white skins. Immigrants often discover the truth after arrival.

This propaganda encourages support for the "system" no matter how much it falls apart. So we can have the greatest unemployment rate since the Great Depression, highest rate of poverty (in 2014) since 1959, etc., etc., but we're still the "finest country on the face of the planet." We can still fight wars in the Middle East after 14 years, destroying local social orders and (inadvertently but inevitably) creating militarized and militant social movements such as ISIS to contest continued US/Israel domination of the region, but "we're still #1," and we still haven't heard from either Bush or Obama as to why we really invaded and still want to be

there.

Labor members must confront the “labor imperialism” of the AFL-CIO that some of us have carefully documented. Labor imperialism has not been forced on the labor movement purely by external actors such as corporations, the US government, the CIA, etc., but is also a product of internal dynamics *within* the top leadership of the AFL-CIO, and is based on the idea that the US *should* dominate the world. The labor movement must recognize that it cannot support global domination—including uncritical support of US corporations and the military—and still take care of working people at home: if we want to take care of working people in the US, then that means it is imperative to build global labor solidarity, then we cannot oppress workers elsewhere.

Third and finally, we cannot limit our understanding of oppression to “class,” “race” or “gender.” The reality is that all of these, and other factors, combine to create the systemic oppression we each are affected by, but they vary by time, place, by “situation.” Therefore, we have to adopt dynamic models and related understandings. It’s time to think outside of our box (es).

The Age of Acquiescence is a masterful effort that provides vivid detailed descriptions of US society but fails to deliver much in the way of useful analysis. Examining the “first” Gilded Age as a guide to help us understand the second, while good in theory, doesn’t provide illumination, at least not here. Fraser’s post-Depression discussion is considerably weaker and less satisfactory than that which precedes it. He foregrounds Labor without understanding what has taken place within the labor movement or why. At the same time this reviewer readily acknowledges that Fraser’s claim that there is almost no national protest – except Occupy – against the economic dislocation and increasing income inequality between especially, say, 1973 and 2011, is basically correct. We need to understand why sustained resistance has not yet happened, and use that knowledge to reinvigorate various social movements, if not the Left in general. The answer, however, is almost certainly to be found in the elites’ response to the social movements of the 1960s-early ‘70s, and not prior to the Depression.

Notes

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Lawrence Wilde. Global Solidarity, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013

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Those of us living in these early decades of the twenty-first century are haunted by the grand dream of global solidarity. An ever-present reminder of the failures of past struggles, this dream, which inspired the great socialist tradition of the nineteenth and twentieth-centuries, stands apparently thwarted today. Long after the failure of the Russian Revolution of 1917, and with market fundamentalism fully in the ascendency, we live in a world seemingly given over to ever-widening local and global inequality and to persistent and renewed national, ethnic, and religious tribalisms.

As economic crisis piles upon economic crisis, and citizens and nations increasingly turn upon each other, predictions of the 'End of Ideology' (Bell) and the 'End of History' (Fukuyama) are giving way to concerns over heightened barbarism and the end of liberalism on the one hand, and to hopes that the socialist phoenix will rise surely from the neoliberal flames on the other. In both cases, the prospect of apocalyptic collapse is invoked, and done so in a way in which more serious analyses of the situation tend to be ruled out. Where analysis is more serious, it tends – perhaps understandably, given the degree of retrenchment taking place – to preclude consideration of internationalism. In either case, consideration of norms and ethical sensibilities tend to be avoided.

The great merit of Lawrence Wilde's study is that it attempts to outline specifically, and in some detail, our potential for overcoming global social divisiveness. Chapters 5 and 7, in particular, deal with the social, political and cultural developments which suggest that beneath the undeniable inequality, exploitation and xenophobia so characteristic of social relations today, there lies a growing potential for the realisation of global solidarity. In chapter 5, and alongside a clear statement of how much still needs to be achieved, Wilde discusses the successes of the new social movements in relation to things such as gender equality, environmental conservation, and the rights of non-human animals. Noting how these movements secured advancements that traditional forms of solidarity based on occupation, class, and community were incapable of securing, Wilde also points out that they quickly embraced a global dimension, working transnationally on issues which were central to their particular concerns. In each case there have been meaningful achievements which demonstrate the kind of prefigurative potential for progression to global solidarity that Wilde is keen to make clear.

In Chapter 7, Wilde focuses on recent political developments that offer an increased potential

to help realise the dream of global solidarity. As part of a discussion of the new global institutions that have arisen since the 1990s, Wilde focuses on the 1995 UN Commission for Global Governance, and its report, *Our Global Neighbourhood*. Although noting that only one of its suggested reforms – namely, the setting up of a Criminal Court of Justice – has been heeded, Wilde nevertheless stresses that the report 'provided an alternative, more solidaristic future that has helped shape many subsequent ideas for reform' (232). Wilde notes that the call for 'a global civic ethic', a 'Forum of Civil Society', and for an 'Economic Security Council of the UN' demonstrates that the basis of an initial form of solidaristic global governance is already present within the existing potential policy matrix of the UN. Wilde also discusses the 'Social Europe' project envisioned by Jacques Delors in the 1990s.

Although he acknowledges that the project stalled in the light of the economic recovery enjoyed in the years following the adoption of the single market and the preoccupation of the EU with enlargement, etc., Wilde points out that the aspirations for a 'Social Europe' are 'still present in the Social Policy Agenda following the Lisbon Treaty of 2009, and in such things as the Working Time Directive and the right to have works councils' (245). In this connection Wilde points to the possibility that the kind of tighter economic controls that have been called for in many countries in the aftermath of the 2008 crash may yet lead to intervention in the Eurozone along the lines imagined by Delors in the 1990s. Whilst it is too early to judge, the heavily coercive position adopted by the EU in relation to Greece in recent weeks and months suggests that such intervention is some way off.

Such upbeat stress on the progressive potential of the UN and EU is not advanced blindly, however. Wilde takes time to detail the largely subservient and facilitative role of both institutions to the dominant financial authoritarianism of the WTO, IMF, and World Bank – such authoritarianism, in fact, forming a central target of the book. Even so, there will be those who remain concerned by his statement that 'a radical change of direction can only be initiated through decisions made at intergovernmental bodies such as G20 or a new version of the Bretton-Woods agreement that set the framework for the world economy back in 1944' (244). Despite following Joseph Schwartz in contending that the 'the road to greater international solidarity cannot transcend the politics of the state, but rather, must run through it',[i]

Wilde is not calling for the floor to be abandoned to party mandarins and political elites. Throughout the book there is a strong stress on the importance of non-affiliated civil society and grassroots movements. As noted above, Wilde stresses the importance of these movements in securing greater gender equality and acceptance and recognition of differences in sexual orientation and practice. Such movements, Wilde contends, will be similarly crucial, if not even more so, in the move towards global solidarity. In particular, Wilde focuses on the anti-capitalist and alter-globalisation movements that sprung up in the wake of 'Battle of Seattle' in 1999. He is notably impressed by the potential for global resistance to the social consequences of neoliberal globalisation offered by the growing World Social Forum (WSF), and praises the achievements of INGOs such as Jubilee 2000. He also gives passing reference to the Occupy movement.

Despite this potential, Wilde is frank in his acknowledgment of the many obstacles to the kind of global solidarity that he wants to see. He is clear that persistence of social division seems to point to a 'congenial inadequacy to achieve reconciliation' (142). He is also aware of 'the relative weakness of the social and political forces needed to secure the change of direction' (236). Despite this, he offers hope that change is possible. For instance, whilst the grassroots and civil society groups he focuses on are relatively sporadic, he stresses that existence of such a 'solidaristic spirit' is highly significant. Wilde cites research by Spencer and Pahl that has shown that by focusing on the nature and quality of people's informal relations, it is possible to identify strong solidaristic communities.[ii] He notes further Pahl's reasonable suggestion that such 'hidden' solidarities span the globe.[iii] The far from baseless hope that Wilde draws from this is that '[i]n exposing injustice [these movements can create] the space in which social forces can be mobilised to create a more humane system of global governance, and to further the cause of solidarity on a national and global level' (225).

Wilde's hopes in this regard are indexed to the overcoming of the neoliberal project as an *initial* task. To this end he advances a radical reformism in which we turn the purpose of the state around to building social cohesion, repealing neoliberal legislation and offering support to local and national civil society groups concerned with developing solidaristic projects across a range of areas. Such a reformism will naturally require the deepening and at least partial unification of the many oppositional movements Wilde discusses; and it is here that we arrive at the real heart of his account: namely, the contention that *only an explicitly ethical response* can generate momentum powerful enough to ensure concerted political action towards global solidarity.

According to Wilde, solidarity – which he defines as 'a feeling of sympathy shared by subjects within and between groups, impelling supportive action and pursuing social inclusion' (1) – can be best achieved through an explicitly ethical commitment. To such an end, he explores the possibility of creating a culture of human solidarity in which there is 'a growing consciousness of our inter-dependence and a growing commitment to a just and sustainable world' (191). In Chapter 6 Wilde stresses the need to cultivate this social self in everyday life, through interpersonal relations in communities and workplaces and through attitudes affirmed or demonised by the media and through education. Although he does not state it explicitly here, what is also required as a necessary part of this cultivation is a deeply committed individual effort at character formation in line with the virtue ethical position he adopts and with the subjective moment of the ethical Marxist approach to revolution that he otherwise stresses.

The greatest provocation in the study, however, is to be found in Wilde's drawing on the idea of a common humanity in his account of 'radical humanism' in Chapter 4. The idea of a common humanity, which in turn evokes the idea of a common nature or essence, has been so out of bounds in influential sections of academic discourse for so long that it still seems odd to see a discussion specifically dealing with it. In a deliberate attempt to further re-normalise sophisticated discussion of universal aspects of what it means to be human, Wilde advances an account of what he contends are the core universal human potentials relevant for a discussion of solidarity and human flourishing. The positive development of rationality (understood

substantively as opposed to instrumentally), compassion, productiveness (understood in the Frommian sense as referring to the freely chosen development of individual abilities), and cooperation, all interpreted generally so as to ensure room for realisation in a wide variety of cultural forms, offers for Wilde the central ethical preconditions for global solidarity.

Such an account poses a direct challenge to the leading theorists of solidarity that Wilde discusses in Chapter 3. Richard Rorty, Jürgen Habermas, Alex Honneth, Alain Touraine and Carol Gould all stand united in spite of their differences in a shared opposition to the notion of a common humanity – an opposition which, as Wilde points out, leads to crucial insufficiencies in their respective accounts. Although more will need to be said in relation to specifying a robust radical humanism, it is clear that Wilde has provided a significant contribution to this wider project, as well as to the radicalisation of the discussion of cosmopolitanism and the old dream of global solidarity more specifically.

Notes

[i] Schwartz, Joseph M. (2007) 'From Domestic to Global Solidarity: The Dialectic of the Particular and the Universal in the Building of Social Solidarity', *Journal of Social Philosophy* 38 (1).

[ii] Spencer, Liz and Pahl, Ray (2006), *Rethinking Friendship: Hidden Solidarities Today*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

[iii] Pahl, Ray (2005), 'Hidden solidarities that span the globe', New Statesman, 17 January: https://www.newstatesman.com/node/149735.

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T. J. English, Where the Bodies Were Buried: Whitey Bulger and the World That Made Him! New York: William Morrow, 2015

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This is a tale of terror, with implications well beyond the mean streets of Boston. On its surface the true story of the career, capture and trial of life long Boston Irish American gangster James "Whitey" Bulger, T.J. English's enthralling narrative in Where the Bodies Were Buried actually focuses on exposing the failings of the previously little- known US Government "Top Echelon Informant" (TEI) program. Set up by J.Edgar Hoover's FBI decades ago in response to Hoover's embarrassment when mobster Joe Valachi revealed the undeniable existence of the Mafia that Hoover had long claimed was a myth, the TEI program inextricably tangled Federal (and allied state and local) law enforcement agencies with the criminal networks that were supposed to be their targets.

Thus, as English deftly recounts, in the 1960s, the FBI enlisted and protected a vicious New England thug named Joseph "Animal" Barboza. The mob hit-man Barboza was given Federal cover to frame by false testimony a number of men who were sent off to decades of prison for crimes they did not commit. The Feds played Barboza as a snitch against the "bigger fish" Mafiosa who were their ostensible targets. In exchange, Barboza was given nearly a free hand to commit murder and other crimes. English explains that, "Afterward some of Barboza's handlers in the FBI would go on to become the handlers of Whitey Bulger, who, like the Animal, was protected by the FBI and theU.S. attorney's office in New England."!

When Bulger, after an infamous, often public, career of murder and racketeering, disappeared in 1995, he became a national "Where's Whitey" obsession until his capture in 2011. While he was hiding, the fact of his role as an FBI informant became public knowledge. His 2013 trial in Boston, which is reported in fascinating detail by English, raised the very real risk that the long standing Federal collusion with and de facto sanctioning of murderous criminals would come to public light. English suggests, and convincingly demonstrates, that the Feds manipulated the trial so that the earlier Barboza story and its implications (systemic decades-long criminal corruption of the FBI and Federal prosecutors) would not be exposed, and the focus of public attention remained on Bulger, his henchmen and the by-then imprisoned former FBI agent John

Connolly, Bulger's close crony and, in English's estimation, the fall-guy distracting attention from the wider story of law enforcement collusion with Bulger and other gangsters.

No Robin Hood, and certainly not the romantic “Irish chieftain” of uninformed popular imagination—among many other killings, Bulger had a young would-be supporter of Irish revolutionaries gruesomely murdered—James “Whitey” Bulger was a thug driven by his own lust for money and power, albeit a very intelligent thug at that. And a sometime acid-head! An odd aside in his story is the early prison stretch during which Bulger volunteered to participate in the CIA’s experimental program testing LSD on inmates. Bulger took an extraordinary high dosage, prolonged over months. Interestingly, although narcotics importing and distribution were his stock in trade, in later years, according to English, “Whitey” never touched drugs nor alcohol. Perhaps his early hallucinatory trips were enough indulgence for him. English describes Bulger as normally reticent and taciturn, though he did indulge in some crude outbursts at trial, despite his attorneys efforts to keep him quiet.

A very poignant scene late in this book is English’s description of the court’s listening to impact statements from the families of Bulger’s victims—many of them now-adult children whose parents or siblings had been abruptly and forever taken from them by Bulger in the tight-knit confines of working-class South Boston. English writes, “Within the community, these were intimate murders, hushed in silence because they had occurred under the umbrella of organized crime. These people had grown up consumed with fear and hatred for the man who through his powerful political brother [Massachusetts State Senate leader Billy Bulger], his connections in law enforcement, and his control of the underworld had, for decades, seemed to be above the law.”

This is a chilling story, to say the least. It is far more scary than the amusing but decidedly fictional version of the Bulger story cleverly acted by Jack Nicholson in the movie *The Departed*, and it is even more frightening than the psycho-killer portrayal of Bulger by Johnny Depp in the recent film *Black Mass* (which itself is based on an earlier non fiction account of the tale of Whitey Bulger and his crooked- politician brother Billy). That’s because the true tale that T. J. English strives to tell here is really not Whitey Bulger’s pathological biography. It is the far more twisted story of deep rooted, and persistent murderous corruption within our own Federal government. Indeed, as this book rolls out it’s “truth is far stranger than fiction” account, the reader sees a horror unveiled that is much more terrifying than the face of a cruel killer like Bulger. It is the face of organized state terror colluding with criminals.

T. J. English has never written books meant to comfort. His earlier masterpiece, *The Savage City* showed us a true 1970s New York nightmare of bad cops and desperate revolutionaries locked in a death-dance of real life savagery. Likewise, his books on Cuba and the Mafia and on Asian-American and Irish-American gangsters were page turners driven by mounting tensions as some very bad people commit some very bad deeds—and often get away with them.

This book goes deeper into its story than any of the many books and films on Bulger have and English is greatly to be praised for his diligence. English was never able to interview Bulger—no one ever has, despite attempts, not even Johnny Depp—but he does use sources extremely close to the man and his network of crime. Some are victims, some are former pals and allies.

An added boost is the access English achieved post-trial to one of the jurors in Bulger's trial, Janet Uhlar. While she had agreed with the conviction of James Bulger on thirty-one of thirty-two counts, including eleven murders (for which Bulger was sentenced to the rest of his life in prison), Uhlar tells English, "to me the government's case was a travesty of justice." She also publicly blamed the prosecutors for failing to fully reveal who was responsible for enabling Bulger in his long and brutal career, and she attacked the media for not delving deeper into the background story of government corruption which she and English feel was not made clear in the trial, to their shared deep disappointment.

Certainly no other writer on the subject has achieved such an inside view of the multi-faceted horror that is the Whitey Bulger story and its Federal conspiracy ramifications. As English concludes after telling his exhaustive tale, "The truth is buried or obscured. . . . In the end, the System protects itself."! This is a hard, fascinating, very important read. The effect is one of extreme outrage at the massive injustices and brutalities which English deftly reveals. Highly recommended.

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Eli Zaretsky, Political Freud: A History. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015

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Is psychoanalysis *kaput* ? If not, ought it be put out of its misery? Sigmund Freud and his notorious 'problem child' have fallen on very hard times and for reasons having virtually nothing to do with their real merits, argues historian Eli Zaretsky in his latest book. Though a collection of five previously published articles*, Political Freud* musters a sustained and telling assault on a legion of critics who accuse Freud of straying recklessly from the truth, meaning truth as reckoned by diehard positivists, Big Pharma, and those obliging shrinks who want nothing more than to help clients to 'fit in' the social disorder. Go ahead and grow up absurd, as Paul Goodman once put it, so long as you make a buck and no waves. That's the neoliberal spirit.

Was Freud, the stern sage, really a political animal? Yes, Zaretsky answers, from the very first and in a variety of important ways. That Freud sympathized strongly with the Social Democrats of "Red Vienna' is the least of it. Zaretsky, author of the splendid *Secrets of the Soul,* among other works, resurrects this political Freud "to reaffirm the critical element in Freudianism" and to trace out why this dynamic radical core became all but eclipsed. Since the rampant denigration of psychoanalysis from the 1970s onward, Zaretsky argues, we have taken a "huge step backward" in explaining the mysteries and the slippery grip of irrationality in our lives. Yup.

In an achingly ironic fashion Freud, that exquisite connoisseur of ambivalence, should appreciate, the very success of psychoanalysis in the early to mid-20th century generated a milieu that hastened its own decline in an increasingly individualistic epoch. Chapter by chapter Zaretsky "highlights two seemingly antithetical moments: a critical moment when political thinkers and social movements looked to psychoanalysis to clarify the irrational sources of domination and an affirmative moment when Freudianism became submerged in a larger history and appeared to become obsolete." (p.12) Zaretsky briskly embarks on his mission of integrating "psychoanalysis into the broad matrix of modern social and cultural history," which he persuasively says "has barely begun" (p. 15)

The first essay, orienting everything to follow, reconsiders Max Weber's analysis of the role of the Protestant ethic in capitalism, which requires a motivating spirit (if only as a cloak) for its remorseless acquisitiveness. This 'spirit' changes roughly as the economy develops, so Calvinist discipline "helped generate the utopian ideology of individuality that accompanied mass consumption (p 18). In a liberal vein, Daniel Bell, among others, pondered the social implications of this dramatic shift in *The Cultural Contradictions of Capitalism*. This shift entailed a freeing of individuals from the chafing authority rooted in family life, which is in turn

rooted in, and reflective of, society. Hence, one cannot speak validly of the inner world in isolation from external events. That essential insight alone makes Freudian psychoanalysis inescapably political. Individuality in the dawning 20th century became 'the "governing norm" (p. 45), and for navigating our murky inner worlds psychoanalysis became "a theory and practice of those new aspirations for a personal life [and] encouraging an inward development that is the only secure basis for progress."

What was relished in this early psychoanalytic heyday was the freedom not to discover "universally valid moral rules but "what one wants to do with one's life,' although these were hardly mutually exclusive activities. I am reminded of future prominent psychoanalyst Editha Sterba, who as a teenager would bask on a beach poring over a volume of Kant, which was not unusual for rebellious youngsters of her strata at the time. "For psychoanalysis what matters was not worldly success but the state of one's soul" (p. 28) Psychoanalysis, with its 'charismatic, anti-institutional origins," was indelibly subversive, or so it seemed. As Freud recognized, "a bit of unconquerable nature lurks" inside all of us and is ever poised to upset any old institutional apple cart. The eroding of awareness of this crucial and subversive reality is at issue throughout the volume.

Zaretsky's complains that in the post-war phase the rapid rise of ego psychology, with its conformist "maturity ethic", arose to dilute and distort the radical crux of Freud's work. Psychoanalysis purported to study the "durable, unique individual personality," Zaretsky laments, even as a host of new "intersubjective theories and practices insisted that no such thing ever existed." The notion of a "personal life interior to the individual was repudiated in favor of an emphasis on flexibility, sociality and sensitivity to difference." (p. 35) Why? Because in a new era of slick managerial capitalism "image, personality and interpersonal skills, not autonomy, have the highest commercial value." Mass diffusion, especially in post-war America, 'democratized and banalized a newly psychological way of thinking." This is pretty much what Erich Fromm, who I suspect Zaretsky might lump among the ego psychologists, long ago diagnosed as the blight of "other-directedness."

Zaretsky's second essay is a fascinating and provocative probe into psychoanalysis as an illuminator of, and ingredient in, the transforming of blacks' self-image through the Harlem renaissance, the Popular Front and the Cold War eras. The "achievement of genuine subjectivity" by urban blacks "had to pass through a recognition of degradation," and psychoanalysis became a valuable means for addressing and rectifying 'internal submission' and an unmastered past. In music the blues were "a triumph over a shaming culture,' which "yearned for 'emancipation, including from the racial community itself," just as many Jews sought a way out of ghettoes imposed not only by hostile others but by tribal Jews themselves. W.E.B. Dubois, Frantz Fanon, Richard Wright, Ralph Ellison and other notables were preoccupied with the plight of "double consciousness between self and gaze of others," defining oneself through the eyes of others, although this tack ultimately seems to have had more to do with G. H. Mead's profoundly superficial social psychology than with Freudian analysis.

If there was no sex before the 1960s, as poet Philip Larkin drolly averred, there apparently was no 'self' before the industrial age either. "Self,' in this parched rendering, was the human being stripped of volcanic Freudian core and made up instead of little more than the 'reflected appraisals' of others – a conceptual recipe for abject or, for that matter, sly conformity. One can imagine why the corporate world warmed to such hollow men and women. Ralph Ellison palled around with neo-Freudian Harry Stack Sullivan whose blunt essay, 'The Illusion of Human Personality" sums up the stance nicely and icily. Richard Wright, though, recognizing "mental states had a historical and social basis," duly tried to combine Marx and Freud, and Zaretsky sees this quest pervading the later years of the Popular Front (p. 55, 62) The remarkable Lafargue clinic in Harlem was attentive to the social conditions creating neurosis, and its research into segregation as a public health problem contributed to the 1954 Supreme Court school desegregation decision. Meanwhile, though, in mainstream America, where medical schools and naive empiricism reigned, the Freudian canon slowly but steadily was recruited into "the cold war synthesis as a supposed critic of utopian ideas and advocate of "maturity." (p 65).

Zaretsky next tackles Freud's *Moses and Monotheism*, detecting that Freud's acute concern with Jewish identity, as an annihilatory World War loomed, was as much about the survival of psychoanalysis and, in turn, the survival of our collective spiritual and intellectual accomplishments. The Nazis were keen to obliterate it all. Today when genial greed *uber alles* is prized (behold Herr Trump) and civilizational and planetary reversals seem under way at breakneck, we just might sympathize with Freud's attunement to the fragility of higher values. For Freud, monotheism was an advance which offered "freedom from subordination to the senses and deepens the inner world." (p. 83). Both monotheism and psychoanalysis, however, were "difficult and even ascetic practices subject to vulgarization and distortion as they took a popular form."

Like Moses confronting golden calf worshippers, Freud edgily faced Adler, Jung and other dissidents. What was at stake for Freud, Zaretsky explains, "was the subjectivity or inwardness of *geistigkeit,* through which the mind rose above the instincts and encompassed its own ambivalence." (p.90) *Geistigkeit* connotes spirituality in a not necessarily religious sense, and it aligns with the strictly secular meaning of soul in Bruno Bettelheim's splendid *Freud and Man's Soul*. The dissidents, who were well-meaning enough folks, let everyone off easy with palliatives geared to the tempo of glossy, quick fix-obsessed American life. The path *to geistigkeit*, toward a better-integrated and morally sound human being, was through the resistances, which had to be worked through, not sidestepped. To get to what Lincoln called the better angels of our nature, one has to acknowledge and integrate the hellish aspects of that same nature. No short cuts.

The fourth essay, 'The Ego at War ' is a critique of Judith Butler's take on 9/11 in *Precarious Life*, but also of what Zaretsky regards as the vogue-ish and wholly inadequate view that "the ego is formed through object relations and language." Freud over time moved to 'analyzing the ego's defenses rather than interpreting unconscious wishes directly," but Melanie Klein and others of the object relations school went much further. This is a technically abstruse debate

for most readers but Zaretsky carefully lays out what matters in it for the wider culture. Freud wanted to "strengthen the ego while Klein wanted to strengthen personal relations." Zaretsky pinpoints this latter trend, which will make some readers bridle, as the source of a "weakening of concern with reason and justice and more on intersubjective relations."

For Kleinians the relationship to the mother – curiously termed an "object" – is the key to ethical responsibility so that the inception of the postwar British welfare state then is attributed to the necessity to protect mothers and children (as if one needed a certified psychoanalyst to account for such a motive). Arising from this is a "maternalist iconography of social democracy" so that a distinguished British Kleinian in June 1940 winds up coining and condemning what she terms a 'Munich complex," which is a manifestation of "the son's incapacity to fight for mother and country." (p.132) This formulation is plainly daft on so many levels that only Kleinian acolytes (and not all of them) could buy it. The kindest thing to say is that this explanatory mode is seriously incomplete. All experience is hyper-individualized and society is lost sight of.

Judith Butler, an object relations theorist, asks why after 9/11 the collective emotional make-up of America "led away from intersubjective sadness and deliberation and toward vengeful, blind reaction." Wrong question. While there is much to say in favor of Butler's analysis of the 'precariat," despite her oblique prose getting in the way, Zaretsky notes that Butler treats 9/11 as if every single American automatically slavered for a lashing out in blind revenge. Anyone ever heard of the neocon *Project for a New American Century* gleefully kicking into gear? Butler commendably urges us toward a broadened circle of solidarity, Zaretsky notes, but this can go in two directions: one is benign and progressive; the other churning out more neoliberal 'free thinking' Ayn Rand fans. A Marxist critique is an essential supplement if we are to comprehend our elites' post-9/11 high jinks. Unlike Butler, the political Freud tradition refuses to treat "dependence and independence as if they were antitheses [and] demonstrates rather the ego reaches down to its earliest, most primal, and essentially immortal dependencies precisely when it is strongest and most independent." (p.147)

Zaretsky picks up momentum as he barrels along in his final essay which ruefully reappraises the new Left, feminism and a 'return to 'social reality." In the 1960s Herbert Marcuse, especially, re-politicized Freud with an analysis of surplus repression. By the 1970s radical feminism and gay liberation, taking aim (rather understandably) at visible power imbalances, give a Freud they misunderstand the bum's rush. Psychoanalysis still "embodied powerful sexual and other emancipatory currents that key socializing institutions, above all the family, could not contain," but this mutinous aspect was muted or ditched as analysts too gradually were enlisted in a project that "weakened traditional authority but substituted the adjustment, labeling and manipulation that the New Left criticized." (p. 151) Psychoanalysis thereby lost analytical depth. Juliet Mitchell criticized fellow feminists for reducing everything to power relations and promoting culture over biology, which, Zaretsky correctly (I think) accuses, only "paved the way for accommodation with neoliberal thought." These erstwhile rebels were suckered into a "rights revolution" focused on discrimination against individuals while downplaying structural reform. Thus, again ironically, viewing "the past in terms of power has

left men and women powerless" before our worst enemies. Abandoning a notion of authority as entailing an unconscious or intrapsychic dimension was "a gift to neoliberalism."

How liberated are we anyway? "Can we honestly say," Zaretsky rhetorically asks, "that a society that is based on release of the instincts, on gratification and on a turning away from guilt, at least at the conscious level, is a freer, more just and more civilized society than the repressive one it replaced?" Zaretsky draws our attention to our blind spots and to the most peculiar ways in which we have colluded in blinding ourselves. A dangerously neglected value of psychoanalysis is that it "enables radicals to look at internal sources of woes, class exploitation within, violence internal to liberalism, misogyny internal to family and violence internal to nation state." Readers will emerge from *Political Freud* with a clearer sense of what is lost and must be recovered in the much-maligned psychoanalytic tradition. This brilliant riposte to Freud-bashers ought to be, as they say, on every shelf.

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Review: Benjamin Ginsberg, The Fall of the Faculty: The Rise of the All Administrative University. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press 2013

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Benjamin Ginsberg's *The Fall of the Faculty* provides a compelling and accurate diagnosis of the contemporary ills plaguing the rise of the all-administrative university. Ginsberg's analysis strongly resonates with my own experience at several different institutions (public and private) over the last ten years, as I have personally witnessed how administrators have used their positions of managerial oversight to advance their personal interests, essentially turning the university into a political bailiwick. Ginsberg's analysis leaves one with little doubt about what the consequences of this rapid expansion of the administrative corps are: The rise of the all-administrative university has been ruinous for students, who foot steadily increasing tuition bills to keep the administrative bloat going, bad for faculty autonomy as contingent labor becomes increasingly prevalent, with the concepts of academic freedom, tenure, and shared governance devolving into relics of the past; and destructive of the public interest as educational institutions classified as not-for-profit enterprises use non-taxable endowment income and indirect cost recovery associated with grants and discoveries—and in some instances grant overhead–to facilitate the creation of organizational wealth, which unsurprisingly goes to increasing administrative salaries and perks instead of to the funding of teaching and research.

In the contemporary scene, the major goals associated with the values of a traditional liberal arts education have seemingly been sabotaged by career bureaucrats. The self-promotion and puffery associated with administrators, the psychobabble promulgated by those Ginsberg derisively labels as "deanlets" and "deanlings"—not to the mention their dutiful and mindless staffers— who carry out their tasks by deploying the rhetoric of excellence and diversity, while in reality protecting administrative interests (not to mention the waste, embezzlement, insider trading, and fraud typifying the corporate university), make a mockery of the core academic mission. Within such a situation, to paraphrase the title of Richard E. Miller's brilliant book, *it's as if learning is really beside the point*.

Ginsberg's warnings about the rise of the all-administrative university should be taken seriously among faculty who are committed to preserving the seriousness of the educational enterprise. If the administrative apparatus continues to grow at its present rate, university professors may very well disappear themselves. Administrators have been clever in exploiting the university's bureaucracy in advancing administrative interests while marginalizing faculty

expertise, concerns, and perspectives. If administrative expansion continues at current rates, what possible hope is there for the resurrection of the faculty-controlled university?

Ginsberg uses the phrase “administrative imperialism” to describe the increasing creep of the administrative imperatives into what were once faculty-controlled domains. He notes that administration was something faculty used to do part-time, with the understanding that teaching and research were their main commitments. Now, being an administrator is a full-time job, with those who are not particularly productive faculty members flocking to become administrators. Ginsberg effectively dismisses the belief that this administrative expansion into once-faculty-controlled domains has anything to do with increased state oversight or federal government regulation of affirmative action programs and grant distribution/oversight, especially since the greatest administrative growth has occurred at private universities. Furthermore, there is simply not enough work for these administrators and their assistants to justify such a huge expansion of the administrative apparatus. Personal aggrandizement and professional advancement, rather than a commitment to the institution, faculty, and students, seemingly remain the chief administrative concerns.

With many college and university administrators using their current positions for advancement to a higher-ranked school, a continual process of jockeying and self-promotion obtains as the norm. Administrators go through the motions, mouth platitudes about how great the institution is, and grease the right palms. For example, every four or five years college and university administrators recruit faculty to commit to the process of formulating a strategic plan, which is supposedly geared toward contemplating the university’s future. Everyone seems to understand that the creation of such plans is in actuality a well-orchestrated sham, as no one really possess a good sense of what the buzzwords filling such plans (which are like so many other plans at other universities) really mean or even refer to. University officials who tout these plans have their eye on a different time horizon, i.e. their own bottom line and the advancement of their careers.

One of Ginsberg’s most damning indictments against administrators, and it’s an indictment that I completely concur with, is that that they are not particularly well qualified to occupy the positions they hold. Of course, this indictment does not apply to all administrators, but one does not have to be in a university long before learning that the mere mention of certain administrators’ names brings with it a certain amount of faculty eye-rolling and groaning. Typically, upper administration identifies the faculty members it wants to recruit into administrative leadership positions when it wants to avoid bringing in outside candidates. These faculty members are “uncontroversial” and viewed as “team players.” Being a “team player” and “uncontroversial” in this context of course means not criticizing, embarrassing, or resisting one’s superiors. This entails shutting down one’s better instincts and common sense and never (heaven forbid) acting on principle.

Because of this tendency to select those who will not rock the boat, administrators are careful to exclude faculty who might expose their incompetence and real agenda. So substantive discussion about serious issues with administrators is out of the question. Frequently,

administrators view faculty who are persistent in researching issues around shared governance, as well as procedures pertaining to the functioning of the university, as very active threats to their inflated sense of authority. For example, some upper administrators are not only unfamiliar with the content of their university handbook (the supposed guarantor of student and faculty rights, as well as the place where one locates detailed procedures for the operation of the university), but do not care that they are unfamiliar with it since they rule by executive fiat. In this bizarre world, the only rule that matters is the one that serves the administration at a particular moment in time, enabling rather creative interpretations of what the handbook actually says or outright dismissals that the handbook is wrong or antiquated. Faculty members, who directly confront administrators about how muddleheaded a particular administrative decision is, will face serious consequences. Even when such confrontations are well meaning and have the best interest of the university at heart, administrators react defensively, insisting that they know best or are privy to confidential information that are beyond the comprehension skills of the faculty.

Administrators are smart enough to know that they must avoid forums where probing arguments and the presentation of convincing evidence will be required. When all ducking fails, administrators have used the charge of “harassment” against faculty and students who raise disturbing questions about problematic administrative practices such as embezzlement, fraud, and theft. As Ginsberg notes, most harassment on campus these days is of the administrative kind. If administrators were accorded as little due process as faculty, an administrator who is even accused of harassment should be promptly removed for his or her position. At the end of the day, however, administrators have a number of weapons that they can deploy to escape being held accountable for their words and actions.

It’s not difficult to figure out what all this means for the advancement of innovative leadership. For example, in the context of searches for university executive positions, search firms choose the most boring and conventional of candidates, making a point to steer away from those who appear the slightest bit edgy or controversial. . Search firms quickly identify the favored candidates by locking in on traditional credentials and experience. As Ginsberg points out, the head hunters at these firms know next to nothing about the world of higher education, being easily duped by candidates successfully spout the required lexicon of corporate buzzwords—“best practices,” “accountability,” “assessment,” and “benchmarking.”

That administrators conspire to marginalize the faculty voice, undermine tenure, and scuttle shared governance principles within their institutions is undoubtedly true. The move to increasingly rely upon contingent labor gives administrations yet another way to control the faculty. Since non-tenure-track faculty can be dismissed at a moment’s notice, administrators do not have to be bothered with the resistance of the faculty when it comes to changing the curriculum, scuttling meritorious research, or controlling once-successful programs. The administration will proceed to do what it judges best, while offering up the pretense of faculty consultation. Ginsberg describes a number of instances in which faculty senates were disbanded because they stymied administrative ambitions. Financial exigencies, as Ginsberg points out, have provided administrations with an ingenious way of undermining due process

procedure for doing away with academic departments and whole programs. When all else fails, administrators can insist that an emergency situation has forced them to forego consulting with anyone on the faculty because time is of the essence.

Seemingly adopting a line of critique from the cultural right, Ginsberg asserts that crafty administrators understand that they can create alliances with minority activist groups on campus by being solicitous of the multicultural agenda, posturing as supporters of these activists concerns and perspectives in exchange for these activists' support of the administrator's agenda. As part of this trade off, administrators look the other way when it comes to evaluating the low enrollment of ethnic studies and women and gender studies programs, preferring to keep these programs afloat rather than to appear insensitive to the multicultural agenda, which would result in the withdrawal of political support from these politically active constituencies on campus. Furthermore, administrators have effectively developed a hidden curriculum that they exclusively control to further sideline the faculty. Never mind that the courses offered in this hidden curriculum focus on life skills and various types of political indoctrination related to race, gender, and ethnicity, subjects that the deanlets and deanlings are hardly qualified to teach. Add to this, speech, civility and anti-harassment codes, which administrators use with great effectiveness to silence faculty and student critics who interfere with administrative designs. These same administrators often rely upon outside agencies and licensure groups to discipline the faculty with outside assessment measures, threatening the faculty with the school's possible loss of accreditation. Administrators often interfere with well-running programs, attempting to change their structure to the point of ensuring their failure.

What Ginsberg describes here is a reign of administrative terror that most faculty have come to passively adopt as unbreakable. The grip of this terror is ensured by the upper administration's, specifically the university president's, close connections to the members of the Board of Trustees/Regents, who prefer to leave university business to administrators. Ginsberg argues that upper administrators work diligently to keep the faculty from communicating with the trustees, obviously preferring that the idyllic vision of the campus remain uppermost in the minds of these key business people and donors; faculty gripes and grievances disturb this vision. If faculty were to regularly communicate with the Board of Trustees or Board of Regents, administrators would be placed on the defensive, forced to account for bad decisions and financial missteps. Perhaps such communication from faculty members would result in Boards adopting the following recommendations from Ginsberg:

1. Boards should shift spending priorities at their universities from management to teaching and research [Boards will quickly realize that it can do without administrators who are constantly meeting and retreating};
2. Trustees should compare their own school's ratio of managers and staffers per hundred students to the national mean [How is it that some large state universities get by with 7 or 8 administrative staffers per 100 students, whereas other schools require as many as 64 staffers per 100 students?];
3. Boards must be wary of administrators who spout managerial jargon [Managerial

theory, as Ginsberg notes, has the sole goal of imposing hierarchy on the institution. Managerial jargon simply appeases underlings, while providing the façade of consultation.]

One of Ginsberg's recommendations is that Boards of Trustees should police themselves with respect to a strict conflict of interest rule, avoiding even the appearance of insider trading with respect to a board member providing services to the university. Here is a place where faculty members have a key role to play, especially if there is a designated spot or two on the Board for faculty members who can police conflicts of interest. While I'm skeptical that Boards of Trustees and Regents will be receptive to such positions for strong faculty representation (there are after all such positions for students), it would at least create an avenue for faculty to present their views to Trustees. Of course, some Boards already do have some faculty representation (perhaps one slot), but the jury is still out on how effective this representation is in countering administrative power.

Given Ginsberg's cogent analysis in *The Fall of the Faculty*, what can actually be done to advance reform? I believe challenging the public perception of administrators, in their role as managers, is essential. As Ginsberg shows, administrators control the PR organs of the university and, in turn, the public perceptions of the administrator's role in the university. This administrative control over public perceptions about the university's functioning facilitates the covering up of administrative misdoing, except in the most egregious of cases when serious fraud on the part of a university president or financial officer is uncovered. Faculty have a clear role to play in establishing alternative channels for distributing information about administrative malfeasance to alumni, current students, and parents. Why rely on the media relations office to get the word out about where the university is heading when the staffers in that office have absolutely zero incentive to tell the truth about the administrative shirking, sabotaging, and stealing affecting the long-term health of the institution? Presumably, alumni do care about the reputation of the institution where they earned their degrees. Faculty should nurture relationships with key alumni, using these relationship to check and puts the brakes on administrative power. Finally, we should encourage strong faculty personalities to go into administration; these faculty possess the resolve to speak out loudly against administrative corruption. Plus, they will stand in stark relief to the sycophants the administration normally puts forward as "the faculty voice."

It is crucial that faculty publicize administrative malfeasance within their universities. Given that there is increasing interest in the kinds of anecdotal evidence Ginsberg provides in *The Fall of the Faculty* about administrative abuse, especially in the wake of the 2008 financial collapse, publicizing administrative misdeeds may lead to the gathering of a critical mass of faculty, students, parents, and alumni who will be prepared to fight back against the theft of the university. Parents will certainly be interested in the kinds of abuses Ginsberg examines, since they are the ones often footing the skyrocketing price of tuition. The next time a student or parent blames escalating tuition bills on increasing faculty salaries, we should be quick to correct them. We should immediately spotlight the salaries of our university's mid- and upper-level managers. Indeed, administrative salaries have not been subjected to the kind of scrutiny

they deserve because most people do not know about them, preferring to focus on faculty indolence and self-indulgence. In brief, faculty are convenient scapegoats, absorbing the blame for the effects of administrative expansion and recklessness.

The administrative imperative seems to be: promote and increase thyself at the expense of the common good. That administrative salaries have climbed at an annual rate of 5%-10% in the midst of financial crises at so many educational institutions is obscene. Not only are administrators undermining and marginalizing the faculty, they are appropriating institutional resources for personal advancement and gain. That they are doing so by paying lip service to mantras such as “diversity,” “multiculturalism,” and “civility” is especially obscene.

The administrative imperative seemingly posits that the administration is always right, it can’t be questioned, and that it always wins due to the strength and number of its weapons. Resisting the administrative imperative requires publicly challenging administrators (as Ginsberg has done) when they seek to take over successful programs, pour millions of dollars into technological boondoggles, or implement wacky schemes that everyone warns will fail. Administrators know that faculty members are timid and are unlikely to organize to resist administrative actions. When faculty do organize and go public, administrations become defensive, occasionally backing down or admitting error. When they do face major resistance from the faculty, administrations often back down to avoid constant media attention.

In closing, I will offer perhaps the most immediate solution to the problem of administrative blight. Many of us, who are willing to take the battle to the enemy, must commit to going underground, preparing our professional profiles *to do battle with administrators as administrators*. I’ve often wondered what it would take to put together an administrative career in the all-administrative university. The first thing I would have to do is avoid any and all political controversy in my scholarship and public utterances, even going so far as to excise any evidence of previous strong commitments to unpalatable causes and charged statements about relevant issues. I might even go so far as to renounce these past allegiances as youthful errors. Then, I would have to dispense with any critical examinations of the academic institution. In other words, I would simply stop criticizing the institution, as well as my location within it. In the course of promoting myself as suitable administrative material, I would portray my faculty colleagues as pampered, lazy, and unaccountable, while praising my administrative superiors as visionary and committed leaders. Of course, I would quickly begin spouting the latest about “benchmarking,” “best practices,” and “accountability,” while expressing my strong desire to attend an endless stream of meetings and retreats. I would disparage tenure, academic freedom, and shared governance as irrelevancies that stand in the way of smooth managerial control. Finally, I would express interest in offering life skills courses on event planning and meditation, while imposing a shadow curriculum on the faculty and disciplining those who resisted me with appropriate civility training. I can confidently predict that my rise to deanlet status would be just around the corner.

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