FAST CAPITALISM

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Volume 2 • Issue 2

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Volume 2 • Issue 2

2007

Fast Capitalism is an academic journal with a political intent. We publish reviewed scholarship and essays about the impact of rapid information and communication technologies on self, society and culture in the 21st century. We do not pretend an absolute objectivity; the work we publish is written from the vantages of viewpoint. Our authors examine how heretofore distinct social institutions, such as work and family, education and entertainment, have blurred to the point of near identity in an accelerated, post-Fordist stage of capitalism. This makes it difficult for people to shield themselves from subordination and surveillance. The working day has expanded; there is little down time anymore. People can 'office' anywhere, using laptops and cells to stay in touch. But these invasive technologies that tether us to capital and control can also help us resist these tendencies. People use the Internet as a public sphere in which they express and enlighten themselves and organize others; women, especially, manage their families and nurture children from the job site and on the road, perhaps even 'familizing' traditionally patriarchal and bureaucratic work relations; information technologies afford connection, mitigate isolation, and even make way for social movements. We are convinced that the best way to study an accelerated media culture and its various political economies and existential meanings is dialectically, with nuance, avoiding sheer condemnation and ebullient celebration. We seek to shape these new technologies and social structures in democratic ways.

Publication Design and Formatting by Brittany Griffiths
Cover Design by Brittany Griffiths

Published and made openly accessible by:
University of Texas at Arlington Libraries
702 Planetarium Pl.
Arlington, TX 76019

*First published on www.fastcapitalism.com in 2007

ISSN 1930-014X

Mavs Open Press

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X

Contents

Slow Thoughts for Fast Times

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X

Fast Capitalism

* We invite contributions on these and related issues. Some papers will stick close to the ground of daily life and politics; others will ascend the heights of theory in order to get the big picture. The work we publish is both disciplinary and interdisciplinary, bridging the social sciences and humanities. Culture and capital are keywords. We are also interested in cities, the built environment and nature, and we encourage people who theorize space to submit their work.

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.001

The Killing Fields of South Africa: Eco-Wars, Species Apartheid, and Toal Liberation

Steve Best

"Animals are those unfortunate slaves and victims of the most brutal part of mankind."
—John Stuart Mill

photo by Michele Pickover

In South Africa, the elephant has emerged at the center of heated political debates and culture wars, as the government and national park system maneuvers to return to the practice of "culling"—a hideous euphemism for mass murder of elephants.[2] Culling advocates—including government officials, park service bureaucrats, ecologists, "conservationists," large environmental organizations such as the World Wildlife Fund, farmers, and villagers—argue that elephants have had deleterious effects on habitat and biodiversity and their herds need to be "managed" and reduced. Farmers and villagers complain that elephants are breaking reserve fences, destroying their crops, competing with their livestock for food, endangering physical safety and sometimes attacking and killing humans. The consensus among these parties is that biodiversity, ecological balance, and human interests trump the lives and interests of elephants, and that the most efficient solution to the "elephant problem" is the final solution of culling thousands of lives.

Opponents of culling include animal activists in South Africa and the world at large, ecologists, and thousands of Western tourists fond of elephants and the desire to see them in their natural habitat. In addition to the moral argument that elephants have intrinsic value and the right to exist—quite independent of their utility for humans—

critics dismiss the claim that elephants threaten habitats and biodiversity. They emphasize that numerous alternatives to controlling elephant populations other than gunning them down exist, such as contraceptives and creating corridors between parks to allow more even population distribution. Against hunters and villagers alike, many culling opponents argue that elephants are worth much more alive than dead, and that elephants and humans alike win by developing the potential of ecotourism. The ethically and scientifically correct policies are not being adopted, critics argue, because government and "conservationists" are allied with the gaming, hunting, and ivory industries, and all favor a "quick fix" over a real solution. Animal advocates worry that the resumption of culling will reopen the global trade of ivory and argue that the ivory industry is driving this policy change.

This essay supports the rights of elephants to live and thrive in suitable natural environments and opposes all justifications for culling elephants and exploiting African wildlife in general.[3] My purview is much broader than elephants, hunting, and the ivory trade, however, as I see the human-elephant "conflict" as a microcosm of the global social and ecological crisis that involves phenomena such as transnational corporate power, state totalitarianism, militarism, chronic conflict and warfare, terrorism, global warming, species extinction, air and water pollution, and resource scarcity. The approach of the South African government and people toward the "elephant problem" has global significance and is an indicator of whether or not humankind as a whole can steer itself away from immanent disaster and learn to harmonize its existence with the natural world.

I first analyze the influence of the hunting, gaming, and ivory industries, and expose the profit motive driving their illicit production and trade. I then compare the regimes of social apartheid (white exploitation and domination of blacks) to the much larger system of species apartheid (human exploitation and domination of animals) to highlight the similarities between the regimes of racism and speciesism, and to stress the superficiality of the changes that culminated in the abolition of institutionalized racism while leaving intact species apartheid and that challenged white supremacy but not human supremacy.[4] I then show how euphemisms such as "culling" and "sustainable use" are transparent covers for violence and exploitation and stem from neo-Malthusian and eco-fascist mindsets. Put bluntly, I argue that South African "conservation" policies are akin to (certainly not identical with in all respects) Nazism in the vilification of the animal Other, the scapegoating of elephants as causes rather than effects of environmental problems, the bureaucratic language and technical administration of mass killing, and the pursuit of a final solution to the alleged problem of elephant overpopulation.

More generally, I argue that human beings worldwide urgently need a paradigm shift in the way they frame their relationships with animals, a conceptual revolution that abandons the dominator psychologies, hierarchical worldviews, and exploitative practices (forged some ten thousand years ago with the emergence of agricultural society) in favor of a new ethics promoting nonviolence, respect for all sentient life, and the harmonization of the social world with the natural world. My approach is rooted in a critical social theory and radical politics that explores the connections between social and environmental problems, relates them to the emergence of hierarchical mentalities and social forms, and argues that the solutions to crises in both realms requires revolution social change that seeks to dismantle the inherently exploitative and unsustainable system of global capitalism while rebuilding societies along decentralized and democratic lines. In contrast to other critical approaches, however, my orientation jettisons the speciesist baggage of humanist, Leftist, and so-called "revolutionary" or "progressive" outlooks in order to link radical social theory to animal rights and thereby significantly expand the critique of hierarchy and broaden the composition of contemporary resistance movements. Given that the goals of the human, animal, and earth liberation movements are inseparably intertwined, we need a global alliance politics of unprecedented scope and range, one that pursues the goal of total liberation.

Big Game, Big Business

> "If monetary value is attached to something it will be exploited until it's gone. That's what happens when you convert living beings to cash. That conversion, from living forests to lumber, schools of cod to fish sticks, and onward to numbers on a ledger, is the central process of our economic system."
> —Derrick Jensen

South Africa is known to the world not only for its magnificent wildlife and parks, but also for the trafficking in endangered species, the huge gaming and hunting industries, and the brutal killing of elephants for ivory and body parts.[5] Virtually lawless in its regulation of the animal trade, South Africa has the highest species extinction rate of

any area on the planet, for big game is big business and money and resources are all that count. One of the richest "resources" in South Africa's possession is the wildlife that roams the plains. Yet, rather than respecting the intrinsic value and rights of animals, or even adopting the "enlightened anthropocentric" policy of "ecotourism" (see below), South Africa has chosen to auction wild animals such as elephants and lions to the highest bidder. The "sustainable use" policy of South Africa is an unsustainable farce.

Every year, tens of thousands of animals are killed with impunity in South Africa for the trivial purpose of "sport." For a handsome fee of $20,000 to $50,000, tourists (such as stream in from Japan, the United States, and Europe) can shoot about any species they want.[6] Most notoriously, lions and other animals are killed in "canned hunts" that confine animals (often domesticated and semi-drugged) within fenced enclosures. The outcome is guaranteed, and the mighty warriors go home with a trophy to mount on the wall or decorate the floor. Whereas wildlife sanctuaries are banned in eight of South Africa's nine provinces, all provinces fully sanction captive-breeding and hunting ranches. Currently, there are 9,000 privately owned ranches that employ 70,000 people who cater to the wants of foreign hunters in search of big game.[7]

A dramatic indication of the bloodshed in the killing fields of Africa is the systematic pogrom against elephants, a species comprised of the largest land mammals on earth and renown for its intellectual, emotional, and social complexity. In 1930, Africa was home to a lush population of 5-10 million elephants. Beginning in the 1960s, however, poachers and armies waged a vicious war of extermination against elephants, reducing their numbers to 1.3 million by 1979. Between 1970 and 1989, another million elephants were slaughtered for their ivory tusks. In 1989, the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) passed a global ban on ivory. Due to intense international pressure and threat of a tourism boycott, South Africa declared a moratorium on culling in 1995. These measures helped to reduce elephant poaching, but illegal poaching and ivory trading still flourish. Today, only 600,000 elephants survive in the South African wild.

Perversely, species are valued—economically, not ecologically—to the degree that they are endangered.[8] They are more important dead than alive. The only way an ivory hawker can collect his "white gold" is through the death of an elephant. Able to gather a large sum of money on the international ivory market, which continues to thrive despite a 1989 international ban against its trading, the lure of money is irresistibly seductive for poachers.[9] In the vast and burgeoning international trade in wild animals and plants—as advertised and mass marketed to a global clientele through web sites and magazines—South Africa is the biggest wildlife trader on the continent. Like the lawless days of the Old West in the United States, the South African government and conservation organizations operate in an anarchistic environment, flouting the national and international laws that—feebly—regulate the trafficking in animals and endangered species. Governments, conservation organizations, tourist offices, the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, and all provinces enable and support the gaming, hunting, and ivory industries that kill tens of thousands of animals each year for "sport" and profit.

In South Africa, as throughout the continent, the park system and state operate within a global capitalist marketplace where the name of the game is growth, profit, and conformity to demands of neoliberalism and transnational corporate domination via resource extraction, debt imposition, and "structural adjustment" programs that minimize regulations, lower wages, privatize social sectors, and control resistance.[10] To survive in the brutal and nihilistic system of global capitalism, the state commandeers what its best assets—wildlife and natural environments—to dole them to industries and private interests. The illegal wildlife trade is estimated to fetch $6-20 billion a year. Needless to say, the interests of animals, the environment, communities, and future generations never enter into the economic calculus of state elites and Western CEOs. The goal of the new South African National Park (SANP) management policy is increased trading of animals on the world market, while displaying complete indifference as to whether they end up in a city or roadside zoo, a circus, a laboratory, or a slaughterhouse. In the words of a one Park Minister (a term that ironically implies ethical stewardship of animals and nature), "I see no reason why we shouldn't be able to make an income out of these [parks]."[11]

If a park profits from animals and land, and puts the money back into sound care and management, it is difficult to object to this pragmatic speciesism given state budget constraints and the realities of global capitalist economies. But "responsible stewardship" is hardly the hallmark of the SANP staff who regard animals as commodities and dispensable resources to be sold to the highest bidder and obligingly play their own critical part in the corporate pillage of the planet. Parks and animals, like everything else, are viewed in the basest terms possible, as nothing but commodities that if lacking in economic value have no value at all.[12]

Species Apartheid

"A new society cannot be created by reproducing the repugnant past, however refined or enticingly repackaged."
—Nelson Mandela

South Africa inherited and maintained an ugly legacy of violence and domination from European colonialists, a system of exploiting humans and nature, racism, and discrimination. In 1948, Dutch Afrikaners referred to this social structure they received and developed as "apartheid" (which literally means "separate state").

Apartheid was a brutal system of class and racial domination maintained by repression, violence, and terror, whereby a minority of wealthy and powerful white elites exploited and ruled over the black majority. Apartheid was a conceptual and ideological system, whereby white elites positioned themselves as superior in relation to the black masses they branded as inferior, and an institutional system, which exploited black labor power, stripped them of basic rights, and strictly segregated the races. Whites declared blacks noncitizens, and confined them to different beaches, hospitals, schools, churches, theatres, restrooms, trains, buses, and other public areas. The respective sexes too were kept apart, as interracial sex and marriage was illegal.

Reviled throughout the world, pressured economically, and attacked at every point by the black resistance movement, the apartheid system began to fall. Nelson Mandela, imprisoned on Robben Island for 27 years, was set free in February 1990, and apartheid was dismantled in 1994. South Africa's first democratic elections were held on April 27, 1994, and Mandela, the leader of the African National Congress (ANC), became the country's first black state president. From May 1994 to June 1999, Mandela presided during the transition from apartheid and minority rule to a fledgling democracy, a system that unfortunately remains plagued by great poverty, unemployment, inequality, and discontent.[13]

Despite the changes that (officially, at least) ending social apartheid, nothing changed in the underlying structure of species apartheid.[14] Just as social apartheid is anchored in white hatred of blacks, so species apartheid stems from human contempt for nonhuman species—such as expressed in the iconic images of joyful hunters power-posing with their "kill."[15] Just as racism arbitrarily defines one group of humans as superior to another, out of sheer prejudice and ignorance, so speciesism position human animals as superior to nonhuman animals, and anoint themselves as the end to which all other life forms are mere means. Whereas the racist mindset roots its hierarchy in skin color, the speciesist mindset devalues and objectifies animals by dichotomizing the evolutionary continuum into human and nonhuman life. As racism stems from a hateful white supremacism, so speciesism draws from a malignant human supremacism, namely, the arrogant belief that humans have a natural or God-given right to use animals for any purpose they devise.

Akin to social apartheid, the conceptual segregation of species apartheid informs an institutional segregation, in which animals are removed from social purview and confined to cramped pens and cages, where their oppression is mainly hidden. As much as possible, South African whites tried to hide black oppression by relegating them to "homelands" and designated public spaces apart from white society. Similarly, while some animals like elephants roam in public parks and are spectacles for eco-tourism, the most vicious forms of exploitation occur in dungeon-like laboratories, factory farms and slaughterhouses in rural outposts, and private hunting enclosures. As South African journalist, Mantsadi Molotlegi, writes in regard to the epiphany that radically changed her worldview, moral compass, and politics, "The way we treat animals has all the hallmarks of apartheid—prejudice, callous disregard for suffering, and a misguided sense of supremacy ... group areas and segregation helped to keep the suffering of black people hidden from view. So too with the animals."[16]

Like racism, speciesism deploys a "Might is Right" philosophy that sees the ability of the powerful to rule over the powerless as its justification for doing so, ignoring the fact that the greater the power the greater the responsibility to use it humanely, democratically and ecologically. Like social apartheid, species apartheid is rooted in the enslavement of beings exploited for profit, as global capitalist markets continue to thrive through extreme exploitation and slavery. Victims of severe oppression, both animals and black Africans were slaves subject to economic exploitation within capitalist systems. Whereas speciesism and racism are pernicious ideologies that underlie animal and black oppression, their subjugation was also informed and determined by capitalist logic and market networks that thrive from slave labor. Speaking of the complex causes of apartheid, an African National Congress (ANC) article states that, "Afrikaner nationalism was [not only about] evicting African blacks simply because of their race; much of it was [about a desire to appropriate land, resources and labour power... it must never be forgotten that Apartheid and racial discrimination in South Africa, like everywhere else, has an aim far more important than discrimination itself:

the aim is economic exploitation. The root and fruit of apartheid and racial discrimination is profit."[17] As the white South African minority enjoyed the highest standard of living in Africa, on par with many western nations, the black majority were marginalized and impoverished in every area such as income, housing, and schools.

As with blacks toiling in the fields and mines of capitalist, —whether it be horses transporting people and goods in urban cities; or cows, pigs, and chickens confined in stalls, crates, and cages manipulated (including genetically) to produce maximum quantities of meat, milk, and eggs; or mice, rats, rabbits, cats, cogs, and chimpanzees in research laboratories who are artificially sickened and serve as sheer bodies for the production of meaningless quantitative data or to provide organs for human "harvest."

As bad as black Africans had it throughout the era of social apartheid, species apartheid is an even more oppressive system. This is because a significantly greater number of animals (dying by the billions) are killed each year, the methods of exploitation typically are more brutal, and there is far less outcry over their suffering and death. Although blacks were violently repressed and many were beaten, tortured, and killed, they were not bred, farmed, confined, and exploited for hunters to shoot down in a demented drama of "sport" and human mastery of nature. While jailed and beaten, blacks were not captured and sent to laboratories for experimentation, cut into pieces and consumed for meat, nor dismembered and sold for jewelry and paperweights. Although black victims of apartheid were murdered by the thousands, over 40 billion animals die each year at the hands of human oppressors in various systems of exploitation, from slaughterhouses and fur farms to hunting fields and laboratories. While the world conscience was slow to awaken to condemn the exploitation of blacks, they ultimately did and were crucial factors in the abolition of apartheid; the cries against species apartheid, however, are barely audible—those quickly growing. And even those opposed to the trade of ivory and chimpanzee meat condone, approve, and participate in myriad forms of animal exploitation such as meat, dairy, and egg consumption or wearing leather products.

The crucial point here is not to quantify suffering or to privilege one form of oppression over another, but rather to draw parallels among different forms of oppression and to call attention to the plight of animals within global species apartheid systems. In the time span since 1994, with the tripartite alliance of the African National Congress, the Congress of South African Trade Unions, and the South African Communist Party, a democratization process has begun to improve life for human beings. But absolutely nothing has been done to ameliorate the slaughter and suffering of animals. In post-apartheid South Africa, one finds the same pseudo-"park" and "conservation" policies, the same cronyism and corruption, the same morass of legal codes and lack of regulation, the same systematic violation of treaties such as CITES, and the same arrogant and violent speciesism that deems animals beings and uses force and aggression to unconscionably exploit them for human purposes.

To be completely accurate, in post-apartheid South Africa the killing rates have accelerated, as exploiters have escalated their extermination campaign against elephants, chimpanzees, gorillas, tigers, and other species. This wholesale massacre of animals—as aggressive, hateful, violent, and bloody as any genocidal rage Africans have unleashed on each other in Rwanda, Darfur, and elsewhere—is driving many species to extinction, while destroying habitats and upsetting ecological balance. As elsewhere in the crumbling human empire, animals in the African wild are under siege, whether it be chimpanzees stolen from the jungles to die in Mengelesque research laboratories or the lions and cougars mowed down by demented hunters. Soldiers in Rwanda have used endangered mountain gorillas for target practice. Paramilitary poachers have sprayed bullets from semi-automatic weapons into terrified herds of elephants mowed down to their death.[18] Rebels assisted by the South African Defense Force killed 60,000 elephants to finance their war in Angola.[19] In 2005, Robert Mugabe, President of Zimbabwe, ordered the slaughter of ten elephants to serve barbecued pachyderm at festivities marking the twenty-fifth anniversary of Zimbabwe's independence and black rule.

How can one expect peace, tolerance, community, and democracy in a country where such pathological violence is unleashed routinely on animals? Does not African exploitation of animals manifest and perpetuate the worst aspects of colonial rule over Africans? Doesn't the dominator mindset and cycle of violence have to be broken at every point?

The Pathology of Humanism

"This hell made mockery of all blather about humanism."
—Isaac Bashevis Singer

> "The assumption that animals are without rights, and the illusion that our treatment of them has no moral significance, is a positively outrageous example of Western crudity and barbarity. Universal compassion is the only guarantee of morality."
> —Arthur Schopenhauer

Where humans fail to make the most profound changes—those involving their relationship to the vast living earth—political regime changes mean nothing to animals and perpetuate violence and social and ecological crises. For whether a regime is Left or Right, Capitalist or Communist, White or Black, Afrikaner or ANC, the same species apartheid mentality and brutal policies prevail. Animals are still exploited as slaves; they are still reduced to resources for human use, and they still suffer and die in unimaginable numbers.[20]

Under the pseudo-progressive guise of progress, rights, democracy, and equality, leftists, communists, democratic humanists, black nationalists, and community activists murder animals no different than white, racist, Western, capitalist, imperialists. Consider, for instance, the Zimbabwe "Campfire Conservation Association" that lobbies the U.S. Congress for funds to kill elephants for community benefit. Through a blatant discourse of objectification, Campfire member Stephen Kasere unashamedly reveals his speciesist outlook: "We just want the elephant to be an economic commodity that can sustain itself because of the return it generates. Ivory is a product that should be treated like any other product."[21]

This is reification—the reduction of a living subject to the status of a thing—in its finest form; it is a hateful, discriminatory, ignorant, morally repugnant outlook that fails to understand the difference between an elephant and an eggplant. Ivory, in fact, should not be treated like "any other product" as this "product" comes from a complex living being murdered for its body parts.[22]

To provide another example of the speciesist and objectifying views informing radical, humanist, and communitarian activists, consider James Shikwati's article, "Conservation Effort: Protecting Africa's People and Wildlife."[23] Shikwati describes the plight of Kenyan villagers who receive little or no benefits from wildlife tourism, as profits are siphoned into private hands and Western banks. He proposes that if elephants belonged to communities, poaching would be reduced as people are not likely to destroy their own "property" or steal "value" from themselves. This is a sensible search for an economy that benefits both humans and animals, replacing a zero-sum game with a win-win situation, but Shikwati frames elephants objects, not subjects, as mere resources that exist not for their own purposes but rather for the benefit of humans. Broadening the capitalist language of objectification and commodification used by hunters and so-called conservationists to grant ownership rights to communities and not only individuals, Shikwati urges us to view a national park as a "village bank" where animals are the peoples' "assets."

From his communitarian-capitalist perspective, Shikwati argues that "there is nothing immoral in having people own wildlife. It is immoral to have them trampled to death [be elephants] and their crops destroyed with no gain in sight." In fact, there is something wrong—profoundly wrong—about ownership of wildlife. It involves a reduction of animals to the status of property, things, commodities, and slaves; it causes, promotes, and legitimates insensitivity to their pain, suffering, and true nature. It is both a philosophical and moral failing. It is the Lockean ownership and property rights mentality that grants exploiters the legal authority to torture and kill other species in any way they see fit, and, conversely, that makes property destruction and economic sabotage for the cause of animal liberation serious crimes.[24] The crass commerce language of "resources" and "assets" is one thing when it refers to oil, gas, or corn crops, and quite another when used to frame the lives of sentient beings as things.

The gaming, hunting, and ivory industries see animals in the same capitalist and utilitarian terms as Kasere and Shikwati. Voices of the people, they make the same appeal to animals as their property over which humans exercise powers of life and death rights as a King commands his subjects. They urge respect and equality for humans, while evincing no understanding or sympathy for animals. They appeal to democratic values while engaging in totalitarian behaviors. The extent of Kasere and Shikwati's moral objection to the assault on animals, biodiversity, and evolution itself is to demand a bigger piece of the pie to distribute among more people, without seeing how the "pie" itself, however carved up and doled out, is the product of violence and exploitation.

While Shikwati rightly criticizes the Kenyan government for indifference to its people, he shows the same apathy to animals in his quest to democratize the killing (its benefits and to some degree its acts) of wildlife rather than to abolish killing altogether and organize alternative—nonviolent and nonexploitative—sources of community income. He understandably expresses loss over people killed by wildlife, but shows no sorrow for millions of animals shot down on the African plains. When Shikwati and others, such as the director of the WWF in Namibia, speak enthusiastically of the economic benefits of killing elephants for human communities, they ignore the inestimable

value living elephants have to their families and communities

Quite reasonably, Shikwati argues that "the poor populations of the world must make a living from their natural surroundings … [o]therwise they will have little incentive to preserve these surroundings, including the wildlife that inhabits them." Given that they kill wildlife to survive, and not for sport or profit, he bristles at animal rights critiques and denounces them as arrogant, Eurocentric, and elitist. "Only people who do not make a living in the vicinity of the wildlife reserves have the luxury of questioning whether or not human beings have the right to control wild animals."[25]

Like Nazi ideologues, totalitarians, and dogmatic fundamentalists of all stripes, Shikwati precludes criticism from outside his culture, constructing a binary opposition in which Western critiques of African cultures are always wrong and indigenous peoples' defense of their traditions and lifeways are always right. Yet, betraying the fallacy of cultural relativism, the same logic can be used by Western imperialists (e.g., through the gospel of Progress that equates social advance with economic growth) to disable anticolonialist critiques of their exploitation and looting of the Southern hemisphere. Hiding under the cover of cultural relativism, Kasere and Shikwati provide carte blanche license for African communities to treat animals in any way that advances their needs and interests.

But there is no guarantee that villagers—often as anthropocentric and cruel as anyone else—would treat animals with more respect than big government, corrupt state elites, exploitative industries, and co-opted "conservation" organizations. Where sensitivities are lacking, however, economics and self-interest can dictate "humane treatment." Poaching and trafficking in endangered species may indeed be reduced where democratic communities manage and protect the precious "assets" in their "bank," as opposed to the reckless and unsustainable practices of outside corporate and hunting interests.

But, to underscore the fundamental point, if animals have basic rights to life and liberty—a question that dogmatic humanists dismiss, dodge, and rarely seriously or intelligently engage—these rights are inviolable and thereby trump human utilitarian considerations.[26] As emphasized by Kant's universal moral imperatives, to treat another as an end rather than a means demands we accord them respect, principles which and and should be extended to govern human relations to animals.

At this point, inevitably, humanists, "progressives," and indigenous voices dredge up the tired ad hominem slander that animal rights—typically Western, white, and economically "privileged"—are elitists who disrespect traditions and impose values relevant to conditions of material privilege but not to the realities scarcity and poverty. To be perfectly clear: there is nothing inherently racist or elitist about "white privileged westerners" (such as myself) criticizing other cultures on moral grounds, as if non-Western cultures are morally perfect, beyond reproach, and completely consistent in their condemnations of the West. U.S. systems of factory farming, Japanese whaling and dolphin slaughter, Canadian seal hunts, and South African elephant culling are all morally reprehensible, and can be judged as such from the ethical and logical foundations rooted in the rigorously argued case for animal rights.

Indeed, we cannot pass over the irony, inconsistency, and hypocrisy of non-Western condemnation of animal rights as an elitist, white, Western, privileged discourse, while the conceptualization of animals as resources, bank reserves, and community property stem from Western (capitalist and individualist) concepts of ownership and property rights. Attacks on animals rights from an indigenous and communitarian standpoint are framed in the corrupt capitalist language of commodification and property rights, whereas animal rights rejects the idea that animals are property, whether of individuals or communities. Whereas indigenous critiques are rooted in Western capitalist concept, animal rights is a profound break from the entire Western tradition what defines humans as superior to animals by virtue of their rational and logical abilities.

Cruelty is cruelty, and violent and exploitative attitudes and practices can and should be condemned universally; chicanery, dogmatism, and hiding behind the cover of cultural relativism must be exposed and rejected, as critical theorists give due attention to nuances such as arise in the hunting practices of "subsistence cultures." The normative thrust of animal rights assails animal exploitation of any kind, regardless of the oppressor's race, class, gender, religion, or nationality. Animal rights theorists typically distinguish between animal exploitation and subsistence killing; all condemn the former and many condone the latter as morally defensible given survival needs. But animal rights advocates also point out that genuine subsistence cultures (such as many wrongly include the Intuits in this category) are rare or nonexistent, and "subsistence cultures" such as the Makah Indians in the U.S. Northwest kill whales with speed boats and high-powered spear guns, and have been seen to disrespectfully dance on their dead bodies in a ritual of domination rather than respect. [27]

The animal rights standpoint urges all cultures to relate to animals in nonobjectifying, nonviolent, and respectful ways. It is a moral revolution that has moved beyond Western states to take root throughout the globe and thus is

influential in nations and cultures such as Taiwan, Russian, and South Africa itself. The ad hominem denunciations of animal rights as Western and elitist have been refuted by a rapidly growing global movement to protect all innocents, end all exploitation, eradicate all prejudice, and stop all violence. Charges of racism and elitism are all the more erroneous and divisive where animal advocates stand in solidarity with oppressed peoples and try to establish interconnections that exist among movements for human, animal, and earth liberation in ways that deepen and strengthen each crucial element of a needed total revolution (see below).

Thus, when Nelson Mandela rails against racism, saying "I detest racialism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black man or a white man," we must expand his objective standard of justice and moral accountability to a include a diatribe against speciesism. To deepen Mandela's moral truth by way of paraphrase, the holistic voice of conscience today would cry out: "I detest speciesism, because I regard it as a barbaric thing, whether it comes from a black person or a white person."

Pseudo-Conservation and the Linguistic Sanitization of Violence

"In our time, political speech and writing are largely the defense of the indefensible."
—George Orwell

There is much talk in South Africa of the "conflict" between —one that demonizes elephants as predators rather than prey, one that is informed by a primitive "Might is Right" ideology and is resolved by violent methods, one where elephants always lose. In contrapuntal chorus, conservationists, farmers, hunters, and villagers decry the "severe ecological damage" allegedly caused by elephant overpopulation in some areas and argue that elephants are harming plant life, endangering biodiversity, and "gobbling up" crops with their voracious appetites, bulldozing bodies, and burgeoning numbers.[28] Rather than look deeply into the ultimate causes of ecological imbalance, elephobes advocate killing as the "solution" to the "elephant problem."

Instead of confronting systematic violence against animals as a profound problem with enormous implications for humans themselves, the brutality of species apartheid is linguistically sanitized in discourse such as "culling," "sustainable use," "sustainable off take," "humane use," "harvestable resource," "adaptive management," and "population management." As noted above, so-called "conservationists" and, indeed, alleged "true environmentalists," refer to elephants as "renewable natural resources" as if they were things.[29] Here is a typical gem from the mouths of conservationists that reifies complex social beings as sheer things, resources, and commodities: "The elephant is a natural resource with assignable ownership. Foreign hunters are willing to convert that from an asset to capital in exchange for a cultural experience compatible with the history and use of the elephant." Exchanging moral discourse of the language of the stock market, this view reduces the elephant to sheer commodity status, denying it any fundamental right to life, as it sanctifies the hunter as a property owner, a vital trader in the global exchange market, and a sophisticated seeker of "cultural experience."[30]

Conservationists define the "culling" of elephants as "the managed alteration of a game populations numbers or compositions, when at odds with its resources, health and welfare, or man's `interest.'"[31] Obscene abstractions such as the "management of elephant density" obscure the very concrete act of killing elephants by shooting them with tranquilizing darts from helicopters, allowing them to slowly and painfully suffocate and die, finishing off those still alive with a bullet to the head or a blade to their throat, and then dismembering and exploiting every penny's worth from their mutilated bodies.[32] Once one clears the fog of semantic chicanery, moral posturing, and allegedly sound and objective science, it is clear that culling is a demonization and slaughter of the innocent. It stems from the human hatred of animals, from the proclivity to annihilate anything that threatens our selfish individual, groups, or species interests, and from the insatiable and inveterate appetite for exploiting life and resources for profit. Culling spreads terror from air and land, breaks apart families, and causes acute distress among herds near and far (who can hear and sense the fear, panic, and slaughter of their fellow beings). Culling is a form of ethnic (or species) cleansing where victims are targeted because they are deemed inferior beings, problems or threats to the interests of the superior group, and thus relegated to the category of the Other to justify mass slaughter.

The Orwellian mystifications rampant throughout so-called conservationist and scientific discourse evoke other nefarious speciesist classics, such as the "humane treatment" of animals in the cages of laboratories, circuses, fur farms, breeders, factory farms, and slaughterhouses, or, best of all, "humane killing"—as if there is a "humane" way

to strip intelligent and sensitive beings from their natural kind and world, to confine them in cramped cages and stalls, to deprive them of their life instincts, to drive them mad or morbidly depressed, and to violently kill them with a blade or knife as they shriek in fear and often are conscious during the act of dismemberment.

Some groups have taken initiatives—albeit from a speciesist perspective coached in the language of reification—to promote "sustainable" elephant hunting. In African countries such as Namibia, the World Wildlife Fund claims to be successfully teaching rural communities how to prosper through "sustainable natural resource management," which includes "sale of thatching grass and crafts, tourist concessions, and revenues from trophy hunting" (my emphasis).[33] Working with government and teachers to implement new curricula, the ultimate goal of their Environmental Education program is "to provide the knowledge to use natural resources with an eye to the future. Planting trees for fuel and timber, preventing water-borne and other diseases, countering soil erosion and pollution, and tapping into indigenous knowledge to maintain a healthy environment."[34] In a qualitative leap beyond this speciesist approach that exploits elephants for human resources and perpetuates instrumentalist and exploitative worldview underpinning the social and ecological crises afflicting the globe, another group provided poachers not with money derived from the slaughter of innocents but rather with alternative livelihoods by training them to become carpenters and involving them in a village sewing cooperative they launched.[35]

Key to the worldview of cunning conservationists and planetary pirates running amuck on land and sea is the concept of "sustainable use." Apart from its semantic deformation, the phrase implies ecological sensibility, benign stewardship, and moral responsibility in awareness of the need to consume "resources" within ecological limits, and not take more than can be replaced and renewable by future generations. The profit-driven, crassly anthropocentric utilitarian model of "sustainable use," however, is a disingenuous device deployed to distract attention from attitudes bereft of holistic attitudes and actions that are entirely unsustainable.

The discourse of "sustainable use" is prostituted and misshaped because the global, voracious demand for transforming beautiful, biologically important, often endangered animals into bloody carcasses increasingly outstrips the supply. [36]According to Michele Pickover, "South Africa has the highest estimated rate of extinctions for any area of the world, with 37 per cent of its mammal species threatened."[37] The hunting and gaming industries follow not the credo of "sustainable use," but rather the imperative to exploit, kill, and plunder as much as possible, as quickly as feasible, and for maximum profit and gain. The exploitative and utilitarian outlook of "sustainable use" precludes any truly sustainable mode of human existence and harmony with nature, and the contradiction can only be resolved—beyond dismantling markets and profit imperatives that drive exploitation—through a conceptual gestalt shift that fosters connectedness to the world and appreciation of the inherent worth of other species.

The "scientific management" of parks obfuscates the economic and political interests that shape "conservation" policies. In the United States, federal regulatory agencies such as the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) allegedly protect the welfare of animals and citizens, but in fact promote the agendas of meat, dairy, and pharmaceutical industries. Similarly, South African "conservation" organizations supposedly act in the interests of animals, but in truth advance the deadly agenda of hunting and gaming industries. As one writer observes, the conservation system "was conceived during apartheid and reflected the authoritarian norms of that era. Today, conservation boards remain under the control of long-entrenched bureaucrats. Mostly white, Afrikaans-speaking men, these functionaries come from the same tight-knit community as many of those involved in captive breeding and canned hunting. Many are hunters themselves."[38]

Westerners would be astonished to realize the degree to which African "wildlife management" is a deceptive and fraudulent charade. Quite commonly, animals are not protected in the park system, but rather are temporarily stored there as resources for future use. The SANP system has a long history of supplying animals such as rhinoceros, elephants, and lions to private landowners and hunting operators. "Conservation" organizations, moreover, are fronts for animal exploiters. With the state and animal exploiters, "conservationists" advocate "sustainable use" policies that appear to be responsible "environmental management," but in reality mask unsustainable levels of killing that are driving numerous species to the brink of extinction. Perhaps most of all, U.S. citizens would be outraged to learn that millions of their tax dollars subsidize elephant killing through Congressional funding of South African hunting lobbies.[39]

It is a perversion of the concept of "conservation" when its semantic range extends to taking not preserving life, to driving species extinction rather than promoting species preservation. Of course, "conservation" is part of a larger ecological vocabulary, one that values ecosystems over individual animal lives. Thus, from this type of holistic outlook that favors systems over individuals, hunting and fishing are perfectly acceptable pastimes, "sports,"

traditions, or businesses—so long as, according to the standard proviso, the one pulling the trigger or yanking the hook understands and respects ecological balance and sustainability requirements. From this perspective, it follows that the life of an individual elephant, lion, rhinoceros, or chimpanzee has no innate or important value, for when "harvested properly, animals are replaceable "resources."

Environmentalists, ecologists, and conservationists are notorious for their partial understanding of the big picture, their commonplace embrace of meat-eating, and their defense of hunting and other exploitative practices. Proponents of "green" lifeways view animals as species, not individuals, and embrace the speciesist ideology that frames them as resources for human use. Like everyone else, they mouth vague platitudes that endorse animal welfare views that merely reinforce speciesism and legitimate every imaginable form of cruelty, for welfarist views seek bigger cages not empty cages and the "humane treatment" of animal slaves rather than the abolition of animal exploitation.

Malthus, Resource Wars, and Eco-Fascism

> "In their behavior toward creatures, all men were Nazis. The smugness with which man could do with other species as he pleased exemplified the most extreme racist theories, the principle that might is right."
> —Isaac Bashevis Singer

Intoxicated with the promise of reason, science, and technology, preaching a new gospel of Progress, many Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century believed that the laws of history were inevitably leading to a universal community governed by reason, where all humanity would be happy and free. A writer by the name of Thomas Malthus, however, observed a fatal flaw in this utopian scenario, insofar is it ignored basic laws of ecology and was rooted in the modernist fallacy of nature as a cornucopia of inexhaustible resources. In his book An Essay on the Principle of Population (1798), Malthus analyzed a dynamic where human populations grow at a geometric rate (1, 2, 4, 8, 16...), whereas food supplies increase only at an arithmetic rate (1, 2, 3, 4...).[40] Eventually, humans overshoot available resources and encounter conditions of scarcity. One way or the other, Malthus reasoned, human populations will return to sustainable levels—whether through conscious choices and planning or through diseases, famine, plague, wars, and conflicts.

In the global ecological crisis of the twenty-first century, it is clear that the modernist vision has been refuted, whereas some basic principles of Malthus have been vindicated. Although Malthus used a static model of calculation and failed to account for factors such as how technological innovation could increase food supplies, the gains artificially obtained through chemicals and agribusiness have peaked, leaving depleted lands and soils. Throughout the world, human populations are facing unprecedented shortages of water, land, food, oil, and other resources. Increasing demand for decreasing resources leads to competition, conflict, and war.[41] From Bush's invasion of Iraq for control of oil, to battles over water in the Nile Basin, and to struggles over timber, gems and minerals in Borneo and Sierra Leone, the same Malthusian pattern is playing out throughout the globe. One key reason for the current genocidal violence in Darfur, for instance, is lack of water and agricultural land. To a significant degree, conflicts throughout the Middle East over the last few decades have been over land and water rights. And of course the Bush administration invaded Iraq in large part to gain access to its oil, and the United States is currently battling China for control of oil and gas flows in Central Asia and compromising national autonomy and security through dependence on oil from the Arab world.

As realized by many politicians, global warming and resource scarcity will emerge as key national security concerns. As sea levels rise, world populations grow, and consumption rates soar, millions of people will become environmental refuges. Water and energy will become increasingly costly and scarce, grasslands will become deserts, and brutal conflicts over increasingly scare resources will flare throughout the globe. Underdeveloped, poor, and unstable nations will be hit the hardest and experience the most social and political chaos, but the wealthier nations will be drawn into the maelstrom with humanitarian and military operations. Hurricane Katrina, which wiped out the U.S. Gulf Coast in 2005, was just a hint of the social and ecological crises to come, such as global climate change portends.

The realization of Malthus' dystopian vision in no way validates his political views and policy suggestions. Malthus was an elitist, capitalist champion, and Social Darwinist who held workers, the poor, and the unfortunate

in contempt. He argued against policies assisting the disenfranchised on the grounds that aid would only increase their dependence on government and aggravate population problems. In the early twentieth century United States, "neo-Malthusianism" emerged as a racist doctrine used to influence immigration legislation. In the late 1940s, neo-Malthusians argued against the use of pesticides and antibiotics to control malaria and infections in third world countries. In the 1960s, neo-Malthusian arguments reached an audience of millions with Paul Erlich's book, The Population Bomb (1968), which made dire and false predictions of immanent catastrophe and tended to scapegoat people of color in underdeveloped nations. In the 1980s and 1990s, Malthusian ideas influenced deep ecology and radical environmental groups such as Earth First!, leading some to argue against famine relief for starving masses in Ethiopia, as others even applauded AIDS as an ideal form of population control.[42]

While positive in their recognition of ecology, the limits of nature, and the dangers of overpopulation, Malthusian approaches suffer from two key problems. First, they present the forced option of either turning our backs on the needy to advance the long-term good, or helping them and thereby exacerbating population growth. Malthusians don't recognize the viability of a third possibility, whereby governments assist those suffering from poverty, famine, and other problems, as they also work to reduce population growth by addressing its root causes in social dynamics—such as involve imperialism, economic dependency, lack of education, and patriarchal control of women. Thus, a second major problem with Malthusianism is that it reduces population growth to a strictly biological issue, thereby abstracting it from its overall social context.

We must respond to human overpopulation problems with compassion and respect for the rights, dignity, and value of each human life, rather than with ecological reasoning abstracted from a social-political context. It is unthinkable to regard humans as mere problems, abstract masses devoid of individuality, a disturbance in ecosystems, or a drain on public resources to be removed by any means. That was the attitude of Nazi Germany, which saw Jews, workers, homosexuals, socialists, and others as genetic pollutants and social irritants that only a final solution could remove. Typically, Western governments do not show indifference to starving masses in Ethiopia and elsewhere on the assumption that aid would only increase their dependence on aid and boost population growth. There are alternative solutions, such as involve facilitating the economic independence and boosting the agricultural capacities of "undeveloped" nations. Western states send aid to starving people even if it might aggravate the problem because they recognize—to varying degrees—responsibilities to help unfortunate people in undeveloped nations who are suffering in the here and now, without dehumanizing appeals to ecological balances in the future. And we certainly do not talk of culling human populations and making a profitable sport of it—unless, that is, we are Nazis enamored with power and contemptuous of life, administrating violence and death on a mass level, applying bureaucratic, Taylorized logic to dehumanized mass populations with icy cold detachment.

So, when it comes to the overpopulation of elephants in some South African national parks, to a species universally acknowledged to be amazingly intelligent and sophisticated, why do ecologists, government officials, park managers, hunters, and others advocate eco-fascist, final solution policies? Why do they promote the mass murder of beings renown for their intellectual, emotional, and social complexity? If nations mobilize to send food to starving masses (perhaps thereby allowing their populations to increase), why don't they take the same lengths to address problems resulting from "overpopulating" animals? Why is the first and main solution to pick up a gun? Why aren't conservationists and park officials aggressively pursuing alternatives and taking extraordinary lengths to avoid violent responses?

The answers lie in the speciesist devaluation of elephant lives, the elevation of human over nonhuman interests, the pressure from the powerful hunting lobbies and ivory trade, and the value of elephants as food and resources. Eco-fascist, neo-Malthusian attitudes are blatantly evident, for example, in the views of Dr. Hector Magome, Director of South African National Parks. In a recent statement, he explained that he was "strongly leaning toward culling and we want the public to digest this hard fact." Similarly, Dr. Ian Whyte, elephant specialist at Kruger National Park, said, "No one likes killing elephants, but we have a responsibility to maintain biodiversity."[43]

This is quintessential Malthusianism, where killing is dressed up as realism and utility rather than murder and wrong, and where ecology and ecosystems trump individuals and rights. Magome and Whyte posture as if they alone can penetrate through sentiment and illusion, that only they have the courage to advance the realist view that in areas such as Kruger National Park it is necessary to kill six thousand elephants to protect biodiversity and to forestall greater ecological problems in the future.

In fact, this attitude and policy is not only Malthusian, it is Nazism in pursuit of the final solution to the "elephant problem." Consider the language of a 2005 policy report, which states: "It is recommended that application

of lethal means, specifically culling, be approved as part and parcel of a range of options for the management of elephant populations. The implementation of culling should be informed by the application of adaptive management principles, while also not excluding the application of and learning from other viable management options." With park bureaucrats negligent for not taking action long ago, and with their backs against the wall to take decisive action and to revivify the ivory market, they reject the many nonviolent alternatives to killing elephants as "too costly and would take too much time to deal with an urgent problem.[44]

Exactly how does this outlook differ from the methodical administration of death through the technological systems of Hitler's Germany? This is not "culling," it is a despicable type of genocide; it is an act akin to ethnic cleansing whereby one group systematically wipes out members of another group deemed the inferior, evil, and threatening "Other."

Scapegoating Elephants

> "What gives man the right to kill an animal, often torture it, so that he can fill his belly with its flesh? We know now, as we have always known instinctively, that animals can suffer as much as human beings. Their emotions and their sensitivity are often stronger than those of a human being. Various philosophers and religious leaders tried to convince their disciples and followers that animals are nothing more than machines without a soul, without feelings. However, anyone who has ever lived with an animal be it a dog, a bird or even a mouse—knows that this theory is a brazen lie, invented to justify cruelty."
>
> —Isaac Bashevis Singer

While there is much ado in government and conservation reports about elephant overpopulation in areas such as Kruger National Park, let's be clear that African elephants on the whole (like their Asian counterparts) are an endangered species, and that any renewal of culling policies can revitalize the ivory trade and jeopardize their survival. The rate of decimation is stunning. In 1930, Africa was home to 5-10 million elephants. By 1979, serial cullers reduced their numbers to 1.3 million. Between 1970 and 1989, the elephant population was halved when another million elephants were slaughtered for their ivory tusks. According to one report, "The exploitation of elephant herds on a massive scale began in the 1970s. Organized gangs of poachers used automatic weapons, profited from government corruption, and laundered tons of elephant tusks through several African countries to destinations in Eastern and Western countries."[45] Today, only 600,000 elephants survive in the South African wild.

The elephant-human conflict is a microcosm of global problems and dynamics, and emerges in a critical time of struggle over diminishing resources in a shrinking earth. Unavoidably, the current era of resource wars raises the specter of Thomas Malthus. But while Malthus saw that scarcity would bring humans into conflict with one another, he didn't predict conflicts between humans and animals over scant land and resources, creating situations where animals are under attack and, quite literally, are often fighting back.

Like humans, chimpanzees, and other animals, elephants have complex minds and social structures. In one dramatic instance of how violence to animals rebounds to affect human society, elephants who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, brought on by killing of and separation from family members, grow up psychologically damaged and are more likely to attack humans. In such cases of "elephant aggression," one should not blame the victim, but rather examine the causes of the behavior in human predation. It is quite possible animals such as African elephants understand the short and long-term threat humans pose to them, harbor anger towards them, and consciously resist and strike back. Thus, in some ways, chimpanzees, elephants, and other animals are forming their own Animal Liberation Front, quite apart from radical animal rights activists who don masks, operate in underground cells, and clandestinely liberate animals from cages and attack the property (never the person) of animal exploiters such as Huntingdon Life Sciences. One can hardly expect animals to win their freedom, however, without help from animal rights activists and an enlightened public.

Amidst complaints that elephants trample crops, damage ecosystems, and endanger and often take human lives, it is clear that elephants are being scapegoated for problems they did not create and, in the form of habitat destruction, many critics argue does not exist. The Canadian sealing industry blames seals for depleti`ng fish population, thereby providing an eco-fascist justification for the slaughter of over 300,000 baby seals every year. But it is the fishermen, not the seals, who are depleting the fish. Similarly, African elephants are not responsible for ecological degradation and shrinking biodiversity, as the fault lies ultimately with human beings. Elephants are blamed for damage wrought

by humans in order to justify their slaughter, and thus are scapegoated like seals in Canada. Making elephants liable for alleged ecological problems opens the door to further genocide in Africa's national parks, a pogrom sure to take place out of sight of Western tourists who largely abhor culling.

But elephant predation is the inevitable result of human predation, and people are blaming the victim. In reality, farmers, loggers, ranchers, hunters, and other commercial interests, buoyed by a growing human population and rapacious market demands, have destroyed and diminished natural habitats, such that roaming elephants inevitably come into contact and conflict with swelling human communities. Far before elephant numbers began to climb in certain areas, environments already were degraded by farming, ranching, timber, mining, and other exploitative industries. To keep up with expanding populations, growing markets, and insatiable consumer appetites, industry and development projects have destroyed natural habitats, leaving only fragmented patches of parks and protected areas.

Subsequently, human and elephant interests clash violently. According to one report, "In central Africa, large tracts of elephant habitat are threatened by slash-and-burn agriculture and by large commercial logging operations, while throughout Africa less than 20 per cent of elephant range is protected in parks and reserves. Many herds are now confined to isolated protected areas. As a result, when elephants try to follow traditional migration corridors through what was once forest or savannah, they are confronted with roads, fields, and villages. This inevitably leads to conflict with local people. Further conflict arises in instances when elephant populations grow and can no longer disperse naturally across their former range. This can lead to local overcrowding, as in the case in some parts of southern Africa where increasing elephant populations cause damage to their habitat. Elephants have found farmers' crops attractive as an alternative food source. The cost for a farmer in this instance is high: as elephants can eat up to 300kg of food every day, even a small herd can devastate a farm during one night's foraging. Human-elephant conflicts can be fatal to for both humans and elephants. Many wildlife authorities shoot animals that are harming humans and their property; local people also sometimes kill elephants in retaliation for attacks. In turn, elephants can also sometimes attack people when their paths cross."[46]

Ecological destabilization has direct human causes. At Wangi National Park, for instance, park officials created waterholes for tourists flocking to the area, but they also became a year round habitat for elephants and other animals, leading to major changes in vegetation and the balance of species.[47] At Kruger National Park, flawed policies such as water point provision as well as culling have upset natural mechanisms of population regulation, artificially inflating elephant numbers out of balance with the environment.[48] Rather than a solution to elephant overpopulation, culling and slaughter have helped to cause it: "Removing elephants has an ecological impact too: Decimation of elephant populations by the ivory trade, especially the huge volumes trafficked in the 1800s, removed elephants over wide areas and had cascading impacts on vegetation and other species allowing tree species, such as marula and various acacias, to colonize and become established in a way that may have been unusual in ecological time."[49] Thus, further culling will only worsen the ecological problems such senseless slaughter tries to avoid.

Many critics, moreover, question the root assumption and justification for culling, by emphasizing a lack of evidence for the claim that elephants are damaging environments and biodiversity. As one critic writes, "Despite decades of draconian population management, there is little reliable evidence of the outcomes of elephant-habitat interactions, with respect to other species and to elephants themselves. However, amidst this uncertainty, there is no evidence to support a reasonable expectation of imminent, irreversible damage to biodiversity, despite SANParks' claims to the contrary. Examples often given within South Africa of elephants' catastrophic damage to ecosystems are, in fact, myths. Tsavo National Park in Kenya was not destroyed (despite misleading reports to the contrary) and remains dynamic, with diverse and productive plant and wildlife communities."[50] In comparison to some other conservation areas, the report states, "Kruger Park is densely covered in bush ...none of the 1,922 plant species in the Kruger Park are endangered, nor are any of the plant communities under threat." The report claims that "there is little reason to fear that biodiversity is under imminent risk in Kruger ... and every reason to believe that imaginative elephant management approaches can result in population mechanisms that will promote heterogeneity within the Park and actually increase biodiversity in the longer term."

In searching for root causes of environmental destruction, human-animal conflicts, and possible elephant overpopulation in some areas, we must also point a critical figure at the destructive effects of thousands of unregulated game farming and ranching industries operating in South Africa. Universally, whether speaking of elephants or deer, a core justification hunters offer for their bloodsport is that shooting animals dead promotes ecological balance by reducing excess population numbers. The evidence suggests, however, that hunting has the opposite effect. As Pickover explains, hunters in South Africa disrupt ecological balance and cause natural selection in reverse, as "they

produce favoured species at the expense of the less favoured, overstock to keep up with demand, exterminate large predators and severely cull small ones ... feed artificially, manipulate habitat as ordinary farmers do, introduce nonindigenous species and strains, and genetically manipulate wild animals."[51] By taking animals with the biggest manes and horns and targeting the strong and healthy instead of the weak and sick, hunting interferes with animal social structures, natural ecologies, and the balance of nature. Game farming disrupts natural selection and genetics as it destroys habitat; the land possessed by private individuals is "alternated and manipulated intensively, and this in turn has detrimental effects on the diversity and abundance of many bird species, small mammals and reptiles that depend on bush and forest habitats. The biological and conservation value of privately owned commercial ranches are therefore very limited."[52]

Thus, if governmental agencies and conservation organizations are truly interested in protecting habits and species, it would seem more logical to target agriculture, commercial logging, game farming, park mismanagement, and hunting organizations rather than elephants. Culling elephants is a hideous case of blaming the victim. But logic matters little where politics prevails over "science" and special interest groups overwhelm the larger good of humans, animals, and the environment. Let's be clear that the blame game runs both ways: we can justly claim that people steal from elephants and other species; that people are immense lethal threats to elephant lives, families, and communities. Perhaps it is humans who should retreat and make room for elephants, and other species as well.[53]

The Dialectic of Ecotourism

> "For every thousand people hacking at the branches of the tree of evil, only one is hacking at the root."
> —Henry David Thoreau

Many South African communities and animal advocates worldwide have proposed that the best solution to the human-elephant conflict is through building networks of "eco-tourism" that market elephants to tourists who would visit South Africa principally to view elephants in the "wild" and whose dollars, euros, and yen would rebuild the economic infrastructure of states and communities. Ecotourism is a significant leap forward beyond culling and primitive exploitation of elephants in the hunting and trade industries, for it reverses priorities—by endowing elephants with more value alive than dead—as it potentially undoes and resolves the opposition between human and animal interests, such that what benefits elephants benefits humans as well, and vice versa.[54] Eco-tourism can help mitigate or dissolve the conflict between people and elephants, and enable people to see them in more positive terms. To underscore this point, a hopeful sign of change is evident in the outlook of Muzarabani district chief executive, Luckson Chisanduro, who stated that, "People are beginning to understand that there is a need to preserve the elephant, not just for the income but because it is our inheritance." [55]

Such insights lead not to actions that exclude elephants from communities with wire fences, but rather include them as a crucial part of their history and identity. One way of mediating the human-elephant "conflict" is through ecotourism whereby communities benefit. Ecotourism is based on the recognition that elephants have more value for communities when alive rather than dead, and that the economic benefits are greater than poaching and hunting, more sustainable, and, in principle, more equally distributed among community members,

If the sole focus of African orientation to elephants is on economics rather than ethics, on what benefits humans not animals, it is crucial to emphasize that there is far more economic value and gain in ecotourism than in animal farming and hunting. As one report explains, "Value can be added more effectively to wildlife existence values through tourism, and related employment and service industries supporting ... wildlife conservation, rather than treating the protected area as a farm for delivering animal products ... revenue generation from tourism is significantly greater than from `cropping' of wildlife, and photo-tourism offers greater opportunities for investment and added value than consumptive utilization, which is limited by the "offtake-determined threshold of revenues."[56]

In other words, African nations and communities will benefit in the long-term far more when Westerns come to shoot elephants with a camera rather than a gun and the elephant is treated as a vital part of the community rather than as an enemy or pest. A complimentary tactic to ecotourism is organizing a massive boycott against traveling to South Africa should the government and park system resume, or threaten to resume, culling. In the schizophrenic Western mindset that promotes kindness to some animals (cats, dogs, horses, dolphins, and elephants) and killing of other animals (e.g., rats and mice in laboratories and cows, pigs, chickens, and turkeys in factory farms

and slaughterhouses), significant numbers of Americans and Europeans hold affection for elephants, condemn their killing, and could be mobilized for an economic boycott that might have a significant detrimental impact on the South African economy. Given Western sentiments and spending power, "the potential risks to South Africa's tourism industry if elephant culling is resumed are enormous; in 2002 tourism earned South Africa R72 .5 billion (U.S.$7.2 billion) in revenue (7.1% of GDP) and generated 1.15 million jobs."[57]

Despite its immense advantages, ecotourism is problematic on moral and political levels because it does not break with commodification logic and the instrumentalist mindset that sees elephants in terms of extrinsic rather than intrinsic value, and alone it is an inadequate reform measure that fails to engage the root causes of interlocking systems of domination, exploitation, and oppression. Individuals, organizations, and communities promoting ecotourism want to stop poaching, protect elephants, and guarantee a space for their existence, but for pragmatic not moral reasons, because elephants bring them economic benefits, not because they are subjects of a life with intrinsic value. Some champions of ecotourism also sanction the "sustainable" killing of elephants.

In direct opposition to the utilitarian and instrumentalist mentality of conservationist and welfare groups, animal rights advocates insist that animals have intrinsic value, whereby their lives are purposeful and meaningful entirely apart from their utility to humans; they thereby reject the instrumentalist framework that reduces subjects to objects and views animals as resources, commodities, property, and mere means to human ends. The animal rights perspective renounces the oxymoronic "sustainable use" and "responsible hunting" policies promoted by speciesist conservationists and animal welfare groups such as the World Wildlife Fund.[58] The moral repugnance of ecotourism can be better recognized by comparing the utilitarian treatment of elephants with the exploitation of "primitive cultures" in human zoos or "tourist performances." Neither people nor animals are harmed, and they benefit from their commodification and objectification (whether by living rather than dying at the hands of poachers, in the case of elephants, or deriving money from their display, as might occur with indigenous cultures), but they are nonetheless viewed as means for the ends of another rather than ends-in-themselves, and thereby denigrated and demeaned in significant ways.

A popular philosophy that flaunts human arrogance is the idea that "elephants can stay if they pay their own way." This suggests, first, that elephants have no right to exist in their homeland which they have been occupying for sixty million years before humans evolved and claimed eminent domain over the entire planet. From this utilitarian and capitalist standpoint, the value of elephant life is entirely contingent on their ability to perform as laborers in a global commodity market at levels high enough to cover the costs of park maintenance. Otherwise, their lives are not worth the time and money necessary to "preserve" or "manage" them, and what value they have in their tusks and flesh will be taken in a hail of bullets. This ingrate mentality ignores the fact that in their exotic allure, fascinating nature, identification with the mystique and beauty of Africa, and stimulants of the ecotourist industry, elephants have already paid their way, time and time again, and they can continue to many times over if South Africa awakens to the fact—if only from within the entrenched market and instrumentalist mentality—that elephants are worth much more alive than dead.

While boycotts and ecotourism can be effective tactics, they are hardly the only weapons needed in the war against animal slavery and domination in all forms. Travel and economic boycotts of South Africa by corporations, banks, and individuals were important contributors to ending the apartheid system, but hardly altered the basic structures of poverty, inequality, and exploitation. Under the crushing weight of Western market imperialism, the continent's social structures and ecological systems continue to deteriorate as African elites and politicians—including Nelson Mandela—embrace neoliberalism and hand Africa over to the hands of global capitalism and world banks. Similarly, should South Africa resume elephant culling, a major tourist boycott could have a significant economic impact and thereby exert political pressure to stop further slaughter, but it would hardly suffice to change the dynamics driving animal exploitation. Touted as the panacea to problems and conflicts and as a model of sustainability, ecotourism itself is potentially unsustainable and ecologically destructive. Its success is a recipe for its failure to the degree that it achieves the goal of attracting hordes of tourists to national parks, yielding the unintended consequence—like the plan to attract tourists to Yellowstone National Park in the United States—of burdening the environment, disrupting wildlife, and bringing about a need for roads and hotels in undeveloped areas.

The struggle for animal rights and liberation is a moral ideal and long-term goal, such that its moral purity and ultimate objectives exist in tension with pressing practical considerations and the urgent needs of the present, such as are defined by the rapid destruction of habitat, species extinction, and the major push of the South African government and park system to resume culling. With this tension in mind—between immediate exigencies and long-

range goals, between abstract ideals and concrete political complexities—we must admit that it is far better that South Africans instrumentalize elephants for their worth as living beings rather than as corpses and dismembered body parts for consumption and market trade. Undoubtedly, the objectification of elephants in the ecotourism industry is infinitely better than their reification in the ivory, meat, and skin trade.

While still a utilitarian and exploitative outlook—one need think only of the moral problems in a parallel form of exploitation of "primitive cultures" as tourist spectacles and mere means for the end of profit—ecotourism may be the most realistic approach in the current context where global capitalism squeezes Africa from one side and, as a direct result, poverty exerts its crippling pressures from another side. While ecotourism depends on democratization, it also can help foster the process since a key objective of ecotourism (economic benefit for the whole community) can only be realized within a society that overthrows corrupt elites, places power directly in the hands of community members themselves, and thereby ensures a relatively equal distribution of money.

Within the constraints of this utilitarian, market-oriented, and humanist context, animal liberationists can work to further mitigate the "conflict" between people and elephants, and encourage African people to see elephants as allies rather than enemies, as fellow beings rather than pests. They can promulgate their moral message that animals have the same basic rights as humans; that they are subjects of a life, not objects, resources, commodities, and human property; and that they should be treated with respect and as ends-in-themselves not mere means to human interests.

Contextualizing Social and Ecological Crises

> "For to be free is not merely to cast off one's chains, but to live in a way that respects and enhances the freedom of others."
> —Nelson Mandela

Afflicted by violence, overpopulation, hunger, disease, poverty, inequality, and shortages of water, food, and land, South Africa mirrors the crises plaguing much of the world which has been ravaged, plundered, and impoverished by global capitalism and its market and growth imperatives. We are at war with one another in large part because we have long ago waged war against other species and the earth as a whole. The devastation societies inflict upon other species and nature ricochets with equally devastating effects on human societies. The human-elephant conflict is just one of many indicators of a world out of joint, of an stressed and imbalanced planet plagued by problems that are so deep, systemic, and interconnected that they can only be solved by critical holistic thinking; new psychologies, ethics, and identities; and revolutionary change on all levels including energy and transportation technologies, agriculture, politics, and economics.

In South Africa and elsewhere, the social-ecological crisis human beings face must be examined in a searching way—through an approach that identifies root causes not superficial effects; that searches for long-term solutions not quick, pseudo-fixes; and that promotes paradigm shifts in thinking rather than repacking the erroneous concepts and worldviews that have spawned and perpetuated the crises and catastrophes that jeopardize the future of human existence and biodiversity.

Trying to solve the "elephant overpopulation problem" with guns, violence, and terrorism exemplifies the alienated and destructive consciousness humankind so desperately needs to supersede if future generations will have a life that is not, in Hobbes' famous words, "short, brutish, and nasty." Michele Pickover cogently reminds us that "South Africa has a history of resorting to violence as a means of solving problems. So when it comes to the issue of elephant management in national parks there is a lot of pressure on authorities by vested interest groups who want to see elephants killed for selfish purposes. We should resist this pressure and, in our treatment of wildlife, we should strive to embody the more humane values that underpin the new ["open" and "democratic"] South Africa."[59]

No attempt to understand and resolve the complex problems confronting besieged nations such as South Africa will be adequate if detached from a systemic critique of capitalism and imperialism, one that reveals the inherent logic of capitalism that leads to imperialism.[60] Analysis of the myriad of problems plaguing Africa—its people, animals, and environment—must begin with the destructive legacies of capitalism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, corporate globalization, and predatory banking schemes. The devastation of the natural environment, the colonization of wild spaces, the forces driving people to chop down trees and shoot down elephants—such dynamics are incomprehensible apart from the history of imperialism. The unbroken legacy of Western exploitation, from the fifteenth century to the present, has had devastating consequences throughout Africa in forms such as

ecological devastation, resource depletion, poverty, famine, disease, political corruption, authoritarian governments, violence, and genocide.

Like Brazil and Latin American nations, Africa is a classic case of underdevelopment—whereby an imperialist power willfully impoverishes southern nations, stealing their natural resources, exploiting their labor power, and appropriating their land to grow food and cash crops for export rather than domestic consumption, as they dump surplus wheat and other commodities in poor countries to further undermine their economies.[61] Like a giant siphon or vacuum, corporations, imperialist nation states, and global financial and legal institutions have drained the resources, wealth, and health of southern nations such as Africa. Forces of underdevelopment have transformed independent and often prosperous nations into hellish lands afflicted with poverty, starvation, disease, gross inequality, violence, and a vastly diminished life span.

Despite the decolonialization process that began in the 1960s, Western transnational corporations such as Shell Oil, legal structures such as the World Trade Organization, and financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank have strengthened the Western stranglehold on Africa by providing loans attached with the political strings of "structural adjustment" (which aim to lower wages and XX) and onerous debt obligations. In addition, corrupt dictators serving Western interests have ruled African countries with an iron fist as they stuffed their own pockets with millions of dollars in loans and aid meant to alleviate the suffering of their people.

Over the span of five centuries, the exploitation of Africa by Western states and corporate powers has had a catastrophic impact on society and nature, proliferating suffering and spawning endless crises. Despite national liberation movements that emerged after World War II, Western domination is today more powerful than ever, poverty rates continue to rise, the specter of AIDS has brought unparalleled suffering and death, and genocide erupts among clans and tribes. No matter what group governs, whether left or right, black or white, South Africa and the continent as a whole is subservient to foreign capital. As Leo Zeilig writes, "The ANC government ministers denounce the protesters as an `enemy within,' but the real root of the discontent is neo-liberalism. No other country in Africa has embraced with such craven enthusiasm the agenda of privatisation and the free market. The resulting economic growth has meant considerable dividends for the rich and the middle class. The wealthy live behind their security gates—shuttling between house and shopping malls. Nowadays, everything is done in the malls—all social and consumer activity, including trips to the cinemas, restaurants and bars. This group, though predominately white, has been expanded by a new layer of black professionals ... The largely unchanging poverty of the poor and the working class is almost invisible in apartheid townships, and almost everywhere the interests of private business dominate government policy."[62]

A radical liberation politics, moreover, seeks to illuminate the intricate connections between social and environmental problems. As demonstrated by theorists such as Murray Bookchin, ecological problems stem from social problems, and thereby require social solutions.[63] One cannot change the destructive environmental dynamics of societies without changing the institutions, power systems, and hierarchical forms of domination that cause, benefit from, and sustain biological meltdown. Corporate destruction of nature on a global scale is enabled by asymmetrical and hierarchical social relations, whereby capitalist powers appropriate the political, legal, economic, and military systems of states in order to bolster and defend their exploitation of labor, animals, resources, and nature.

Commonalities of Oppression

> "As long as human beings will go on shedding the blood of animals, there will never be any peace. It is one little step from killing animals to creating gas chambers a la Hitler and concentration camps a la Stalin . . . all such deeds are done in the name of 'social justice.' There will be no justice as long as man will stand with a knife or with a gun and destroy those who are weaker than he is."
>
> —Isaac Bashevis Singer

Human, animal, and earth exploitation are tightly interconnected, such that no one form of exploitation can be abolished without uprooting the others. It is well understood, for instance, that human population rates drop in societies in women are educated and have basic rights. A possible global pandemic of Asian Bird Flu, the result of

intensive exploitation of birds in factory-farm conditions, could have a devastatingly lethal impact on millions of people. Also, in conditions where people are desperately poor they are more likely to adopt instrumental views of nature, poach animals, and chop down trees in order to survive. Thus, if killing elephants is profitable and beneficial to individuals and communities, we need to eliminate the economic incentive to kill by addressing the root causes of poverty in social relations.

An effective struggle for animal rights and liberation demands tackling issues such as poverty, class domination, economic inequality, political corruption, and the hierarchical organization of society at all levels—from local and national to global relations—such as produced and reproduced throughout human history by racism, sexism, speciesism, and classism (today constructed more deeply than ever on a worldwide scale by transnational/global capitalism). Any viable approach to save animals must also promote the democratization of society, such that crucial decisions and allocations of power and resources are not monopolized by an elite minority to advance their privileges and interests, but rather by communities using democratic decision making procedures to promote autonomy and equality.

The most determinant hierarchy in the current world is class domination, whereby the monopolization of capital, property, and resources goes hand-in-hand with the control of political authority, the legal system, cultural institutions such as education and mass media, and the awesome powers of science and technology. Transnational corporations have hijacked the entire planet to advance their economic interests and political ambitions. Accountable virtually to no one including the governments they bought and control, driven by short-sighted economic motives and power ambitions, corporations thrive by spawning new markets, driving product demand and boundless consumption, devouring all the earth's resources, sending species after species into oblivion, and spewing toxic poisons and pollution to levels great enough to bring about global climate shifts. The grow-or-die system of global capitalism is a runaway train speeding toward oblivion. It cannot ultimately be stopped until market society is replaced with an ecological society, and all hierarchies including the domination of human over nature are abolished in favor of decentralized democracies.

Animal rights and environmental advocates who are misanthropic, single-issue oriented, resistant to work in alliances with other social movements, and pro-capitalist in their political views undercut and can never achieve their goals and objectives. So long as corporations, banks, and dictators control the social, political, and economic structures of societies, animals and the environment will suffer too as elite social interests exercise their power and might—backed by states, armies, death squads, and assassins—to commander humans, animals, and the earth to further their own interests, whatever the consequences to individuals, families, communities, nations, animals, future generations, and the environment as a whole. The protracted dictatorship of Mobutu Sese-Soko, for instance, provoked civil wars that since 1968 cost the lives of 3.9 million people, as he pillaged the nation's natural resources for profit and funding his armies. These kinds of inseparable social/ecological problems are endemic to social hierarchies, and they cannot be eliminated except through a radical process that dismantles power systems (such as rooted in states and corporations) in order to advance democratization, decentralization, autonomy, and egalitarianism.

Conversely, whereas animal rights advocates need to engage other forms of oppression, form broader political alliances, and evolve in their political vision, human rights advocates need to comprehend the myriad of social and ecological problems that stem from animal exploitation. These problems include well-documented relations between violence toward animals and violence toward humans in families scarred by domestic abuse and throughout society as a whole, erupting in fierce forms such as serial killing.[64] In their quest to develop biological and chemical agents to assassinate their enemies, mad scientists in the service of the former apartheid state tested their prototypes on animals. Human beings would never had been put in such grave danger were animals not held in even more contempt and a strong anti-vivisection movement existed.[65]

There are crucial continuities and similarities among various forms of oppression that often are ignored (e.g., by socialist and Marxist theorists who analyze classism apart from racism, sexism, and, most certainly, speciesism). This is a colossal collapse of critical vision that leads to reductionism in theory and anti-alliance politics in practice. Racism, sexism, and speciesism share a fundamental logic of oppression and are constituted out of similar and overlapping social, institutional, and technological modes of control. Racism, sexism, and speciesism are ideologies of objectification, devaluation, and exclusion. Each belief system is grounded in the conceptual structure of a dualist logic, an institutional structure that mobilizes laws and social relations for domination, and a technological structure that mobilizes a battery of things (such as chains and cages) to advance exploitative goals.

In each case, the conceptual structure underlying the machinery of exploitation is rooted in a binary logic. A

rigid dichotomy is established between different groups—whites/blacks, men/women, and humans/nonhumans—that denies their commonality and shared interests. But these oppositions are not innocent or unmotivated; they are arranged in a hierarchy that privileges one group as superior and denigrates the other as inferior. As every power system has a justification, conceptual hierarchies are the theory for the practice of dominating marginalized groups through institutional and technological means. But, in every instance of oppression, the alibi of power is arbitrary—rooted in fallacies, biases, prejudice, and hostility rather than logic, reason, and a defensible argument.

Throughout the development of Western culture, the rationales for domination have failed to withstand critical scrutiny; increasingly—whether training birds to fight, under paying women in the workplace, or using homophobic or racist slurs—exploitative and discriminatory practices are becoming socially unacceptable and subject to penalty (certainly more for racism and sexism than speciesism now). There is no justification for one being to claim moral superiority over another, simply on the basis of differences relating to race, gender, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual preference, and species. The inferior types of being and existence racists, sexists, and speciesists claim that people of color, women, and animals have in fact do not represent an essential nature, but rather are social constructions. As such, these ideologies stem from wholly fallacious interpretations of different types of race, gender, and species.

The essentialism and binary oppositions fundamental to systems of power, hierarchy, and domination have to be challenged in all cases and places. The oppressive regimes of speciesism, racism, and sexism are mutually supporting and reinforcing. In numerous ways, there are deep connections between animal oppression and human oppression, such that attempts to illuminate or eliminate any one form of domination are strongest when related in theory and practice to other forms of domination.

To give some indication of these complex relations by way of concrete examples, we can first examine the connections between speciesism and racism, between animal and human slavery. Beginning in the 1870s, numerous cities including Paris, London, Hamburg, Barcelona, and New York opened new exhibits, called "human zoos."[66] These pathetic spectacles displayed indigenous peoples (Africans, Samoans, and others) in cages, often semi-nude or nude, as living trophies demonstrating white European superiority over "primitive" dark cultures. Tens of millions of people gawked "savage" and "exotic" peoples, their first and lasting impression of the colonial Other. In 1906, Madison Grant, the head of the New York Zoological Society and a prominent eugenicist, exhibited pigmy Ota Benga at the Bronx Zoo. Grant placed him in a cage with an orangutan, and labeled the exhibit "The Missing Link," thus suggesting that Africans such as Benga were closer to apes than to human beings. Human zoos, of course, would not have been possible without the prior existence of animal zoos, which were created in the nineteenth century when colonialists captured and displayed wild animals in a similar display of human supremacy and power over nature.

Thus, institutions first used to exploit animals were adapted to exploit human beings, framing indigenous peoples as sub-human animals. With their large worldwide audience, zoos, in fact, were important institutions for the construction and dissemination of racist ideologies, eugenics, and Social Darwininism, thereby legitimating colonialism as just and right, as the path to Progress. Anthropology and the social sciences were accomplices to this enterprise, as racist theories became increasingly influential in society. The systematic extermination of millions of Jews and others by the Nazis was inspired, informed, and justified by racist theories and "might is right" worldviews, such as zoos helped to construct and bring to a mass audience.

Indeed, there are profound relationships between speciesism and racism, animal and human exploitation, and mass animal slaughter and human genocide. As Charles Patterson demonstrates in The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust, there are deep and disturbing connections between the enslavement of animals and human slavery; between the breeding of domesticated animals and compulsory sterilization, euthanasia, and genocide; and between the assembly-line killing of animals in slaughterhouses and the mass killing techniques employed in Nazi concentration camps.[67] "A better understanding of these connections," Patterson states, "should help make our planet a more humane and livable place for all of us—people and animals alike, A new awareness is essential for the survival of our endangered planet."[68] The construction of industrial stockyards, the total objectification of other species, and the mass mechanized killing of animals should have come as a warning to humanity that such a process might one day be applied to humans, as it was in Nazi Germany. Thus, the poignant relevance of a quote attributed to Theodor Adorno, to the effect that, "Auschwitz begins wherever someone looks at a slaughterhouse and thinks: they're only animals."

Similarly, in The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery, Marjorie Spiegel shows that the exploitation of animals provided the models, metaphors, technologies, and practices for the dehumanization and enslavement

of blacks.[69] From castration and chaining to branding and ear cropping and breeding slaves like horses and mules, white Europeans drew on a long history of subjugating animals to oppress blacks. In the nineteenth century a popular sentiment was that blacks were a "sub-species," more like gorillas than full-fledged humans. Once perceived as beasts, blacks were treated accordingly; pariahs from the moral community, animals provided a convenient discard bin in which to throw blacks. By demeaning people of color as "monkeys," "beasts of burden," and "filthy animals," animal metaphors—derived from systems of speciesist exploitation—facilitated and legitimated the institution of slavery. The denigration of any people as a type of animal is a potential prelude to violence and genocide.

Once Europeans began the colonization of Africa in the fifteenth century, the metaphors, models, and technologies used to exploit animals were applied to human slaves. Stealing Africans from their native environment and homeland, breaking up families, wrapping chains around their bodies, shipping them in cramped quarters across continents for weeks or months with no regard for their suffering, branding their skin with a hot iron to mark them as property, auctioning them as servants, separating family members who scream in anguish, breeding them for service and labor, exploiting them for profit, beating them in rages of hatred and anger, and killing them in vast numbers—all these horrors and countless others inflicted on black slaves began with the exploitation of animal slaves.

Popular anthropological schemes of the nineteenth century placed "Aryans" on the top and blacks at the bottom; previously referred to with terms such as "lineage," nineteenth-century concepts of race were clear examples of scientific racism. As Felipe Fernandez Armesto observes: "Racism provided ample justification for the victimization, persecution, oppression, and extermination of some groups by others. Working off the initial hierarchy forced in relation to animals, it became necessary—even for advocates of Nazism or apartheid—to insist that different human groups constituted different species, sub-species, or potential species."[70] By the late-twentieth century, however, science had discredited scientific races, for "Not only were there no inferior races: there are no races; there is practically no racial differentiation among humans. Although we may look different from one another, the genetic space between the most widely separated humans is tiny, by comparison with other species. The same science has exploded the notion of human `subspecies'."[71]

There are important parallels of speciesism to racism and sexism in the elevation of male rationality to the touchstone for judging moral worth. The same arguments European colonialists used to justify exploiting Africans—that they were less than human and inferior to white Europeans in rational capacities—are the very same justifications humans use to exploit, consume, and kill animals. There is undoubtedly a significant link between animal exploitation and human exploitation as ancient speciesist arguments were adapted to underpin modern racist outlooks and are parallel as well to patriarchal ideology that women are emotional creatures incapable of advanced reasoning.

Moreover, the confinement and killing of billions of animals in factory farm and slaughterhouse systems has a profound negative impact on the environment and thus on human life. To provide grazing land for cattle, animal agriculture industries destroy habitats and rainforests and habitats, and spread desertification. The release of carbon dioxide from cut forests, use of fertilizers, and release of methane gas from billions of cattle are major causes of ozone deterioration and global warming. In a world where energy, land, and water are scarce, the global meat production/consumption system is fueled by enormous quantities of resources. Moreover, in the shift from food to feed production, most crops are grown for animal feed rather than human food, wasting precious crops.

The relation between agribusiness and resource depletion is particularly poignant in the context of Africa as a whole, for it raises the specter of famine. One of the leading causes of world hunger, in fact, is animal agriculture and meat consumption, whereby most of the world's land, water, and crops are fed to animals fattened and slaughtered for human consumption. Besides the toll this system takes on animals and the environment, and its impact on human health, it is an incredibly inefficient use of scare land and water resources. As Jeremy Rifkin explains,

> People go hungry because much of arable land is used to grow feed grain for animals rather than people. In the United States, 157 million tons of cereals, legumes and vegetable protein—all suitable for human consumption—is fed to livestock to produce just 28 million tons of animal protein in the form of meat.
>
> In developing countries, using land to create an artificial food chain has resulted in misery for hundreds of millions of people. An acre of cereal produces five times more protein than an acre used for meat production; legumes such as beans, peas and lentils can produce 10 times more protein and, in the case of soya, 30 times more ....
> Despite the rich diversity of foods found all over the world, one third of its population does not have enough to eat. Today, hunger is a massive problem in many parts of Africa, Asia and South America and the future is not looking good. The global population is set to rise from 6.1 billion ... to 9.3 billion by 2050 and Worldwatch reports forecast severe global food shortages leading to famine on an unprecedented scale.

> This misery is partly a direct result of our desire to eat meat. Children in the developing world starve next to fields of food destined for export as animal feed, to support the meat-hungry cultures of the rich world. While millions die, one third of the world's grain production is fed to farmed animals in rich countries....
>
> If animal farming were to stop and we were to use the land to grow grain to feed ourselves, we could feed every single person on this planet. Consuming crops directly—rather than feeding them to animals and then eating animals—is a far more efficient way to feed the world ...
>
> By squandering the vast bulk of land and water resources, resources that could produce far greater quantities of nutrient rich food in a plant-based agriculture, the global meat culture directly contributes to world hunger. Moreover, the global meat exacerbates inequality and poverty among the world's peoples, as resources from impoverished Southern nations flow to wealthy Northern nations.
>
> The human consequences of the global shift from food to feed production were dramatically evident in 1984, when thousands of Ethiopians were dying of famine each day. The problem was not that Ethiopia had no viable land on which to grow crops and feed its people, but that it was using millions of acres of land to produce linseed cake, cottonseed cake, and rapeseed meal for livestock feed to export to Europe. Rifkin notes the perverse irony of such an irrational and unsustainable system of food production: "Around six billion people share the planet, one quarter in the rich north and three quarters in the poor south. While people in rich countries diet because they eat too much, many in the developing world do not have enough food simply to ensure their bodies work properly and stay alive.[72]

And yet, despite the overwhelming, irrefutable fact of the immense destructive power (to humans, animals, and the earth alike) of the global meat and dairy industries, institutions such as the World Hunger Organization, the IMF, and the World Bank promote the destructive myth that factory farming is the best way to feed a hungry world, as advertisements promoting meat and diary consumption and fast food chains such as McDonalds and KFC proliferate throughout the world. In contexts such as this, people must recognize the larger significance of vegetarianism and veganism—not only as a health and personal growth movement, but also as a social justice and environmental movement.

The tragedy of famine clearly does not stem from "natural" causes such as scarcity and the "stinginess" of nature, but rather from the socio-economic dynamics of meat-based agriculture, the appropriate of land to export cash crops to the Western world rather than to feed domestic populations, the domination of transnational corporations and global banking institutions, and the corruption of national rulers.

Given just a few examples of the devastating effect of animal exploitation on the social and natural worlds, the oft-heard diatribes that animal rights activists care more about animals than humans, are elitists, or have misplaced priorities misses the point entirely. Such a dismissive reaction represents a moral failure to respond to the enormity of animal suffering and an intellectual failure to understand the enormous social and environmental implications of the human attempt to subjugate, colonize, and plunder the earth and its sundry species. Besides the speciesist assumption that animal suffering does not warrant a serious moral or political response, this objection proceeds from an atomistic outlook unable to see the connections between animal exploitation, environmental destruction, patriarchy, racism, violence, and world hunger. The exploitation of animals causes profound social and environmental problems for the human world itself, such that we should stop treating animal rights as trivial to human and environmental problems, and rather see it as fundamental to resolving crises in both realms.

Multiperspectivalism, Alliance Politics, and Total Liberation: Renewing Systemic Analysis and Politics

> "Let there be justice for all. Let there be peace for all."
> —Nelson Mandela

Truly, Africa is a continent overwhelmed with human suffering that has deep causal roots in European imperialism, American neo-imperialism, and the predatory nature of contemporary transnational corporations and banking structures. The wails and cries of babies dying from hunger and people attacked by machetes pierce the air. But the answer to human victimization does not lie in victimizing animals and using a reckless short-term mentality of exploitation of elephants and wildlife as a whole in a way that corrupts and perverts the core meaning

of sustainability. It is crucial to grasp the economic and political roots of the problems afflicting Africa from within a global context, while also understanding how different forms of oppression—such as racism, sexism, speciesism, and classism—overlap, interrelate, and reinforce one another.

Human and animal liberation movements are inseparable, such that none can be free until all are free. Whereas people in South Africa and around the globe cannot develop peaceful, humane, and sustainable societies so long as they exploit animals (and thereby disrupt the environment in profound ways), so animals cannot be freed from slavery without deep social and psychological changes in human societies and psychologies. The social changes entail not mere reforms such as "government accountability," but rather dismantling the entire system of transnational capitalism rooted in unsustainable and omnicidal imperatives for the endless pursuit of profit, accumulation, resource extraction, labor exploitation, and growth.

If conducted intelligently, democratization can destroy the power of the hunting and ivory trade lobbies, as it redistributes monetary resources, eradicates poverty, and nullifies the motivation of poor people who kill animals not out of malice, a profit motive, or revenge (for eating or trampling one's crops, for instance), but rather economic survival. But it is not enough to democratize power if political change does not also eradicate the pathologies of speciesism and domineering humanism, for this only redistributes the authority and capacities to exploit and kill. There is no guarantee that villagers—as cruel and speciesist as anyone else—would treat animals more respectfully than corporations, states, and "conservation" organizations. However progressive the changing political climate may be, benighted mindsets will prevail, such that the land is objectified as a "farm" for delivering animal products, and animals themselves are reified as "harvestable resources." This is the prevailing model among African communities today that experiment with ecotourism and democracy within the utilitarian and speciesist limitations of sustainable use models.

Since decentralization and democratization processes may mean nothing more for animals than broadening human supremacism and collectivized policy of killing, then the process of revolutionary change must also promote profound transformations in human identity, such that people renounce dominator mentalities at all levels—not only in relation to other humans but also to other species and the earth as a whole—and adopt an ethics of respect for life that over time replaces the experience of alienation from nature with a sense of connectedness rooted in ecological knowledge and emotional connectedness.

Vast social, political, and economic changes by themselves are inadequate to construct an egalitarian, ecological, and viable world unless accompanied by equally profound psychological changes. We need a Copernican revolution whereby people abandon humanist arrogance and predatory practices and realize that they belong to the earth and the earth does not belong to them. Unless developed along with moral education, democratization can be nothing but the broadening of species apartheid and the power to kill. Consequently, people can learn to respect the earth and other species for their intrinsic value, not as a resource for their use and benefit, and take their rightful place as citizens within a vast biocommunity where as citizens of the earth their universal rights come with profound responsibilities toward all nature and life.

The purging of violence needed in South Africa and elsewhere cannot transpire so long as animals are hunted and exploited. Still today, the "new" South Africa is struggling against hate, ignorance, prejudice, and violence in order to form a more enlightened and perfect union, and people will truly grow and prosper once they extend rights, protections, and respect to other species who are part of the evolutionary adventure of life and essential to ecological balance.

To spin the dialectical wheel once more, such that we avoid the trap of naïve, apolitical, new-age thinking (rife in the Western animal advocacy movement), we must emphasize that deep psychological change is not enough to resolve the global crisis if not coupled with radical social transformation that unfolds through decentralization and democratization processes at all levels of society on a global basis. South Africa needs democracy as much as it needs moral renewal, a purging of violence that cannot transpire so long as animals are hunted and exploited.

The next logical and necessary step in social and moral evolution is yet to be taken, although there are encouraging signs that societies—on an ever-broadening global scale—are beginning to transform their outlooks and relations with animals by taking stands against their exploitation, recognizing their cognitive and social complexity, and acknowledging that as sentient beings they have basic rights—such as to bodily integrity, freedom of choice and movement, autonomy, and a viable natural environment.

The animal liberation struggle is one of the most progressive and important social movements on the planet today because it is addressing root causes of the global social and ecological crisis, such as stem from alienated

and instrumentalist outlooks; pathological power-based mindsets; and a destructive "might is right" worldview that promotes violence, warfare, and ecological ruin. Animal rights probes to the core of the violent and domineering proclivities of Homo sapiens, such as are manifest throughout the entire span of its history. It works to overcome the schizophrenic, delusional, and arbitrary biases of humanism that relegate animals to resources for human benefit, reinforce ancient Western reductions of animals to human property, and, at best, advocate a welfarist position of "kindness to slaves" and "humane killing" while never questioning the contradictory nature of such phrases or challenging the legitimacy of slavery itself.

Victims of oppression cannot advance by oppressing and victimizing others. While the material constraints of poverty certainly conditions one's view of animals and nature, the conditions of scarcity and desperation must be alleviated as people must learn to view elephants (animals, in general) for what they really are—not "assets" and "harvestable resources," but rather complex persons with intrinsic value and basic rights.

The animal liberation movement insists not only that people change their views of one another, but also that they make a qualitative leap beyond humanism to rethink their relations to animals and the natural world. It argues that species boundaries are as arbitrary as those of race and sex and seeks to move the moral bar and boundaries of community from reason and language to sentience and subjectivity. By extending rights to sentient (not merely "rational") beings to protect them from human exploitation, by advancing deeper and more encompassing notions of moral equality, by developing a broader notion of community and citizenship, by forging a more profound and holistic mode of critical thinking, and by promoting changes in the human diet that have enormous positive consequences for human health, social justice, hunger, peace, and ecology, the animal liberation movement is a key catalyst of social change and moral progress and a necessary part of any revolution worth its name.

Endnotes

1. This paper would not have been possible without the inspiring influence and pioneering lead of Michele Pickover. The importance of her commitment to animal liberation and radical social change is manifest not only in her groundbreaking book, Animal Rights in South Africa—the first systematic application of animal rights theory and politics to South Africa-but also in her indefatigable activist achievements, such as in her work with Animal Rights Africa (http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/) . Moreover, thanks to her kind invitation to do a speaking tour throughout South Africa, I was able to experience the landscape, culture, and oppression of animals and people alike as concrete realities as well as to witness first hand how animal liberation is a global movement for change, one that can achieve its goals only by working within a broader struggle for total liberation.

2. As one among many ominous signs that the South African government is moving toward a pro-culling policy, in February 2007 Marthinus van Schalkwyk, the South African Minister of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, released a "Draft Norms and Standards for the Management of Elephants" report (http://www.info.gov.za/speeches/2007/07022811451001.htm) that advocated the use of culling as one of many responses to resolving the alleged threat elephants pose to ecological systems and the lives and property of human beings. In June 2007, at the 14th Conference of Parties of CITES in the Hague, numerous African elephant range states agreed on a nine year moratorium against ivory trade, but nonetheless allowed a one-year sell off of 60 tonnes of ivory stockpiles on the global trade market (see Richard Black, "Africa Cut Deal on Ivory Trade," BBC News, June 14, at: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/6751853.stm). To help legitimate this move, the South African Department of Environmental Affairs claims that the funds will be channeled into conservation efforts, but animal rights critics argue that the lucrative profits in fact land in the pockets of state officials, that any marketization of ivory, however "controlled," encourages additional poaching, and that the move was intended to relieve the pressure of existing stockpiles in order to replenish them by slaughtering thousands more elephants; ssee "CITES `Compromise' Signifies Disaster for Elephants" (http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/PR_14June07_CitesCompromise.php) and other reports on the Animal Rights Africa website at: http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/AgonyOfIvory.php).

3. Although I provide some general reasons why I think that animals, no different from us, have basic rights, I cannot here explore the many arguments and counter-arguments of this complex moral controversy. For detailed reasoning in support of welcoming animals into our moral universe as equals, and no longer excluding them as inferiors, see Tom Regan, The Case for Animal Rights (Berkeley:University of California Press, 1983); Gary Francione, Introduction to Animal Rights: Your Child or Your Dog (Philadelphia:Temple University Press, 2000); and my own book, Animal Liberation and Moral Progress: The Struggle for Human Evolution (Lanham, MD:Rowman & Littlefield,

forthcoming, 2007). Some clarification of basis terms and assumptions, however, is in order.

> A "right" is a moral and legal construct designed to secure for individuals freedom from exploitation, injury, or harm caused by other individuals or by institutions (such as corporations and government) in order to facilitate freedom to lead a pleasurable, autonomous, and meaningful life, where the boundaries of liberty are drawn at the point where one's choices and actions can cause actual or potential harm to liberty and sovereignty of other right-bearing members of society While they grant and protect individual and social freedoms, rights also come with responsibilities that impose duties and obligations of individuals to respect the autonomy, dignity, and freedom of others.
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> Individuals, corporations, and society as a whole vehemently reject the idea of animal rights because the uncompromising and nonutilitarian logic of rights (for animals as well as humans) demands that one treat right's bearers as ends-in-themselves not mere means to one's own purposes and gain. Rights define and help organize society as a community of equals.
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> The philosophy of animal rights build on the egalitarian conceptual framework of the human rights tradition that emerged in the 18th century, as it exposes and transcends the biases and arbitrary attempts to build rigid walls that isolate humans and nonhuman animals and thus banish animals from moral community. Deeply embedded within the religion, philosophy, science, and overall worldview of Western societies, sedimenting into "common sense" thinking that only mystics or madmen would dare challenge, the justification for human domination over animals, for over two thousand years, has been anchored in the ideology of "speciesism." According to the essentialist, hierarchical, and teleological outlook of speciesism, human beings regard themselves as superior to all other beings given their singular, unique nature that endows them with capacities for rational thought and language.
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> Rejecting the privileging of reason and language as arbitrary markers of rights and moral worth, the animal rights perspective grounds ethics in the property of sentience—in the capacity to feel, experience, and suffer , and not to reason, calculate, and symbolize—that determines the rightness or wrongness of an action and the boundaries of the moral community. Since animals experience pain and pleasure ways similar to us, and causing suffering or pain is an evil to be shunned, all sentient beings require basic rights—human constructs designed to regulate human behavior—that protect their freedom from pain,, suffering, misery, torture, and violence death in order to enjoy the freedom to live as pleasure and free a live as possible. With the goal of dramatically broadening the moral community to protect the interests of not just one species but potentially millions of other species, animal rights requires that we treat sentient nonhuman beings in radically different terms: as "subjects of a life" (Regan) rather than objects or property. Unlike the comfortable, safe, and socially acceptable animal welfare view that promotes "kindness" to animals in order to reduce their suffering, enlarge their cages, and kill them more "humanely," the animal rights approach demands the total abolition of all forms of human exploitation of animals. In theory as well as practice, animal rights requires the elimination of rodeos, circuses, and zoos; of hunting, trapping, and fishing; of meat, dairy, egg, leather, and wool industries; and of animal product testing, research, and experimentation as well. Its goal is not bigger cages, but empty cages; not "humane treatment" of the slaves, but the emancipation of animals from slavery. Egalitarian and abolitionist in logic, animal rights is the moral and logical foundation for the political and practical goal of animal liberation.

4. I use the term "exploitation" of humans, slaves, blacks, or animals to describe the institutions and practices whereby dominant economic classes exploit the labor power of others for profit, gain, military development, and so on. I employ "domination" as a more general term concept that covers any and all forms of power one group exerts on others, such as emerges and evolves, is produced and reproduced, through the institutionalization of unequal degrees of force, violence, authority, privileges, property, and wealth or money. I broaden these and related concepts to apply them not only to human animals but also nonhuman animals, for the powerful reason that people do "dominate" animals in the sense of using superior (technological) power to control them, and they do "exploit" animals for their labor, body parts, bodily fluids, and virtually every part and molecule of their body and facet of behavior, making animals, in a real sense, the greatest body of "slaves" in the modern world, such that their labor power is crucial for economic growth and profits. Radical (eco)humanists such as Murray Bookchin impose and police strict boundaries on the semantic range of concept like "domination" and "liberation," to prevent, specifically, the conflation of the "social world" with the "natural world," the "first nature" of humans with the "second nature" of animals and the physical environment. This not only denies the fluid and continuous evolution of intelligence and subjectivity in nature (which contradicts Bookchin's natural and evolutionary outlook), trying to anchor its first/second nature dualism on some stable point amidst continual flux. It is rooted, in fact, in the most threadbare traditional speciesist notion—a favorite of Aristotle, Kant, Descartes, and so many others—some concepts (1) function only in the context of a social world comprised of beings capable of rational thought, communication and language, and symbolic representation, and (2) only humans have such capacities.

5. See "Consuming Wild Life: The Illegal Exploitation of Wild Animals In South Africa, Zimbabwe and Zambia,"

March 2007 (compiled by Mike Cadman for Animal Rights Africa and Xwe African Wild Life), at: http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/Archive/Consuming_Wild_Life_290307_final.pdf.

6. For an illuminating treatment of the global business of trophy and canned hunting, see Matthew Scully, Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy (New York:St. Martin's Press, 2002), pp. 47-87. Scully describes how killing rare, huge, or endangered animals fetch hunters both money and status, along with, one presumes, a satisfying release of aggressive energy and galvanic boost to macho identity. Global hunting organizations such as the Safari Club elevate hunters to elite status if they bag enough big game, and the dream of every hunter who lives or travels to exotic places such as India or Africa is to kill over his or her hunting career an individual from the "Big Five": buffalo, elephant, rhino, lion, and leopard. The blatant commodification of killing wildlife is channeled through countless magazines and websites in order to lure tourists into expensive safari trips and "hunting packages."

7. "South Africa wants to hedge in hunting," May 3, 2006, iafrica.com: (http://cooltech.iafrica.com/science/289452.htm).

8. See Kurt Schillinger, "Apartheid's Past, Democracy Collide Over Lion Sanctuary," The Boston Globe, February 9, 2003 (http://www.enkosini.com/2003.02.09%20-%20Apartheid's%20Past%20Democracy%20Collide%20Over%20Lion%20Sanctuary.htm.

9. With China, Japan, and other nations vying for position in ivory markets, the US is the world's leading buyer of illegal ivory; see the Care for the Wild International report at: "U.S. Exposed as Leading Ivory Market," at: http://www.careforthewild.com/files/cwiusaivoryreport507final.pdf.

10. On the brutal nature of "structural adjustment" programs, see Jeremy Brecher et. al., Globalization from Below: The Power of Solidarity (Boston:South End Press, 2000), and Walden Bellow, "Structural Adjustment Programs: Success for Whom?) in The Case Against the Global Economy and For a Turn Toward the Local, Jerry Mander and Edward Goldsmith (eds.) (San Francisco:Sierra Club Books), pp. 285-293.

11. Cited in Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 104.

12. Exemplifying the capitalist reduction of the entire earth to commodities and profit potential, consider the words of Martin Brooks, former employee of the SANP system and currently chairman of the World Conservation Union's African Rhino Specialists Group, for whom animals are nothing but harvestable resources to be stocked and replenished for financial gain: ""If you're going to kill an animal, it makes sense that it should have some conservation benefit. If it's the private sector that does that does that … then that's an incentive for them to invest in black rhino populations for breeding, which is good. If the formal conservation agency allows hunting, or sells the surplus animals to private owners, that money goes back into the parks system" (cited in Nicole Itano, "Hunt a Rhino, Dave an Ecosystem?," The Christian Science Monitor, April 25, 2005, at: http://www.csmonitor.com/2005/0425/p01s04-woaf.html).

13. For articles on the continuing poverty and plight of the South African people, see the online resources of Open Democracy at: http://www.opendemocracy.net/editorial_tags/africa.

14. There are obvious dissimilarities in the analogy I draw between social and species apartheid, such as the fact that blacks Africans organized political groups and were not shot for sport, as elephants do not dig for gold or diamonds in mines But such superficial differences matter far less than the deeper continuities in the regimes of domination of human-over-human and human-over-animal, such as I attempt to describe later in this essay.

15. For an extended analysis of the hatred and contempt human beings frequently express toward animals—easily discerned in the paradigmatic picture of a mighty hunting warrior holding up the head of his or her kill, glowing in his superiority and as if he had a sexual release, see Jim Mason, An Unnatural Order: A Manifesto for Change (New York: Lantern Books, 2005).

16. Molotegi cited in the South African human education newsletter, The Latham Letter, Volume XXIV, Number 4, Fall 2003, online at: . http://www.latham.org/Issues/LL_03_FA.pdf.

17. "Apartheid and the Black Working Class: The Problem Defined," African National Congress website at: http://www.anc.org.za/ancdocs/history/congress/sactu/organsta01.html.

18. Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 78.

19. Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 52.

20. For a more extended critique of Left humanism, see my essay, "Rethinking Revolution: Animal Liberation, Human Liberation, and the Future of the Left," The International Journal of Inclusive Democracy, Issue #6, June 2006 (online at: http://www.inclusivedemocracy.org/journal/is6/Best_rethinking_revolution.htm).

21. Cited in "Africa—Ivory Wars," Foreign Correspondent, at: http://www.abc.net.au/foreign/s221193.htm.

22. To provide an example of the objectifying, speciesist biases in everyday language, note that the common term "animal products" (e. g., meat, dairy, and eggs) reduces a whole, living, thinking and feeling being to fragmented and discrete things for human use.

23. James Shikwati, "How to Protect People and Wildlife in Kenya," at: http://www.perc.org/perc.php?id=238.

24. On animal liberation and debates about sabotage and terrorism, see Steven Best and Anthony J. Nocella (eds.), Terrorists or Freedom Fighters? Reflections on the Liberation of Animals (New York:Lantern Books, 2004).

25. Shikwati, "How to Protect People and Wildlife in Kenya."

26. There will, of course, be cases of conflicting interests, where human and animal interests (according to human perceptions) clash (e.g., in the alleged need for humans to experience on animals in order to promote medical progress and human advance), but in most instances (such as sport hunting or meat consumption) there is no justification for exploiting animals. Justifications for animal experimentation too have been shown to be flawed on both empirical and moral grounds; see C. Ray Greek and Jean Swindle Greek, Sacred Cows and Golden Geese: The Human Costs of Experiments on Animals (Continuum:2002).

27. For a penetrating analysis of subsistence cultures in modern times and a critique of their rationale for killing animals, see Lisa Kemmerer, "Hunting Tradition: Treaties, Law, and Subsistence Killing," Journal of Critical Animal Studies, Volume II Issue 2, 2004, at: http://www.cala-online.org/Journal_Articles_download/Issue_3/Hunting%20Tradition.doc.

28. For claims that elephants and other animals and causing ecological damage and harming humans in numerous ways, see Suzanne Daley, ''Ban on Sale of Ivory Is Eased to Help 3 African Nations," The New York Times, June 20, 1997 Rather than advocate killing elephants, some villagers and farmers have managed to protect their crops through ingenious nonviolent methods such as planting chili in the front rows of their crops.

29. For examples of speciesist conservationism that reject animal rights as an extremist discourse of privileged Westerners oblivious to the pressing needs of the poor, see the numerous articles posted on the International Wildlife Management Consortium site, at: http://www.iwmc.org/elephant/elephant.htm, and "Tiger Conservation: It's Time to Think Outside the Box," at: http://www.iwmc.org/PDF/IWMCtiger.pdf.

30. Dr. Bill Morrill, "Conservation and Elephant Hunting," at: http://www.iwmc.org/elephant/981127.htm.

31. Cited in Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 109.

32. For brutal photographic evidence of the horrors of culling, see: http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/Elephant_Gallery.php.

33. "The Challenge of the New Millennium," at: http://assets.panda.org/downloads/wwfafint.pdf.

34. Ibid.

35. Delia Owens interviewed by Steve Curwood, transcript posted online at: http://www.loe.org/shows/shows.htm?programID=93-P13-00005#feature3.

36. For evidence of the growing South African "lion trophy" export industry, for example, see: http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/Archive/Hunting/Feb_07_South_Africa_Lion_Trophy_Trade_Factsheet.pdf).

37. Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 100.

38. Kurt Schillinger, "Apartheid's Past, Democracy Collide over Lion Sanctuary," http://www.enkosini.com/2003.02.09%20-%20Apartheid's%20Past%20Democracy%20Collide%20Over%20Lion%20Sanctuary.htm.

39. See "The Elephant Lobby," Newsweek, September 8, 1997, pp. 60-61.

40. Thomas Malthus, An Essay on the Principle of Population (Oxford University Press, 1999).

41. On the growing dangers and scale of clashes provoked by resource scarcity, see Michael T. Klare, Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict (New York:Holt Paperbacks, 2002).

42. For incisive (but not always fair or accurate) critiques of misanthropic and neo-Malthusian strains in contemporary environmental philosophies and movements such as Earth First! and deep ecology, see Murray Bookchin, Re-Enchanting Humanity: A Defense of the Human Spirit Against Anti-Humanism, Misanthropy, Mysticism, and Primitivism (London: Cassell, 1995).

43. Whyte quoted in "A Numbers Game"

44. Magome cited in Leon Marshall, "South Africa Weighs Killing `Excess' Elephants in Parks," National Geographic News, November 5, 2004, online at: http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2004/11/1105_041105_elephants.html.

45. "Elephant Ivory Trade Ban," online at: http://www.american.edu/ted/elephant.htm.

46. "Species Fact Sheet: African Elephant," World Wildlife Fund, at: http://assets.panda.org/downloads/african_elephant_factsheet2007w.pdf.

47. See "Elephant Management in South Africa: The Need to Think BIG," at http://www.careforthewild.com/files/Cullingreport05.pdf.

48. Kruger National Park "continues to suffer under a legacy of misguided management decisions, which

range from the calculation of unsupported population limits for different animal species, large scale killing of all manner of those species—first predators, then ungulates and then predators again—the even provision of hundreds of waterpoints across all habitat types, rotational random burning policies, as well as ecological impatience, which fails to take long-term ecosystem dynamics into account. All these interventions worked against, rather than with, ecological processes of feedback and competition that regular populations and structure communities," ibid.

49. Ibid.

50. Ibid.

51. Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 68.

52. Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 69. The dynamic is similar to the United States, where hunters make the same ecological arguments for killing deer and other species. In many cases, deer overpopulation is the result of hunting, whereby hunters kill natural predators of deer such as coyotes and wolves. On the violent psychosis of hunters and the myths and fallacies of hunting, see "Hunting: The War on Wildlife" (http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/Hunting.php) and "The Myth of Trophy Hunting as Conservation" (http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/TrophyHunting.php).

53. Consider, for example, the plight of the African rhinoceros population whose habitat is rapidly being consumed by human industry and out-of-control appetites: "Every landscape where the Asian rhino clings precariously to survival is suffering from the pressures of agricultural clearance, logging, encroachment by people in search of land, and commercial plantations for oil palm, wood pulp, coffee, rubber, cashew and cocoa" (Elizabeth Kemf and Nico van Strien, cited at http://www.awionline.org/pubs/quarterly/fall02/rhino.htm). Other contributing causes include the canned hunting industry and the superstition-laden "alternative medicine" markets of Asia.

54. For one example of how local economies are better supported through conserving rather than poaching wildlife, see "Antipoaching patrols help wildlife more than local economic development," at: http://www.animalrightsafrica.org/Poaching_AntipoachingPatrols.php

55. "Where the Elephants Pay Their Way," The New York Times, April 12, 1997.

56. "Elephant Management in South Africa: The Need to Think BIG."

57. Ibid.

58. The WWF is involved in such a project, which I applaud, although I renounce their apology for hunting and assistance to communities involved in elephant hunting. In his article, "A Numbers Game: Managing Elephants in Southern Africa" (http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/jul2006/2006-07-19-03.asp). Mark Schulman of the WWF International emphasizes the number of problems elephants cause humans and defends "sustainable wildlife hunting quotas" as set by the nation's Ministry of Environment and Tourism. Namibia WWF director intones, "You can do a lot with the money," and talks about how each elephant is worth $11,000 which means a lot to commodities who can improved education, and so on" (I imagine the elephants mean a lot more to their herds). The report, "Namibia: Living in a Finite Environment (LIFE) Plus Project" (http://www.nric.net/tourism/factsheets/Namibia.pdf), describes how "Namibia is working to improve the quality of life for rural peoples through sustainable natural resource management. Communities participating in LIFE have reaped substantial benefits from sale of thatching grass and crafts, tourist concessions, and revenues from trophy hunting." The sources of "revenue" are laudable if insensate things and objects like beads and pottery, but deplorable if sentient and complex beings—endangered species in this case—such that people profit from the slaughter of the innocent.

59. "Fate of South Africa's Elephants Hangs in the Balance," Justice for Animals and Xwe African Wild Life press release, October 11, 2004, at: http://www.justiceforanimals.co.za/news_elephants.html.

60. For a critique of overly optimistic views of "post-apartheid Africa" that continues to be exploited by global market forces, see Julian Kunnie, Is Apartheid Really Dead? Pan-Africanist Working Class Cultural Critical Perspectives (Boulder, CO:Westview Press, 2000).

61. On the European impoverishment of Africa and other southern nations, see the classic study by Walter Rodney, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa (Washington, DC: Howard University Press, 1981). For a more recent critique of Western imperialism that builds on Rodney's analysis while updating it to address current global dynamics, see Patrick Bond, Looting Africa: The Economics of Exploitation (London and New York:Zed Books, 2006). In the post-9/11 political context suffused with neoliberal economics, fatuous neoconservative metanarratives of progress and visions of Empire by conquering the Middle East and other regions with bullets, bombs, and business deals, Bond documents how the situation in African continues to deteriorate in direct proportion to the promulgation of neoliberal and neoconservative ideologies and policies, the metastatic spread of transnational corporations that impose market systems and values and siphon resources to Europe and North America, the ever-tightening chokehold applied by international banking and financial systems that conquer through the strategy of loans (for the desperation they helped create in the first place) and debt (that oblige struggling nations to deliver their economies, states, and labor powers to the will of Western imperialism and market domination. Potentates such as Bush and Blair affect concern for the plight of Africans and promise to send significant sums

of money and assistance, but the promises are mere props for political theater and the politics of deny and delay. The G8 has no intention of relinquishing Western domination over people, animals, and resources and meet annually not to craft the policies of global justice, peace, and democracy they extol to the world through the aid of compliant corporate media, but assemble instead (not always as one unified chorus) to consolidate the power of Western markets and militaries over the majority of nations in the world. Bob Geldof can organize Live Aid concerts every year and funnel paltry sums through the corrupt channels of bureaucracy that drop mere pennies into the hands of the poor, and Bono can speak truth to power and morality to markets until he can no longer sing, but his words fall on deaf ears. Oprah can underscore the weighty obligations wealthy Western nations have to alleviate the suffering, violence, poverty, disease, and death that is the ugly legacy of colonialism, but the global power elites will only push the throttle of extraction and development indifferent to the costs to people, animals, and the environment. Only revolutionary change on a mass scale has a chance of stopping the juggernaut of global capitalism, and transforming its nihilistic and destructive forces into life-affirming and constructive powers.

62. Leo Zeilig, "South Africa: Burning Anger in the Townships," Socialist Review, http://www.socialistreview.org.uk/article.php?articlenumber=9682.

63. See Murray Bookchin, The Ecology of Freedom: The Emergence and Dissolution of Hierarchy (Berkeley, CA: AK Press, 2005).

64. On the intricate interrelationship between cruelty to animals and violence toward other humans (such as manifests all-too-frequently in the actions of serial killers), see Frank R. Ascione and Phil Arkow, Child Abuse, Domestic Violence, and Animal Abuse: Linking the Circles of Compassion for Prevention and Intervention (Lafayette, IN:Purdue University Press, 1999); Linda Merz Perez and Kathleen M. Heide, Animal Cruelty: Pathways to Violence Against People, (Lanham, MD:AltaMira Press, 2003); and Arnold Arluke, Just a Dog: Understanding Animal Cruelty and Ourselves (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2006).

65. See Pickover, Animal Rights in South Africa, p. 131.

66. See "Human Zoo" at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_zoo.

67. Charles Patterson, The Eternal Treblinka: Our Treatment of Animals and the Holocaust (New York:Lantern Books, February 2202).

68. Charles Patterson interviewed by Richard Schwartz, at: http://www.powerfulbook.com/interview.html.

69. Marjorie Spiegel, The Dreaded Comparison: Human and Animal Slavery (New York:Mirror Books, 1996).

70. Felipe Fernandez Armesto, So You Think You're Human? A Brief History of Humankind (Oxford:Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 89.

71. Ibid..

72. Jeremy Rifkin, "Meat Makes the Rich Ill and the Poor Hungry," at: http://www.viva.org.uk/guides/feedtheworld.htm. For further information on the social justice and hunger-alleviation implications of a plant-based diet, also see Rifkin, Beyond Beef, pp. 153-181; Francis Moore Lappe's classic study, Diet for a Small Planet (New York:Ballantine Books, 1991); and John Robbins' The Food Revolution: How Your Diet Can Help Save Your Life and Our World (Newburyport, MA:Conari Press, 2001).

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.002

Corporate Power, Ecological Crisis, and Animal Rights

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The global ecological crisis, deepening with each passing year, threatens the world as never before, an outgrowth of unrestrained corporate power that today colonizes every realm of human life. The crisis intersects with virtually every social problem, from declining public health to chaotic weather patterns, growing poverty, resource depletion, agricultural collapse, even military conflict. It goes to the core of industrialism and modernity, to relentless efforts by privileged interests to commodify and exploit all parts of the natural world, including most natural habitats and species within it. The power of a neoliberal international system based in the United States and a few other advanced capitalist nations is so great, moreover, that a crisis which earlier might have been contained now veers out of control, with few political mechanisms or counterforces to resist it. Living habitats are being ravaged at such an alarming rate that the carrying capacity of the earth has already been exceeded, a process of destruction justified by resort to such high-sounding virtues as social progress, material prosperity, and national security. Since transnational corporations, bolstered by immense government and military power, recognize few limits to their quest for wealth and domination, anti-system movements will be forced to adopt increasingly radical politics—progressive socialization of the state and economy, alternative modes of production and consumption, a new paradigm of natural relations. This means nothing short of a qualitative break with longstanding patterns of development if the planet is to be saved from imminent disaster.

If a political shift of this magnitude seems utterly remote and utopian, that is to be expected: genuine alternatives to the global corporate-military tyranny are presently weak and fragmented, and what exists lacks strategic coherence. Some progressive forces retain the capacity to disrupt business-as-usual, others have the power to achieve limited reforms, but none pose any real threat to the power structure. There are no truly anti-system movements of any scope or permanence, including among the multitude of environmental organizations and groups, despite the urgency of the crisis. In the case of animal rights, three decades of popular struggles have shown that even modest gains have been won slowly, with great difficulty, and against imposing obstacles. Of course this problem is scarcely unique to the challenge of transforming natural relations: time-honored goals of disarmament, ending poverty, and conquering disease, for example, are today no closer to realization than they were many decades ago. Still, where struggles to dramatically uplift the world raise such compelling political and moral issues, pessimism or resignation is simply no option insofar as history shows that even limited victories can set in motion more far-reaching dynamics of change. In the existing state of affairs, moreover, an attitude of retreat makes less and less sense insofar as fissures and cracks in a seemingly efficient monolithic system have begun to widen as global capitalism reaps more and more of its own bitter harvest.

Home to an aggressive global empire, the United States has built far-flung networks of corporate, political, and military power that only grudgingly recognize boundaries to their restless ambitions. Across its history this imperial system has followed a path of continuous and violent expansion, colonizing whatever it could, including nations, cultures, working peoples, resources, all of nature—indeed anything that could be turned into profitable commodities. Its vast arsenal of doomsday weapons, now being refined and upgraded,have held the world at its mercy for many decades. Elites and their ideological mouthpieces celebrate this murderous order fueled by racism and national chauvinism and rooted in an arrogant exceptionalism—that is, the righteous conviction that the "American model"

rooted in Manifest Destiny is the very best ever invented, the perfect embodiment of progress, modernity, and democracy. Any violent methods deemed necessary to spread this "model" are considered rational and legitimate, in fact routine, part of the ordinary scheme of things. U.S. imperial domination has a long record of ruthless interventions unmatched in the postwar decades: repeated forcible overthrows of foreign governments, covert operations around the globe, several million dead along with tens of millions casualties, millions more displaced from homes and communities, ravaged natural environments from Korea to Vietnam to Iraq. In such a universe it is to be predicted that the fate of nonhuman animals would be many times worse, creatures also victimized without end by war and ecological assault—not counting those imprisoned and slaughtered each year by the tens of billions for food, sports, biomedical research, and entertainment.

The struggle for animal rights—for fundamentally altered relations between humans and nature—intersects in many ways with the modern crisis, and thus also with the imperatives of future social change—a concern that can no longer be so easily dismissed as the rantings of a few isolated misanthropes. Three decades ago Peter Singer called for a new kind of liberation movement, one demanding a radical expansion of human moral horizons—above all, rejection of the horrors people have for centuries visited on other sentient beings, a condition historically viewed as natural and unchangeable.[1] For Tom Regan, the problem revolves around humans choosing to instrumentalize nonhuman beings as simple resources within an exploitative system that must be overturned in toto, a system that fails to recognize a crucial moral principle—that all sentient beings have inherent value, each the experiencing subject of life, each a conscious being with defensible interests, including the avoidance of human-inflicted pain, suffering, and death. Regan insists that we go beyond the ethic of "humane treatment" to embrace the goal of abolitionism, implicit in a strong rights position taken from the progressive side of liberal theory.[2] Once animal interests are situated within a larger social and ecological context, as they sooner or later must be, the struggle for human and animal equity becomes part of an integrated whole. Accumulated evidence shows that animal exploitation is tightly linked to the ecological crisis in many ways, a connection that unfortunately seems to have escaped most environmentalists and leftists. The findings are clear: the same animal nightmares produced routinely by agribusiness, the meat industry, and fast-food companies also brutalize humans, as employees facing harsh working and living conditions as well as consumers suffering the toxic health effects of a meat-centered diet. The animal-food economy also devours massive resources in the form of water, land, and energy while consuming nearly half of all grains and vegetables produced in a world facing imminent and drastic food shortages and generating more pollution and dangerous wastes products than any other economic sector. This enormous meat complex is also the locus of increasing disease transmission worldwide, yet another blessing of "free market" corporate capitalism.

Today the global corporate system constitutes an ominous threat to both human and nonhuman life, an exploitative, repressive, and unsustainable juggernaut that treats all living beings as resources within a swollen production and marketing regime, as disposable commodities far removed from any moral status. If within this system the oppression of humans and animals is deeply intertwined—a guiding premise of this essay—it follows that pursuit of global justice entails new efforts to include groups (in this instance animals) previously excluded from the political calculus. At this point the ethical, political, and ecological case for advancing the interests of nonhuman sentient beings, for ending the regimen of institutionalized barbarism, is so overwhelming as to force debate from the realm of scientific "evidence" (do animals feel pain, for instance) to that of radical strategy. The main challenge ahead, therefore, is to reconstruct social and political theory to take fully into account the epochal struggle to transform natural relations within a broader, anti-system agenda of challenging the modern crisis.

Since the appearance of Singer's Animal Liberation in 1975, followed by Regan's The Case for Animal Rights in 1982, an incremental but clearly-visible shift in the public view of human-animal relations has occurred, inspired by a growing output of books, articles, and films, the appearance of organizations and grassroots movements, and lifestyle changes (vegetarianism and green consumerism, for instance) under the rubric of "animal rights".[3] Previously obscured from critical inquiry, nonhuman nature became the object of philosophical discourse, mostly confined to universities in Europe and the United States. The result has been a series of reforms leading to more humane treatment of animals, the spread of direct-action politics around such issues as hunting, trapping, lab testing, and animal farming, and greater public readiness to take animal interests seriously, leading, for example, to stiffer prison sentences in cases of animal cruelty. There is a general heightened awareness, thanks partly to the Darwinian legacy, that humans and animals occupy the same temporal space, their fates organically bound together within the same planetary ecology. Yet the overall situation remains grim: long-established practices—hunting, trapping, slaughtering, lab experimenting, circuses—continue more or less without interruption, few debates over these gruesome practices

ever reaching the political sphere. Moreover, aside from its marginal leverage within the radical-ecology movement, animal-rights discourse has scarcely entered into or altered the work of left/progressive groups in the United States, across a span of some thirty years since Singer's book first appeared. Paradoxically, theoretical contributions to our understanding of natural relations have appeared mostly outside the ambience of left politics, from writers and activists with at best peripheral involvement in labor, socialist, anarchist, and left-liberal groups. Sadly, the result is that the project of animal rights remains alien to the major social-change enterprises of the current period.

Institutionalized Barbarism

Efforts to overturn the system of animal exploitation will have to begin the difficult process of ideological delegitimation, that is, subversion of those hegemonic beliefs and attitudes which maintain speciesism in its multiple forms. Unfortunately, despite new theoretical inroads, the brutal treatment of other species remains outside what is considered respectable public debate, understandable given the corporate largesse involved, the huge propaganda apparatus employed by the food, gun, and biomedical interests, and the undiminished power of ingrained cultural traditions. The meat phenomenon alone amounts to something of a national secular religion, helping to shape perceptions of gender and class, national identity, and even race relations.[4] Influential philosophical, religious, political traditions serve to justify and even celebrate the use of animals for every imaginable purpose, endowing human preferences with a veneer of moral righteousness and social progress: the major God-based theologies, exalted philosophers (Aristotle, Aquinas, Descartes, and Kant), Enlightenment rationality with its fetishism of technological and industrial growth. These traditions carry forward, and help solidify, the very imperatives of domination and speciesism that block any political solution to the modern crisis.

Radical voices, fortunately, can nowadays be heard with increasing frequency, many offering at least passing glimpses into an alternative, ecologically-viable future, with natural relations in particular developing into a crucial zone of ethical contestation. Regan, the pioneering rights theorist, probably best articulates the thesis that no sentient being ought to be "viewed or treated as a mere receptacle or as one who has value merely relative to the interest of others."[5] Robbins, author of the seminal Diet for a New America and The Food Revolution, has done more than any other writer to ask humans to reflect on the torture that food animals are forced to endure. In a typical passage he states: "As I've learned what is done to farm animals in modern meat production, there have been times that I've not known how to live with the pain I felt. It can be overwhelming to think of each of these billions of creatures as individual beings with personalities and feelings, yet forced to endure such deprivation."[6] Gary Francione, in his comprehensive Introduction to Animal Rights, critically interrogates the ideology that says "animals are commodities that we own and that have no value other than that which we as property owners choose to give them."[7] Writing in Beyond Beef, a book deserving far more attention than it has received, Jeremy Rifkin argues: "The modern cattle complex represents a new kind of malevolent force in the world. In a civilization that still measures evil in very personal terms, institutional evil born of rational detachment and pursued with cold calculating methods of technological expropriation has yet to be assigned an appropriate rung on the moral ladder."[8] Jeffrey Masson, widely-known for his excellent work on the varied and intricate subjective capacities that animals possess, writes in When Elephants Weep about "innocent sufferers in a hell of our own making" whose "freedom from exploitation and abuse by humankind should be the inalienable right of every living being."[9]

Such far-reaching critiques demand a fundamental break with speciesism, that is, the ethos of human supremacy in which the rest of nature is viewed as a font of resources for human appropriation—an ethos rationalizing cruelty and killing as necessary to civilized entitlements and conveniences. Humans are exalted as basically different from other species, an undeniable contention and scarcely a topic of rational debate when it comes to assessing the sorts of mental capabilities that people valorize. Historically it was thought that only humans possessed an immortal soul, or were the only beings capable of using tools, or were the only species that could build orderly societies. Following the Great Religions and the Great Philosophers, Enlightenment thinking has come to attach to humans a range of qualities identified as unique to the species—thought, reflection, morality, planning, and empathy. It turns out that most of these traits are possessed to varying degrees by members of other species, as modern research shows, although public views have not caught up with such findings (as for "tools", it is true that only humans have massively created and deployed them for the purpose of killing). A greater problem for speciesism is that human behavior more often than not has little in common with this idealized self-conception; the dark side of humanity,

extensively recorded across history, is either ignored or downplayed, contextualized. As Jane Goodall observes in Through a Window, the familiar hallmarks of humanity are violated millions of times daily within the mammoth torture complexes known as packing houses, to say nothing of the never-ending chain of wars and other forms of mass murder that human beings have visit upon themselves over the centuries. "Cruelty is surely the very worst of sins", she writes. "To fight cruelty, in any shape of form—whether it is towards other human beings or non-human beings—brings us into direct conflict with that unfortunate streak of inhumanity that lurks in all of us."[10] Responding to self-serving human proclamations of a unique moral compassion, Singer, in Animal Liberation, points out "that we rarely stop to consider that the animal that kills with the least reason to do so is the human animal."[11] Routinized killing under human auspices is practiced not only for food but for the even more questionable ends of sport, entertainment, and biomedical testing.

Animal-rights agendas face stiff challenges from agribusiness, the meat industry, the media, biomedical interests, and the resistance bred of established lifestyles. Animal-food production in the United States alone has increased no less than four times since the 1950s, despite the more recent spread of popular knowledge concerning the harmful effects of meat consumption. At present there are an estimated 20 billion livestock on earth. In the United States more than 100,000 cows and calves are slaughtered every day, along with 14,000 chickens. The Tyson plant at Noel, Missouri kills some 300,000 chickens daily while the IBP slaughterhouse at Garden City, Kansas and the ConAgra complex at Greeley, Colorado both disassemble more than 6400 steers a day.[12] All told 23 million animals are killed worldwide to satisfy human and food demands daily. In a McDonaldized society Americans now eat on average 30 pounds of beef yearly, with seemingly little concern for well-known health risks. Conditions of factory farming, said to be improved owing to reforms, are in fact worse by most standards—more crowded, more painful, more disease-ridden, more drug-saturated even than at the time of Upton Sinclair's classic The Jungle (written in 1906).[13] The great misery of animals subjected to such conditions and cut off from normal social life has brought few changes from within the political system. More than half of all animals (pigs, chickens, ducks, and so forth) are afflicted with diseases like cancer and leucosis at the time of slaughter. The Federal Humane Slaughter Act supposedly ensured that animals would be rendered unconscious before being ripped to pieces but Robbins and other critics say that 90 percent are conscious as they are processed through the assembly-line terror.[14] The meat industry has virtual carte blanche to do whatever it wants with its commodities insofar as government monitoring ranges from sporadic to nonexistent—a situation that, as Robbins argues, amounts to a crime not only against helpless animals but against nature and indeed against humanity itself.[15] That such practices are so routine, so concealed from public sight, and so ideologically sanitized hardly subtracts from the horrors. So long as living creatures with physiological makeup very close to our own are reduced to resource-objects for human appropriation, virtually anything is possible.

The relentless assault on nonhuman nature is rooted in the same corporate-imperial order responsible for ecological crisis, militarism, resource wars, global poverty, and political repression. The old religious and philosophical belief-systems notwithstanding, no rational defense of such barbarism has been brought forward—nothing beyond blind obedience and crude prejudice. As in comparable instances of ideological convention, prejudice takes many forms. Thus Masson writes: "It has always been comforting to the dominant group to assume that those in subservient positions do not suffer or feel pain as keenly, or at all, so that they can be abused or exploited without guilt or impunity."[16] According to such mindless bias, perfectly healthy, intelligent beings with normal survival impulses are deemed unworthy or life; their fear and misery met with (usually silent) contempt. Immersed in the meat complex materially, institutionally, and psychologically, most people cannot allow themselves to see anything unusual, much less unethical, in the pain and suffering of other creatures. Sinclair argued in The Jungle that anyone visiting a slaughterhouse would be quickly converted into vegetarianism, but alas these zones of torture remain invisible to the ordinary person, far removed from the sanitized and convenient supermarkets, restaurants, and fast-food outlets.

Those profiting from the food, gun, and biomedical industries see absolutely no moral problem with the killing machine, which is fully protected by Constitutional "freedoms". On the contrary, their work is understood to be for the benefit of all humankind—after all, meat is needed for good health, hunting gives individuals much-needed diversion, lab testing helps cure diseases, and circuses provide entertainment for kids. Little in the way of explicit moral justification or even factual evidence seems required in support of such notions, since the blessings of human supremacy (God-given or otherwise) appear sufficient. As with other modes of domination, cruel and lethal practices are simply taken for granted by otherwise educated and progressive individuals. In reality homo sapiens do exercise "dominion" over nature given their obviously superior material and psychological advantages, an element of "anthropocentrism" that is hardly debatable. Of course humans seize every opportunity to claim special moral

qualities, placing themselves above brutal nature and the "beasts" that populate it. Yet while it is no great intellectual triumph for humans to establish their primacy over nature—they have done so for millennia—the real question turns on the exact character that primacy assumes as it is historically played out. In the present context "dominion" (as spelled out in "Genesis" and other texts) has meant exploitation and abuse, that is, domination largely bereft of positive ethical content. A different kind of human obligation would point in the direction of stewardship, calling attention to equity, balance, ecological sustainability, and coexistence between humans and the natural world.[17] So far, however, human beings have done little to distance themselves from a "brutal" or Hobbesian state of nature, having repeatedly proven themselves the most destructive and murderous of all creatures.

The view of natural relations adopted here derives from Regan's philosophical work—namely, that all sentient beings have inalienable rights to be free of pain and suffering at the hands of humans.[18] This line of thinking holds to several interrelated premises: (1) no moral justification exists for overriding animal interests in order to serve "higher interests"; (2) what matters is not specific intellectual or communication skills but rather the capacity to experience pain, suffering, and loss; (3) while much of nature is inescapably used by humans as resources to satisfy material and other needs, this logic should not extend to other sentient beings; (4) humans ought to be stewards of nature and other species within it to the extent possible; and (5) human and animal interests are closely bound together within the same social and historical processes. Moving from these assumptions, a guiding aim of social change should be the ultimate elimination of animal exploitation in all its forms. This rises to the level of a moral imperative: if barbarism cannot be justified by necessity or by ethical precepts, then all that remains is the force of habit, prejudice, and material gain.

While humans have always dominated nature, their capacity for harm and destruction—greater today than ever—can be progressively reduced through the introduction of an animal-rights politics leading, eventually, to the end of speciesism or at least the diminution of its harshest manifestations. If the rights agenda is constrained by the very inequities of capitalism, as Ted Benton argues, that is surely no reason to reject it completely any more than we would consider jettisoning any of the multiplicity of long-established human rights.[19] In a state-corporate system where domination pervades the entire social landscape, the promise of full equal rights will always run up against limits in the form of wealth, power, and ideology. It follows that rights, given adequate legal codification, will have to be deepened as part of long-term social transformation. Conversely, any theory of animal interests will be inadequate unless integrated into a more comprehensive schema engaging issues of corporate power and ecological crisis, a challenge taken up in the following pages.

Neoliberal Illusions

As with other areas of personal life now viewed as having larger public relevance, meat has traditionally been regarded as a "private" issue, in this case one's dietary choice—a matter of individual preference. The past few decades have witnessed some changes in popular attitudes toward meat, yet most people see no connections between meat and general social problems. And these problems are indeed plentiful: resource depletion, pollution, food shortages, deforestation, global warming, and disease. Worldwatch magazine has observed: ". . . as environmental science has advanced, it has become apparent that the human appetite for flesh is a driving force behind virtually every category of environmental damage, including the growing scarcity of fresh water, loss of biodiversity, spread of toxic wastes and disease, even the destabilization of countries."[20] This predicament is aggravated by the fivefold increase in global demand for meat in just the past four decades: with more than 6.2 billion humans on the planet, at least 90 percent consumers of meat, it takes no genius to see that the Earth's capacity for renewal is rapidly being outstripped. The source of astronomical profits for agribusiness, meatpackers, grocers, and the fast-food industry—in fact a bulwark of the entire corporate system—meat is today a decisive factor in altering planetary life. [21]

In a word, meat is highly unsustainable, and is destined to become more so over time unless existing consumption patterns are reversed. It demands great reservoirs of energy in the form of fossil fuels—pesticides, fertilizers, transport, processing, for example—and this, along with enormous waste and toxics from animal farming, is the largest source of water and soil pollution. In the United States, moreover, nearly 60 percent of all grains are fed to animals. Great expanses of land worldwide have long been overgrazed, leading to soil erosion while vast regions are being deforested to make room for animal grazing and farming. Half of all water is utilized in meat production, which, owing to toxics and runoffs, also contaminates shrinking water tables. Overall, meat drains a staggering

amount of resources and energy at a time when their availability is peaking or declining. In the case of global warming, livestock account for more than 20 percent of world methane emissions, not including fossil fuels used in agriculture and transport. Though the staggering material wastefulness and ecological dysfunctions of the meat industry is no secret, the sad reality is that as societies develop economically and their middle strata grow, meat consumption tends to increase sharply as it is widely considered a symbol of affluence and good-living. The public demand for meat escalates at precisely the historical moment when arable land is shrinking, oil resources are peaking, soil is becoming depleted, and water supplies are more problematic than ever.

Meanwhile, agricultural surpluses dwindle and more than one billion people around the world are chronically hungry—a figure that is sure to increase dramatically. Although world grain output has tripled since 1950, with the introduction of fertilizers and high-yield seeds, such growth has reached an end as farmers globally are now, in Lester Brown's words, "faced with shrinking supplies of irrigation water, rising temperatures, the loss of cropland to nonfarm uses, rising fuel costs, and a dwindling backlog of yield-raising technologies."[22] At the same time, world meat consumption rose from 47 million tons in 1950 to 260 million tons in 2005, a fivefold increase, while out of 220 tons of soybeans produced globally (in 2005) just 15 million tons were consumed by humans. World population is expected to reach over 9 billion by 2050, but life-support systems will never be able to satisfy food demands of even half that many people given present trends. The result is we now have a degree of unsustainability that is taking the planet toward catastrophe. Concludes Brown: "Our global economy is outgrowing the capacity of the earth to support it, moving early twenty-first century civilization closer to decline and possible collapse."[23]

Spurred by unfettered corporate expansion, neoliberal globalization thus subverts ecological balance by its very logic, but an often neglected component of this downward cycle is animal-based agriculture. Neoliberalism legitimates its unsustainable practices on a foundation of technocratic arrogance, mythological belief in "free market" economics, an instrumental view of nature, and contempt for other species. If U.S. elites stand at the forefront of such thinking, they are hardly alone: the global ecosystem has little value to corporate ideology in any setting, for that would intrude on profit-making. Insofar as sustainability requires developmental balance, respect for nature, limits to growth, and renewal of resources, a transformed relationship between humans and animals logically follows, as does a worldwide move toward population reduction.

This last point deserves further elaboration. World population is expected to double over the next fifty years, at which time a sustainable economy—assuming present trends—will be a long-forgotten possibility. Rapid population growth brings a steady decline in per capita resources, increase in toxic wastes and pollution, extreme crowding in major cities, intolerable demands on public infrastructure, drastic loss of biodiversity, diminution of remaining species, and intensified global warming well beyond anything currently imagined. Food and water resources will be consumed far past crisis levels. Both agriculture and industry will be stymied, spreading poverty, joblessness, social chaos, ecological breakdown, and general calamity.[24] The Pimentels are not overstating the case when they observe that "Humanity is approaching a crisis point with respect to the interlocking issues of population, natural resources, and sustainability."[25] Since sustainable global population has been estimated at roughly two and a half billion people, we can assume that a population of 12 billion will tax planetary capacity to the point of catastrophe.[26] And if meat production continues anywhere close to present levels—and it is projected to rise sharply—the crisis will be simultaneously hastened and exacerbated. Unfortunately, at present no serious political counter-forces exist, with the United States taking the lead in stonewalling even modest attempts to curtail global warming and related environmental threats. And very few observers (left, center, or right) have even posed the question of how meat production and consumption heavily weighs on sustainability.

For corporate managers across the globe unlimited accumulation has always trumped social and ecological imperatives. Having for years pretended that global warming is a liberal myth, the George W. Bush administration was forced to backtrack, but still insisted that any challenges could be met by benevolent functioning of the "free market", itself an actual conservative myth. In December 2005 more than 10,000 delegates from 189 countries met in Montreal to discuss how to reverse climate change, but the United States. (source of no less than 30 percent of all greenhouse emissions) sought to obstruct reform efforts as its chief negotiator, Harlan Watson, walked out of the proceedings, continuing a rejectionist pattern established at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. If a sustainable economy requires emphasis on the process of natural renewal, then neoliberal globalization—by far more exploitative, coercive, and destructive than in the past—can no longer be tolerated by either humans or other species. Under existing conditions, nature cannot begin to renew itself, meaning that conscious human intervention, relying on those special ethical and political qualities people claim to possess, is an urgent imperative. (Anthropocentrism

in this sense cannot be denied, and in fact ought to be welcomed.) Ecological balance depends on a shift away from corporate agendas, toward a regimen of public goods, long-term social planning, renewable energy resources, reduced population levels, and a vegetarian-based agriculture—now less a matter of individual preference than of collective survival. Progressive social change today is unthinkable without confronting an ensemble of problems: corporate power, ecological crisis, population pressures, meat-based agriculture. How theorists and activists of the left have managed to avoided this constellation of issues remains one of the great puzzles of the current period.

Addicted to Meat

If it can be said that the United States is addicted to militarism and war as the famous volume Addicted to War graphically puts forth then it might equally be argued that the nation is addicted to meat and all that comes with it, including the fast-food mania. A major difference is that meat permeates the entire society to a degree even beyond the culture of violence. Psychological habituation occurs and is reinforced on several levels—political, economic, cultural, personal, even religious—and is reproduced by agricultural, industrial, and service networks that have grown dramatically over the past few decades. Fast food alone has exploded since the 1970s, helping reshape the entire American landscape: home, schools, media, sports, and workplace.[27] According to Eric Schlosser, Americans spent $134 billion on fast food alone in the year 2000, more than was spent on college education, personal computers, or new cars.[28] Animal products now fuel the modern industrial system everywhere, a (false) symbol of human prosperity but also a source of mounting social, workplace, health, and environmental ills. Poor people and youth are most heavily targeted by fast-food advertising campaigns indifferent to the great harm their products bring to the workers who manufacture them, human health, the environment, and the animals they disassemble.

Rifkin illustrates how the beef complex, long ago seen as a vehicle of modernity, developed historically alongside an Enlightenment project fixated from the outset on the total commodification of nature.[29] Scientific discovery, technological innovation, and industrial growth were all harnessed to the sprawling meat enterprises that in the U.S. became especially valued as part of the frontier expansion. At the time of the Westward push meat was a dominant economic and cultural force, reinvigorating the capitalist ethic of material acquisition and masculine ethic of rugged individualism.[30] Since then the cattle system celebrated in hundreds of Western books and movies has become a pervasive element of the social order, a staple of the American diet, site of bountiful profit-making, and a nightmare for animals that Sinclair was just the first to bring to (U.S.) public attention. By the 1950s meat could be linked to the rise of suburbia, the automobile culture, and an expanding electronic media that helped drive McDonaldization, a food regimen integral to fast-paced urban and suburban lifestyles while the apparatus itself (both production and consumption) came under Fordist operating principles: uniformity, speed, efficiency, standardization, affordability. All the historical components of animal farming and meat processing were thoroughly rationalized, generating and satisfying public demand for hamburgers, hot dogs, steak, luncheon meats, and related fare. Workers at factory farms, slaughterhouses, canning plants, and fast-food outlets were mostly recruited from low-wage minority labor and subjected to alienating, routinized, toxic, and dangerous jobs involved in the disassembling of animals. As for cattle, they were (and are) dehorned, castrated, injected with hormones and antibiotics, sprayed with insecticides, and transported to automated slaughterhouses before being killed, then broken down into countless marketable parts, ultimately to wind up at butcher shops, stores, and restaurants. Used in literally hundreds of industrial and food products, beef alone generates huge profits for corporations lie ConAgra, Cargill, Tyson, IBP, and McDonalds. The same ritual is repeated for chickens, ducks, pigs, sheep, turkeys, and other creatures, by the millions each day, all subject to similar assembly-line horrors.

As McDonalidization appears to symbolize modernity in food production and consumption, meat has evolved into one of the most saleable commodities for corporations that benefit from mobile lifestyles dependent on relatively cheap energy sources. Champions of advertising and marketing, the meat companies fiercely resist government regulation precisely in that sector (food) most desperately in need of it to monitor health threats, toxic emissions, harsh working conditions, and extreme cruelty to animals. The industry has emerged as a bastion of rightwing politics infatuated with neo-Darwinian economics, including union-busting and the fight against minimum wage. If those who run the meat empires have nothing but reckless contempt for their own workers and only slightly better regard for consumers, what can be expected of their treatment of those millions of hapless creatures processed through the extermination chambers? As Ken Midkiff observes, "In the concentrated feeding operations, animals

are treated as nonsentient beings, as if incapable of feeling pain."[31] Schlosser's vivid account of life at ConAgra's giant plant near Greeley, Colorado reverberates with horrific narratives right out of The Jungle. There hundreds of thousands of cattle are squeezed together in huge feedlots, so close they can barely move, handled as nothing but units of production. Animal wastes, toxic runoffs, and chemical emissions fill the slaughterhouse, spreading disease to cattle and humans alike. Workers are powerless cogs in a rationalized machine operation that similarly reduces them to manipulable objects. At Greeley, Schlosser reports three overpowering odors—burning hair and blood, grease, and a rotten-egg smell from hydrogen sulfide—with people, animals, and meat all contaminated by the same toxins and pathogens.[32] This uniquely "American" contribution to food production is now being exported to every corner of the globe.

Aside from the military, no sector of American society matches the frightening consequences of the meat complex: ecological devastation, food deterioration, routinized violence, injury, disease, and death to both humans and animals, rampant corporate power. The health of consumers addicted to fast foods loaded with fats, salt, sugar, and calories worsens with each passing year, marked by a growing obesity epidemic connected to health problems like cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and chronic infections. The American junk-food diet, now more often than not a source of habituation at an early age, must be considered one of the great contemporary tragedies. As mentioned, public awareness of health problems stemming from meat consumption has recently increased, thanks to a new generation of critics and such documentaries as Diet for a New America, McLibel, Supersize Me!, and The Corporation. No doubt too the alarming scope of health problems, afflicting even the very young, has given rise to something of a backlash. In response, the meat industry has stepped up its propaganda crusades hoping to short-circuit any thoughts people might have of turning to vegetarianism. Consumers are told, falsely, that meat is essential to good health, that it is an indispensable source of protein and other nutrients, that vegetarianism is a silly and harmful fad, that "barnyard" animals are treated with great care, that critics of meat addiction are behaving like "food dictators" and "lifestyle Nazis". People are warned against the sinister and intrusive schemes of a "culinary police", big brother taking over the kitchen. Lobbies like the National Cattlemen's Association and the American Meat Institute, reinforced by friendly "diet" crazes like those of Robert Atkins, have waged multibillion dollar media counteroffensives to persuade Americans that meat is the (only) path to true health and a sign of prosperity.[33] Meanwhile, despite abundant scientific, medical, and environmental evidence to the contrary, the familiar habits live on with daily reinforcement from the corporate media.

The terror that animals routinely experience at the hands of humans has for several decades been a taken-for-granted part of everyday existence, far removed from any possible set of ethical concerns. Of course such collective sense of denial owes much to simple habit rooted in traditions, customs, and lifestyles, readily justified (and fiercely protected) as culinary preference. Yet where addiction of this sort causes extreme harm to the environment, to animals, and of course to the addicts themselves, much deeper explanations seem in order. Beyond the role of an indefensible speciesism, there is the power of transnational business interests that help define media culture, but that is not all. The break with old habits, however destructive, is more difficult where such habits are legitimated by hallowed belief-systems, long inscribed in religion and philosophy, thatphilosophy, which celebrate homo sapien supremacy over an objectified nature. When people are questioned about what they eat, for example, they instinctively fall back on time-honored myths inherited from Christianity, Judaism, Cartesian and Kantian notions of human superiority, Enlightenment (scientific, technological) views of progress, or simple liberal-capitalist norms of possessive individualism. From these traditions it is a logical (and all too quick) journey to the factory farms, packing houses, fast-food enterprises, hunting clubs, and biomedical labs. Criticism of such traditions strikes most people as nonsensical, an unwarranted intrusion into their personal lives and values. Barriers insulating people from the daily carnage are just as much ideological as physical (distance from source), permitting comfort in detachment, in the same way victims of technowar remain unseen by the perpetrators. What Western religion, philosophy, and political ideology instill is a conviction of human uniqueness and superiority: "man" possesses a level of intellect, communication skills, language, and emotional capacity that other species cannot match. While humans are capable of distinctly moral discourses and noble actions, "wild" animals are trapped in their biological immediacy—crude, primitive, violent, and devoid of ethical impulses. The gulf is seen as unbridgeable. Such self-serving mythology, wrapped around certain kernels of truth, conflicts with Darwinian evolutionary principles but it does give humans a sense of entitlement over nature—easy justification for exploiting other species for food and other ends.[34]

Great distance and concealment allows people to isolate themselves from atrocities, so that moral discourses around animal interests readily fall on deaf ears; removed from sight, the pain and suffering does not register on the

supposedly empathetic human psyche. Of course relatively few people are directly involved in the killing apparatus, while fast-food outlets and supermarkets (employing millions) package meat as just another customer item like bread, cereal, and soft-drinks. The harm done to living creatures is relegated to the margins of social life, rarely broached as a topic of conversation much less a source of moral outrage. Paradoxically, however, it is people's intimate daily connection to animal flesh as food staple that renders meat addiction so difficult to break, or even to grasp as a problem. The end product of killing is viewed as vital to culinary and health benefits, reinforced through a constellation of daily habits, tastes, rituals, ceremonies, and special occasions, often linked to traditions and/or psychological identities. Habit further requires powerful defense mechanisms: denial, cynicism, insulation, cultivated indifference. Any challenge to meat-eating, moreover, can quickly be taken as an insult to personal rights often associated with sensitive religious, national, or ethnic traditions. Few meat-eaters are prepared to hear that their food decisions are somehow unethical, harmful, and costly to human well-being, the environment, and animals possessing traits little different from those of domestic pets. Like other destructive behavior, the meat habit is embedded in complex social relations as well as ideological beliefs, thus working its way into systems of domination. An ostensibly premium, nutritious food, meat has long signified good health and strength while more mundane foods (grains, vegetables, fruits) were associated with inferior, cheap diets of the poor and lower classes. Even today meat (above all beef) represents power, especially masculine power, of the sort wielded by strong leaders and warriors, a kind of special nourishment needed to carry out tough work. Writes Carol Adams: "According to the mythology of patriarchal culture, meat promotes strength; the attributes of masculinity are achieved through eating these masculine foods."[35] A meat-centered diet is still regarded as a source of great virility. With the planet driven past its ecological limits, and with meat consumption more wasteful, destructive, and unhealthy than ever, humans remain locked in a closed universe of myths and addictions, immobilized by years of inbred practices.

Collective addiction can easily serve as a psychological bulwark of established interests, but in the end it provides no excuse for sidestepping important ethical choices. As Gary Francione points out: "Many humans like to eat meat, they enjoy eating meat so much that they find it hard to be detached when they consider moral questions about animals. But moral analysis requires at the very least that we leave our obvious biases at the door. Animal agriculture is the most significant source of animal suffering in the world today, and there is absolutely no need for it."[36] Radical change will insist upon moral and psychological as well as economic decisions that the vast majority of people anywhere will be reluctant to support, especially since habits are so deeply rooted in social institutions. Meat consumption is sustained at high levels by such vigorous corporate advertising and marketing that any significant break with existing patterns appears unlikely—that is, unless the modern crisis intensifies to the point where it forces basic alterations in daily life. For such alterations to occur, human-animal relations would finally have to be subjected to a full recasting. One might argue that, as in the case of the impact of fossil fuels on global warming, a sharpening crisis has already shown that it can provoke changes in both the social and ecological realms. If humans are indeed endowed with unique intellectual and moral potential, not to mention a capacity to plan for the future, then a new historical path ought to be within sight.

Theoretical Myopia

As Francione observes, addictive human behavior can seem to justify an impulse to ignore the moral and political consequences of such behavior; some of the worst human crimes across history were rooted in longstanding habit and custom, later to become the targets of resistance and change. Critical reflection implies a willingness to reconsider any personal or institutional practice known as harmful to others or to the common good. In the case of natural relations, as we have seen, barbarism rooted in human convenience and monetary profit not only thrives but is legitimated within the media and popular culture. However, if meat addiction is deeply-implicated in the modern crisis across many fronts, then we are faced with a new set of political challenges. Such critics as Robbins, Rifkin, Masson, and Schlosser have written extensively about some of these connections, calling at least tacitly for decisive changes in the whole system of food production and consumption, but progressive/left responses have given rise to one long deafening silence. It is probably no exaggeration to say that human-animal relations have been systematically ignored within the Marxist and labor traditions, and to a lesser extent within liberalism, major social movements, and community organizations. Important left journals (The Progressive, Monthly Review, Dissent, Z Magazine, The Nation) have, with only rare exceptions over many decades, closed their pages to the discourse, as if the matter of

animal interests were something of an ideological embarrassment.[37] For progressives, animal-rights work has been dismissed as the misguided work of a motley assemblage of pet extremists, eco-misanthropes, and fringe new-agers. Whether such leftist cluelessness derives from sheer ignorance or the simple prejudice of an addicted population, or simply reflects an intellectual myopia—or some combination of these—is difficult to tell. The problem is that, in the area of natural relations at least, the left has abandoned any claim to critical thinking much less oppositional politics, following instead the safe contours of mainstream ideology and its defense of powerful interests and conventional wisdom. Meanwhile, animal-rights activism has generated one of the largest and most influential movements of the past two decades.

Such theoretical paralysis on the left assuredly runs deep, as does a preferential weighting of issues that exhibits an irrational contempt for nonhuman nature. One might suspect that the growing impact of animal exploitation on the environmental predicament, its role in sustaining corporate power, and its connection to miserable working conditions, the spread of disease, and worsening of human health—problems historically championed by progressives—might in fact compel serious engagement. But nothing along these lines has happened. The left has exhibited total disregard for the contributions of highly-accessible critical public intellectuals like Singer, Regan, Robbins, Rifkin, and Masson among others. Despite its radical implications, this work has scarcely resonated among progressive writers, journals, groups, and movements otherwise dedicated to open and critical thought.

The reasons for such deficiency of critical spirit surely fall along psychological as well as intellectual or political explanations. Lifestyle habits clearly matter, but the religious and philosophical traditions mentioned above still exercise hegemonic power. On the other hand, animal-rights discourse has its own distinct limits, in at least three ways. First, theorizing often follows rather narrow, exceedingly abstract, lines of inquiry, with animal concerns isolated from wider (social and ecological) priorities. Second, the rights concept so prevalent in framing animal interests is tied overwhelmingly to questions of individual moral choice, a product of the liberal tradition in which motifs of social structure, institutional power, and ideology are deemphasized. Benton writes that "The problem for the rights perspective is not that it purports to offer protection too widely but, rather, that it is too restrictive in the purchase it gives to moral concerns."[38] These points logically intersect with a third: even the most far-reaching critiques of speciesism fall short of political articulation, with change posed largely in terms of personal ethics, detached from general strategic choices. Most attempts to reconceptualize human-animal relations fail to confront the weight of corporate power and supporting liberal-capitalist institutions. Beneath the façade of democratic practices we face a corporate system that, in the U.SUnited States. above all, pursues agendas guaranteed to bring ecological calamity. With its civilized flourishes and highmindedhigh-minded discourses, this system is integrated by a growing concentration of economic, governmental, and military power intent on world domination. It is a global order legitimated by Enlightenment ideology which, as William Leiss says, approaches "the kingdom of nature is like any other realm subject to conquest by those who command the requisite forces."[39]

The question at this juncture is not whether humans really "dominate" nature—the capacity to do so is undeniable—but what form their intervention will or should take. Liberal-capitalist development, merging technocratic and market principles, is fueled by conquest and exploitation, turning vital ecosystems into lifeless machines, reservoirs of accumulated wealth and power. Nor is the question one of people simply using nature to advance their own interests, since the only alternative would be total depopulation of the planet so that no water, foodstuffs, metals, wood, and paper could ever be extracted—an extreme approach to sustainability, to put it charitably. Again, the problem turns on precisely what forms human use of the natural habitat will take, including whether the developmental model will be sustainable, consistent with the Earth's biospheric potential. Any radical break with past ecological dysfunctions will require a new mode of natural relations including a qualitative leap forward in the human treatment of animals.

Marxism and the socialist politics it inspired throughout the twentieth century accentuated class struggle in some form, the anticipated prelude to large-scale social transformation—a negation of liberal-capitalism, in theory if not always in practice. Yet, in its main strategic formulations (above all social democracy) Marxism followed liberalism in its attachment to Enlightenment values, rapid industrial growth, and maximum exploitation of nature. Classical Marxism held that human alienation could be abolished by eliminating the capitalist division of labor, a necessary stage in the full realization of species-being, or ultimate liberation. Nineteenth- century socialists—not only Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels but Karl Kautsky, George Plekhanov, and others—inherited a strong modernizing faith in science and technology, in the blessings of economic development. The egalitarian side of Marxism signaled a radical shift in what it meant to be human, but it never went so far as to redefine human-naturehuman nature or human-

animal relations, a hardly surprising void given the ideological constraints of the period. The positivist, scientistic side of Marxism, wedded to an implicit speciesism, militated against any such reformulation. Marxism was also productivist in its obsession with economic forces as the driving force of history, as the determinant of a new society.[40] Again, such theoretical bias was inevitable given the Zeitgeist of the times: Marxism, after all, gained ascendancy during the early modern period, forged between 1840 and 1880, and then reached its peak in the decades preceding World War I, reflecting established intellectual currents of the time and place (Europe), including a strong optimism in the future of technology and the industrial order.

It has been argued that Marx (and later Marxists), despite the ideological confinements of time and place, arrived at a conceptual framework universally relevant not only to class struggle but to ecology. The socialization of production, a shift toward egalitarian class and power relations, breakdown of the division between urban and rural life, emphasis on collective consumption—all this is said to point toward a model of sustainable growth resting on a balanced relationship between humans and nature.[41] Whether this imputed vision effectively counters a productivist fixation on limitless industrial growth and triumph over scarcity is problematic, but even if we recognize an ecological Marx we are still left with his well-known silence regarding natural relations. There is nothing in Marx (or indeed later Marxists) to indicate serious theoretical reflection on this issue, nor indeed has anyone ever made such a claim. As Benton, generally sympathetic to Marx, observes, the overall thrust of the theory is to give humans a freer hand in utilizing the natural world for human purposes, with class struggle a vehicle of the "humanization of nature."[42] The much-celebrated "humanism" of the early Marx actually replicates the deep-seated speciesism of Western religious and philosophical thought. For Marx, following in the tracks of Descartes, Kant, and Hegel, humans are innately creative and self-reflexive, potentially free to remake history, while nonhuman creatures are trapped within a pre-designed biological realm. Instead of an organic connection between humans and animals, sharing the same ecological fate as Darwinian theory affirmed, Marx saw dualism and opposition between the two—a tendency that would become more pronounced in later, more crudely materialistic, variants of Marxism.

Twentieth-century Marxists were no more likely to address ecological issues than were the founders: "Western" Marxists like Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Korsch, Antonio Gramsci, Georg Lukacs, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Herbert Marcuse took up a range of distinctively non-productivist concerns—culture, aesthetics, bureaucracy, the family, media, to name many—but, with the partial exception of Marcuse, seemed no more interested in ecology than were nineteenth-century thinkers. "The environment" would become a challenge taken up by theorists outside the Marxist tradition, since for Marxism (and socialism) change was a project for and by humans struggling to conquer nature—"conquest" meaning here what we normally define as exploitation. Nowhere, of course, did issues related to ecological crisis, much less animal rights, get placed on the political agenda. By the time writers like Rachel Carson, Murray Bookchin, and Barry Commoner began calling public attention to ecological problems in the 1960s, Marxism was already in decline.[43] The crucial point is that the underlying productivism of Marxist/socialist thought imposed strict limits on its capacity to reconceptualize natural relations; it has had little more to offer than liberal-capitalism.

By the early twenty-first century strong attempts to merge ecology and Marxism were under way not only within and around Green parties and movements but in socialist circles, yet reconceptualization of natural relations in line with an ethic of animal rights had made little headway. Now as before animal interests, where considered worthy of intellectual discourse, are explored in isolation from other problems, while those other problems are usually taken up separately from questions of animal rights. As for Marxism, John Sanbonmatsu has recently pointed out that the familiar theoretical impasse remains: although the global economy depends increasingly on the cultivation, killing, and disposal of billions of animals yearly, this horrific reality continues to be untheorized (in fact untheorizable) within the socialist tradition.[44] In this regard little has changed since the time of Marx and Engels: only human consciousness matters, only human suffering and pain enter the political calculus. Thus Joel Kovel, in an otherwise incisive work on the ecological crisis, maintains that animal-rights concerns are "fundamentalist" and "forget that all creatures, however they may be recognized, are still differentiated and that we make use of other creatures within our human nature."[45] Left unexplained here is just what element of "human nature" (itself a problematic concept) justifies the practice of institutionalized barbarism. An article by Marxists Theresa Ebert and Mas'ud Zavarzadeh elevates blind prejudice to higher levels, arguing that human consumption of meat ("real food") is essential to the "proletarian diet" since it furnishes healthy, high-protein, strength-giving nutrition to workers who depend on it for every ounce of physical energy. As they put it in boosting the fraudulent Atkins diet, "Meat is the food of the working people; a food of necessity for the class that relies on the raw energy of its body for sustenance." In contrast to the sophisticated "bourgeois diet" containing a large proportion of grains, vegetables, and fruits, animal foods give

workers exactly what they need while these upper-class foods are more appropriate for people with abundant leisure time to savor the "Zen moment". The authors conclude that such dietary opposites reflect a social order now in the process of splitting up into two great classes.[46] Leaving aside their total contempt for animal welfare and seeming ignorance of the way in which agribusiness, meatpacking, and fast-food corporations make obscene profits off both human and animal misery, Ebert and Zavarzadeh faithfully repeat every myth passed on by the meat interests—that animal foods are the most nutritious, are needed for physical strength, are the best thing for mundane lifestyles, are easier and less time-consuming to prepare. In fact these foods are just the opposite of what the authors pretend—their harmful effects well-documented by thousands of hardly-secret studies conducted in the United States alone, as explored in such texts as Robbins' The Food Revolution. Reflecting on such an ill-informed diatribe, one is tempted to conclude that meat addiction is a much deeper problem for the progressive left than for mainstream or even working-class culture. As the ecological crisis veers out of control, the limits of Marxism become more obvious by the day—and these limits are all the more glaring when it comes to animal rights. Yet it conceptual apparatus still offers crucial insights into the workings of economic power, corporate globalization, and class domination, vital to deciphering the nature of material forces in a transformed world.

Ecological politics, still relatively embryonic in its modern incarnation, grows out of an uneven legacy of theories and movements the ideal of which has been to overcome the destructive consequences of industrialism, to restore balance between society and nature. Its radical, at times utopian vision has followed a trajectory largely independent of Marxism, grounded in themes of local community, environmental renewal, mutual aid, limits to growth, and generalized opposition to hierarchy. What might be called "ecocommunalism" or "ecosocialism" passes through the seminal ideas of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, utopian socialism, anarchism, Peter Kropotkin, and the later contributions of modern anarchists and "left-Greens" like Bookchin and Rudolf Bahro. This rich tradition embraces a distinctly anti-authoritarian outlook—meaning hostility to the entire fabric of domination—and a fierce dedication to what might be called an ecological renaissance. Here we have something along the lines of a radical, or "Green" democracy, defined through ongoing popular struggles for local self-management.

Bookchin's social ecology, an extension of classical anarchist thought and developed across prolific writings going back to the early 1960s, represents probably the most sophisticated ecological radicalism today. His theory is shaped by a "dialectical naturalism" in which efforts to transform history and nature, society and environment, unfold simultaneously, leading to organic community—a process defined by local struggles against multiple forms of domination: class, bureaucratic, racial, gender, cultural, and ecological. An ecological society would mean full realization of "free nature" through human self-activity, fully dependent on revival of natural relations and the locus of an entirely new consciousness. In Bookchin's words: "Such a change would mean a far-reaching transformation of our prevailing mentality of domination into one of complementarily, in which we would see our role in the natural world as creative, supportive, and deeply appreciative of the needs of nonhuman life."[47] Here the human and nonhuman worlds would be intimately connected, reunited after long centuries of harsh opposition and conflict. Bookchin inherits the political radicalism of Marx in his embellishment of dialectics and popular struggles to overthrow capitalism, but he goes beyond it in two important ways: a view toward overturning all modes of domination and a commitment to ecological reconstruction that is at best only implicit in Marxism.

But when it comes to animal rights Bookchin remains just as implacably attached to Enlightenment values and speciesism as Marxism. Indeed, animal interests are roundly dismissed as "misanthropic", a form of "primitive" ecocentrism he sees, incorrectly, as a logical manifestation of Deep Ecology. For Bookchin, DE and animal rights share a mystical anti-humanism that inevitably undercuts radical politics. Humanity possesses a singular capacity to reappropriate "first nature" and create an elevated "second nature" grounded in reason, planning, and creativity, qualities that set humans apart from other species confined to the biological realm—a view that places Bookchin squarely within the mainstream of Western philosophy.[48] Other species remain tied to "genetic imperatives" and immediate needs of survival, so that "freedom . . . is not attainable by animals."[49] As we have seen, "special" attributes of human beings might be compatible with "freedom" (in human terms) but have absolutely no relevance to an abiding interest that other species might have in avoiding misery and death at the hands of their ("free") human masters—a moral issue Bookchin never confronts. Again, what matters here is the specific relationship humans are able to establish with nature—that is, whether "dominion" becomes "conquest" in the form of institutionalized barbarism, or something altogether different. In the final analysis, humans possess nothing special that can ethically justify the terror of slaughterhouses, lab testing, and hunting, although they obviously have the power to carry out such practices. In Bookchin's social ecology, we end up with an emancipatory theory of radical (human-centered)

transformation that supports an arrogant speciesism where animals have no protection against whatever horrors people decide to visit upon them. As with neo-Marxism, social ecology has been impervious to the radical influence of animal-rights theory and practice since the early 1980s.

Reacting against Marxism and social ecology, Deep Ecology—its influence on Green currents strongly felt over the past two decades—looks to systemic change in human-nature relations, marked by an ecocentric break with modernity and industrialism. DE shares with social ecology a rejection of all forms of domination but, given the depth of the ecological crisis, identifies natural relations as the privileged site of human efforts to transform the world. It dismisses liberal environmentalism and its narrow project of limited reforms in favor of a deeper "paradigm change" in consciousness, lifestyles, and values that would define the new community. DE rejects the Enlightenment legacy tout court, urging limits to economic growth, "bioregional" living arrangements, population reduction, self-sustaining agriculture, and unyielding reverence for natural habitats. More fundamentalist DE theories call for a return to preindustrial society, consistent with basic Green principles of equality, democracy, peace, spiritualism, and ecological renewal. As George Sessions argues, human self-activity is attainable only through organic unity with the surrounding ecosystem.[50] Many DE currents adopt the view that virtually any human intervention in nature is destructive and must be avoided. The modern crisis, according to this extreme formulation, would be surmountable only at that point when humans finally exit the scene—a view bringing charges of misanthropic and even fascistic politics. Most variants of DE, it must be said, retreat from such dogmatism.

DE theory stresses moral obligation to nature and living systems within it, a biospheric equality that conflicts sharply with the requisites of industrial society. Departing from Marxism and social ecology, DE argues for full-scale transformation of social life and natural relations consistent with the abolition of speciesism, or "anthropocentrism". This is no contrived "second nature" but rather progressive adaptation to "first nature", transcending the age-old dualism between society and nature, humans and other species. Here the DE agenda seems compatible with animal rights given its reverence for nature and attraction to "wild nature" unspoiled by human contamination.[51] Yet the theory both exceeds and falls short of animal-rights objectives as spelled out in this essay. First, its moral stance covers the entire natural world, beyond individual sentient beings to include natural habitats as such (trees, water, insects, even rock formations as well as animal species) within an interconnected ecological system. It transcends and even trivializes "rights" to embellish all life-forms, so that animal interests fall short of what needs to be considered as part of a "deep" ecological revolution. Beyond the formal (one might also say legalistic) goal of "rights", radical change insists upon a qualitative shift in the economy, social structures, lifestyles, and popular consciousness—all indispensable for planetary survival.

At the same time, DE ecocentrism runs up against its own limits and contradictions. If animal-rights discourse lacks a holistic, global outlook, DE offers no theoretical construct that would prohibit institutionalized barbarism as the system is currently maintained. Within DE thinking it has been easy for partisans to hedge on their rejection of anthropocentrism which, in any case, mistakenly poses the question of human domination itself as opposed to looking at how precisely that domination unfolds. The result is that Deep Ecologists lean toward an open, malleable attitude regarding how individual members of other species are expected to be treated in actuality. As Arne Naess writes, reflecting the tone of many DE passages: "My intuition is that the right to live is one and the same for all individuals, whatever the species, but the vital interests of our nearest [i.e., humans], nevertheless, have priority."[52] He goes on to defend the use of animals as "resources" for human appropriation,[53] and one finds scattered references throughout DE literature to the acceptable use of animals as food sources. At another point Naess writes that humans should be allowed to intervene in nature "to satisfy vital needs", clearly a departure from the ethic of biocentric equality.[54] Lacking a theory of rights or its equivalent, biospheric egalitarianism shades into a vague general orientation, leaving moral and political space for humans to continue their meat addictions and related activities. Ecological radicalism would not be so "deep" as to interfere with the brutal treatment of animals if that treatment can viewed as contributing toward "satisfying vital needs". Conceivably "wild nature" would remain untrammeled, but in other locales sentient creatures would be eligible for merciless abuse from their human betters.

Another difficulty with DE is that its exit from modernity—indeed its very idea of organic bioregionalism—turns out to be rather abstract, a utopian fantasy. Modernity is so thoroughly a part of the existing world, so embedded in social institutions and practices for so many generations, that ambitious moves to "escape" its global reach would lead to immediate calamity—even conceding the possibility of such an escape. The idea of abolishing all or even most human intervention into the natural world, which no DE theorists has in fact ever concretized, winds up as just another hopeless romantic myth. Biocentric equality, itself a fanciful human construct, is so far beyond any realizable

goal that down-to-earth political action is rendered moot. It is hardly surprising that in the sphere of animal rights DE lacks specificity: "natural" entities from elephants to shrubs, insects, and rocks appear to enjoy the same putative moral standing, however nebulous and subject to myriad qualifications. The grandiose notion of extending moral status across the entire ecological landscape seems on the surface laudatory enough but, as Tim Luke observes, such sacralization of nature fails to rise above a vague sense of "moral regeneration" devoid of political meaning.[55] Despite its deep, radical formulations, therefore, DE in itself offers little guide to an animal-rights strategy much less to a political way out of the modern crisis.

Liberating Theory

We have yet to arrive at a theory of animal rights sufficient to engage all dimensions of the challenge. Both Marxism and social ecology, though vital departures for analysis and change, are much too attached to Enlightenment rationality, with its fetishism of technology and deeply-ingrained speciesism, to inspire any revolution in natural relations. Their view of animal rights is essentially one of contempt—where the issue is not ignored altogether. DE, on the other hand, breaks with Enlightenment ideology and affirms the moral standing of living habitats and the integrity of nonhuman species, but retreats so far into romanticism that it cannot by itself furnish any strategic way forward. The theory contains vague references to moral renewal and organic community that have no relevance to actual political outcomes, including animal liberation. Further, as we have seen, its stated position on animal rights is ambiguous at best. As for the animal-rights movement itself, both in theory and in practice it has veered toward insularity, cut off from larger social and ecological concerns even as it generates militant and often highly-effective popular struggles. The discourse has regularly been framed as a set of normative ideals to be achieved within the liberal-capitalist order, in the tradition of earlier "rights" movements. While this is eminently understandable, the problem is that no far-reaching animal liberation (or ecological) project can be sustained without challenging domestic and international corporate power, though partial reforms benefiting animal welfare (for example, no-kill zones, hunting bans) do obviously matter and ought to be defended. As David Nibert argues, social changes leading to the liberation of both humans and animals are mutually reinforcing, fueled by a common material exploitation that goes back thousands of years.[56] My argument here is that a new theoretical synthesis is urgently needed, incorporating dynamic elements of Marxism, radical ecology, and animal rights, if the modern crisis is to be fought with any hope of success. Corporate capitalism has grown ever-more authoritarian, exploitative, violent, and unsustainable over time, nowhere more so than in the United States, thus forcing political strategy along a more radical path. If the crisis is a product of multiple and overlapping factors, then countering it means proceeding along diverse fronts: class and power structures, the globalized economy, culture, ecology, and natural relations. Even the most transformative change, however, can occur only within the parameters of an already existing urban, modernized order, part of a lengthy historical process, as opposed to any sudden "exit" from the present, or immersion in "wild nature".

An expanded moral sensibility requires the normative obligation to other life-forms, species, and individual sentient beings—a sensibility basic not only to animal rights but to historical ideals of social justice, democracy, peace, and sustainability. Such ideals demand no mythical biocentric community for their actualization, but they do assume prohibitions against exploitation, torture, and killing in any form, which clearly applies to institutionalized barbarism of the sort perpetrated against billions of sentient creatures today. As Herbert Marcuse, never known for his embrace of animal rights, observed in the 1960s, human beings in their great wisdom have managed to create a general "Hell on earth", and a significant "part of this Hell is the ill-treatment of animals—the work of a human society whose rationality is still the irrational."[57] Today Marcuse would probably agree that the struggle to overcome the dualism of society and nature, humans and other species—barely theorized so far—ought to inform any future radical politics worthy of the name.

Whatever its lacunae in conceptualizing natural relations, Marxism remains indispensable to this project, its class analysis and anti-capitalist theory vital to forging anti-system movements against transnational corporate power. The most imposing problems of the current period, including worker exploitation, global poverty, militarism, and ecological decline, cannot be grasped much less reversed in the absence of class-based movements that break with the hardened rules of corporate globalization—a dialectic best theorized within the Marxist tradition. A deep flaw in Marxism is filled by social ecology, given its more systemic view of ecology and sharpened attention to the multiple forms of domination. Attuned to the complex ensemble of relations, social ecology resists the productivism

and class reductionism that works against a full ecological Marxism. On the other hand, Deep Ecology (including ecofeminism) embraces a more distinctly subversive outlook toward natural relations, conferring moral status on all of nonhuman nature. Neither Marxism nor social ecology rival DE in the sense of gravity it attaches to habitat destruction and the global ecological crisis, in its potent critique of rampant industrial growth and obsessive pursuit of material abundance. Criticized (for the most part inaccurately) for its misanthropic ideas, DE calls for alternative modes of agriculture, production, and consumption in harmony with sustainable development—a viewpoint scarcely articulated within the Marxist tradition. Such a qualitative shift in social and ecological arrangements is necessary because, as the Pimentels observe, "Humanity is approaching a crisis point with respect to the interlocking issues of population, natural resources, and sustainability."[58]

The final and perhaps most contentious element of the synthesis, animal rights, calls attention to an institutionalized barbarism that has been routinely ignored but which does so much to sustain corporate wealth and power, thereby helping further intensify the modern crisis. For the short term, like other protocols and standards, the rights of animal ought to find universal codification in the U.N. Charter, the U.S. Bill of Rights, and every other national constitution. Viewed over the long term: insofar as animal interests pose far-reaching challenges to the status quo regarding agricultural practices, the industrial system, diet and health, natural relations, and the ecological crisis, any movement that addresses the general interests of animals has undeniable anti-system potential. Nascent struggles to overturn institutionalized barbarism represent a blow, however limited, against escalating human assaults on nonhuman nature, perhaps opening a new phase in the development of a truly liberatory politics. Taken to new historical levels, animal rights, in tandem with the great moral questions it raises, clashes with those megacorporate interests -agribusiness, fast food, biomedical, media and Big Pharma among others—that will stop at nothing in their efforts to amass greater wealth, power, and profits.

Endnotes

1. Peter Singer, Animal Liberation (New York: Avon Books, 1975), p. xii.

2. Tom Regan, The Case for Animal Rights (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), p. xiii.

3. For a recent comprehensive anthology on questions of animal welfare, see Peter Singer, ed., In Defense of Animals (Oxford: Blackwell, 2005).

4. Jeremy Rifkin, Beyond Beef (New York: Penguin, 1992), p. 235.

5. Regan, The Case for Animal Rights, p. 332.

6. John Robbins, The Food Revolution (Berkeley: Conari Press, 2001), p. 220.

7. Gary Francione, Introduction to Animal Rights (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2001), p. xxiv.

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9. Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, When Elephants Weep (New York: Delacorte Press, 1995), p. 236.

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11. Singer, Animal Liberation, p. 235.

12. Ken Midkiff, The Meat You Eat (New York: St. Martin's, 2004), p. 39.

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15. Ibid., p. 221. See also Midkiff, p. 13.

16. Masson, When Elephants Weep, p. 29.

17. For a powerful statement on stewardship values, situated within a philosophical discourse, see Holmes Rolston III, "Challenges in Environmental Ethics", in Michael E. Zimmerman, et. al., eds., Environmental Philosophy (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1993), pp. 135-57.

18. Regan's views are best summarized in his The Case for Animal Rights (2004 edition), ch. 9. This approach, in my opinion, is superior to either the Utilitarian framework adopted by Singer (in Animal Liberation and elsewhere) or the "capabilities approach" employed by Martha Nussbaum in her Frontiers of Justice (Cambridge, MA.: Harvard University Press, 2006). Both views allow for entirely too many qualifications and exceptions to any rule against animal cruelty and exploitation. The weaknesses of Utilitarianism are well known: virtually anything can be justified if it can be

said to maximize pleasure for the majority. In the case of Nussbaum, she argues forcefully for a ban on all forms of cruelty to animals but then makes room for exceptions when "there is plausible reason for the killing". (p. 393) Elsewhere she writes that the use of animals for food and for biomedical research provide thorny, but still unresolved, moral questions. (pp. 403-03). Regan's case for a strict abolitionism, of course, permits of no such moral ambiguity.

19. Ted Benton, Natural Relations: Ecology, Animal Rights, and Social Justice (London: Verso, 1998), p. 152.

20. "Is Meat Sustainable?", Worldwatch (July-August, 2004), p. 12.

21. The widely-acclaimed Albert Gore documentary, An Inconvenient Truth, provides a brilliant investigation into the problem of global warming, but contains not a single word about the impact of agriculture, meat, and dietary habits on this aspect of the ecological crisis.

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23. Ibid., p. 3.

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25. Ibid., p. 46.

26. Ibid., p. 45.

27. See George Ritzer, The McDonaldization of Society (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press, 2000), ch. 1.

28. Los Angeles Times, May 12, 2006.

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31. Midkiff, The Meat You Eat, p. 27.

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36. Francione, Introduction to Animal Rights, pp. 187-88.

37. Aside from journals and magazines, animal-rights concerns have also been excluded from progressive radio. For example, nothing has been historically aired on the influential Pacifica stations devoted to this issue, except for a brief stint by Karen Dawn at KPFK in Los Angeles during 2004. Dawn's excellent program, however, was taken off the air after several months—the agreement was not renewed—at the insistence of the Program Manager.

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39. William Leiss, The Domination of Nature (New York: George Braziller, 1972), p. 55.

40. See especially Ronald Aronson, After Marxism (New York: Guilford, 1995), pp. 90-123.

41. See, for example, "Ecology, Capitalism, and the Socialization of Nature", an interview with MR editor John Bellamy Foster, Monthly Review (November 2004), pp. 1-12.

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48. Bookchin, The Philosophy of Social Ecology (Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1990), pp. 115-16.

49. Bookchin, Re-enchanting Humanity (London: Cassell, 1995), p. 236.

50. See George Sessions, "Ecocentrism and the Anthropocentric Detour", in Sessions, ed., Deep Ecology for the Twenty-First Century (Boston: Shambala, 1995), pp. 169-77.

51. On "wild nature" see, for example, Jack Turner, "In Wildness is the Preservation of the World", in Sessions, Deep Ecology, pp. 331-338.

52. Arne Naess, "Equality, Sameness, and Rights", in Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 222.

53. See Naess, "Deep Ecology and Lifestyle", in Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 260.

54. Naess, "The Deep Ecological Movement", in Sessions, Deep Ecology, p. 68.

55. Timothy W. Luke, Ecocritique (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), p. 23.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.003

Modern Science, Enlightenment, and the Domination of Nature: No Exit?

William Leiss

Introduction and Overview

> The disease of reason is that reason was born from man's urge to dominate nature.
> —Max Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason (1947)

In the fuller passage from which this extract is taken, Horkheimer locates the origins of the 'collective madness' of modern times in 'in primitive objectification, in the first man's calculating contemplation of the world as prey' (176). Perhaps all one can say in response is, if this diagnosis is correct, there is certainly no cure, so we might as well get on with our lives.

In the early sections of this paper I will first note briefly the argument that the approach taken in Dialectic of Enlightenment and Eclipse of Reason ends in a cul-de-sac. Then I will offer a somewhat different interpretation of the historical dialectic of Enlightenment, arguing that we are still today in the midst of a real, historical conundrum—with potentially fateful consequences—that is playing itself out in contemporary society. Returning once again to the main theme—the relation of modern science to enlightenment and the domination of nature—I will then try to show how the 'stakes' in this game are now being raised by molecular biology and neurosciences. For it was inevitable that 'human nature' and its most precious attribute, the human mind, would one day become 'objects' to be mastered by the methodology of the natural sciences.

Here is where I will end up: Domination of nature through the progress of the modern natural sciences is the defining historical dialectic of modernity, which has a distinctive internal contradiction that must be addressed and resolved if humanity is to be able to transcend this stage of historical development. I argue against the 'dialectic of enlightenment' because it presupposes what it ought to prove, namely, that there is no exit. On the other hand, this defining historical dialectic is still in the process of development, driven further by its own internal tension. Thus it is still 'open' to qualitatively different final outcomes.

Dialectic of Enlightenment Revised

In the two main texts from the 1940s, Dialectic of Enlightenment (complete typescript in 1944, first published in 1947) and Eclipse of Reason (1947), three different sets of key concepts appear. One is, of course, 'dialectic of enlightenment,' which may be summed up in the proposition that enlightenment, the enemy of myth, falls victim to its opposite: 'The more completely the machinery of thought subjugates existence, the more blindly is it satisfied with reproducing it. Enlightenment thereby regresses to the mythology it has never been able to escape.'[1] The second is the opposition of objective versus subjective reason: The latter holds that 'reason is a subjective faculty of the mind' and serves the subject's interest in self-preservation; the former holds that 'reason is a principle inherent in reality.'[2] The third is the domination of nature. In seeking to understand how nature works, and thus to control its powers for their benefit, 'human beings distance themselves from nature in order to arrange it in such a way

that it can be mastered.' But the enlarged social apparatus that is required to refine, enlarge, and administer control over nature takes its revenge, for 'the power of the system over human beings increases with every step they take away from the power of nature….'[3] Enlarged, collective domination over nature is matched at every staged by a comparably heightened domination by some people over others.

Although there are differences in the modes of expression used for these three sets of concepts, there are enough similarities, even in the brief quotes given above, to suggest that the three should be regarded as variations on a single theme.[4] That they may represent a single core idea is affirmed in a passage written toward the end of Horkheimer's life:[5]

> The immanent logic of social development points to a totally technicized life as its final stage. Man's domination of nature reaches such proportions that scarcity, and thus the necessity of man's dominion over man, disappears. But at the same time, the end is total disillusionment, the extinction of mind insofar as it differs from the tool that is reason.... All this is part of the dialectic of the Enlightenment, the change from truth into unconditioned conformity with meaninglessness, with reality generally.

These sentences evoke nothing so much as Max Weber's 'iron cage' of rationality. Horkheimer's own heading for this passage is: 'On Pessimism.' The idea of a 'final stage' of life that is 'totally technicized' leaves little doubt that this is a path of regressive social development having no exit into a better future (utopia).[6]

This fatalism and explicit pessimism is also summed up well in the sentence quoted at the outset: 'The disease of reason is that reason was born from man's urge to dominate nature.' In locating this dialectic within the 'human condition' as such, in particular, in the very nature of human reason, Horkheimer appeared to pose an insoluble dilemma for social theory. Among other things, this perspective does seem to contradict the underlying basis of critical theory, inasmuch as it is considered to be a variant of the Marxist theory of social change in general, and of modern society in particular, because it places the key issue in human development entirely outside of history and presents it as a constant, essential feature of the species in all of its manifestations over time.

One of the main difficulties created by this overly-expansive concept of instrumental reason lies in the highly indiscriminate use of the word 'domination' in the phrase 'domination of nature.' For this phrase makes no sense when applied to what Horkheimer refers to as the 'primitive' state of Homo sapiens, presumably meaning before the time of early agriculture and settled, as opposed to purely hunter-gatherer, societies. Nor does it make much better sense when applied to the state of premodern civilizations, because in reality there was very little control over nature to speak of.[7] Hobbes's famous description of the condition of humankind in the state of nature, a life 'solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,' is—minus the solitary part—a reasonably accurate characterization of the lives of most people in most times to date (excluding the rich, of course), and of many even today. To take just one example, before the age of modern medicine and public health, up to half of all newborns could die in the first year of life; in addition, pregnancy and childbirth represented severe risks of death for women (as is still true today in many places in the world).

Thus there is no sensible way in which 'primitive objectification' can be regarded as the first step on the road to the modern epoch and the form which the domination of nature takes there. This error is compounded in critical theory by 'generalizing' the phenomenon of enlightenment and presenting it as a historical constant, applicable equally to ancient Greece and eighteenth-century Europe. The result is to misrepresent in a fundamental way the true function of the modern enlightenment.

The French Enlightenment

The opening pages of Dialectic of Enlightenment correctly present Francis Bacon as the original Enlightenment thinker of the modern period, for without a doubt Bacon developed the clearest and most straightforward conception of 'domination over nature' and its relation to the new sciences of nature. In a nutshell, he put the concept in the form of a paradox, which goes like this: Achieving command over nature can only be gained by following nature.[8] One must patiently observe how nature works, taking careful measurements and confirming the accuracy of these observations by systematic experimentation (i.e., replication)—a search that should be driven by the recursive interplay of theory and evidence, not by a purely speculative natural philosophy alone. Patience is required in order to reveal the underlying structure of matter that hides behind the phenomenal appearances of things (Bacon thought

the alchemists were too impatient, for example). Patience requires a long-range, integrated perspective developed gradually over time by a community of scientists working in different places and corresponding with each other. Bacon also realized that government resources would be needed to subsidize the venture, but he was ahead of his time in this respect and when he died he thought of himself as a failure.

The first—false (because partial or incomplete)—form of the dialectic of modernity was the perceived conflict between the new sciences and the dominant religious world-view. Bacon resolved this apparent conflict quickly, and over time his resolution became widely accepted.[9] He acknowledged the dilemma—namely, that an enlarged 'power over nature' placed into humanity's hands would need to be superintended, somehow—but he dismissed it with a formulaic response. In his book The New Organon (1620) he wrote: 'Only let the human race recover that right over nature which belongs to it by divine bequest, and let power be given it; the exercise thereof will be guided by sound reason and true religion.'[10] He would not live to see the triumph of his program, however. Toward the end of his life he consoled himself by writing a utopian fantasy, The New Atlantis (first published posthumously in 1627), depicting a form of society where an élite scientific research establishment sets its own rules and runs the investigations of nature independently of political authority.

Only towards the end of the eighteenth century, after the French Enlightenment and the French Revolution had swept away the ancient dogmas that stood in the way of the new sciences, could it be said that Bacon's view had finally triumphed. (Bacon was a great hero in the eyes of the Enlightenment thinkers.) And it was only in the works of these eighteenth-century thinkers that the full richness of Bacon's original message became clear—for, remarkably, Bacon, standing at its point of origin, had in fact already but vaguely sensed the essential, internal tension in the epoch of modernity. This tension may be described as the two-sided significance of science and technology for society, to which I shall assign the labels inventive science and transformative science:

> 1. By the term inventive science I mean the promise of 'the conquest of nature,' the vision of an endless stream of new products and technologies to enhance the material conditions of life and human well-being.
>
> 2. By the term transformative science I mean the penetration of the 'ethos' of the modern scientific method throughout all of society and its institutions. This ethos includes the experimental method, with its emphasis on the objective demonstration of results, confirmed in a peer-review process; a thoroughly skeptical attitude to all received wisdom and traditional belief; the search for the 'laws of nature' existing independently of human thought and interests; and what we would now call an 'evidence-based' approach to the analysis of the causes of human misery, ignorance, and backwardness.[11]

The second is even more important than the first, in my view, but it has been virtually forgotten, shoved aside in the course of the triumphant march of the great triumvirate of science, technology, and industry. Nevertheless, it is the two forms of science together, and the tension between them, that make up the essential dialectic of modernity. To the extent to which the two sides exist in a creative tension, thus fostering historical progress, they counteract the twin obstacles to human development: first, lack of adequate material security, a necessary precondition for the full unfolding of human creativity, and second, a subjection to irrational forms of thought. The two do not exist in creative tension when the hyper-development of one side (inventive) is matched by the under-development of the other (transformative). In the latter case, which is the one that has persisted and intensified throughout the two preceding centuries (with some exceptions here and there), there is a growing risk that the enlarged technological powers will be put to the service of irrational social forces.

If the sentence immediately prior sounds a lot like the core theme found in Dialectic of Enlightenment, that is no accident. But the analysis of the underlying problematic is fundamentally different, not least in its concrete historical setting (modernity) and in its source, namely, modern science and its social context. It was the work of the eighteenth-century French Enlightenment—the 'real' Enlightenment, not the generic one constructed by Horkheimer and Adorno—that completed the development of Bacon's duality

To be sure, through the end of the eighteen-hundreds there were not all that many new 'products' emanating from scientific laboratories, although the foundations of invention were being laid down in the new sciences of chemistry and physics. During that period, however, the second part of the bargain, transformative science, triumphed over its opponents within European culture. This triumph is wonderfully summed up in the great posthumous work by the Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794), Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind, a work he wrote while in hiding from the agents of the Terror.[12] This text is the clearest statement of the idea that the new scientific methods are not only important for the truer understanding of nature. Rather, their highest importance lies

in the fact that they can and should also be diffused throughout society, by means of universal education, and that social policy and social institutions will be rendered more humane and just as a result.

He envisioned a future in which 'the dissemination of enlightenment' would 'one day include in its scope the whole of the human race.'[13] The process called 'enlightenment' is founded on a way of thinking that instructs us 'to admit only proven truths, to separate these truths from whatever as yet remained doubtful and uncertain, and to ignore whatever is and always will be impossible to know.' The gradual extension of this method into the realm of 'moral science,' politics, and economics has enabled thinkers 'to make almost as sure progress in these sciences as they had in the natural sciences.' He continues:

> This metaphysical method became virtually a universal instrument. Men learnt to use it in order to perfect the methods of the physical sciences, ... and it was extended to the examination of facts and to the rules of taste. Thus it was applied to all the various undertakings of the human understanding.... It is this new step in philosophy that has for ever imposed a barrier between mankind and the errors of its infancy, a barrier that should save it from relapsing into its former errors under the influence of new prejudices,...

Condorcet has an interesting reason for suggesting that advances in the natural sciences are the original foundation for a broader social enlightenment. He remarks that 'all errors in politics and morals are based on philosophical errors and these in turn are connected with scientific errors.' What he is saying is that there is a connection between our conceptions of natural processes, on the one hand, and our understanding of society and individual behaviour, on the other. Once the progress of the physical sciences' is launched, he claims, this 'inexorable progress cannot be contemplated by men of enlightenment without their wishing to make the other sciences follow the same path. It offers them at every step a model to emulate ....' This theme is nicely summed up in the following sentence: 'Just as the mathematical and physical sciences tend to improve the arts that we use to satisfy our simplest needs, is it not also part of the necessary order of nature that the moral and political sciences should exercise a similar influence upon the motives that direct our feelings and our actions?'[14]

If there is one core idea in Condorcet's conception, it is surely this: The 'progress of the sciences' that defines the enlightenment project is a double-sided phenomenon. It encompasses both the physical and the moral sciences or, using my terminology, the combination of inventive and transformative science, or technology and ethos. It is a process with a built-in mechanism ensuring its indefinite continuation: 'The progress of the sciences ensures the progress of the art of education which in turn advances that of the sciences.'[15] The inner unity between these two dimensions is something which Condorcet seems to have taken for granted. He saw the two sides as arising in quick succession over the course of the seventeenth century and flourishing together throughout the eighteenth. In short, a more sophisticated chemistry and physics, on the one hand, and enlightened social behaviour, on the other, were two sides of the same coin. That this is an inner unity, and not just a coincidence, is shown by Condorcet's emphasis on the great advances made possible by the invention of the calculus: It is not only a methodological pillar of the new natural sciences, but also of such innovations in social welfare as insurance and pension programs, which require the use of probabilistic analysis in order to function well.

Condorcet's Sketch is the most incisive, insightful, and comprehensive presentation of the underlying unity of enlightenment thought ever written by one of the key participants of the era. (It is a far better guide in this respect than is Kant's famous essay, What is Enlightenment?) But to the best of my knowledge there is no mention at all of Condorcet in Dialectic of Enlightenment. Thus critical theory never came to terms with the internal dialectic of the modern enlightenment—nor did critical theory take a close look at the indispensable role played by the 'new sciences of nature' in it.

Horkheimer said in 1946, but only in an internal memorandum at the Institute for Social Research, that 'the rescue of the Enlightenment is our concern.'[16] If this is so (and it is believable), they chose a very odd way of going about it. For how could one not fully recognize, for example, the force and range in Condorcet's account of the struggle waged by enlightenment thought against regressive and oppressive forms of law and social custom? Yet it is in critical theory's failure to acknowledge the true significance of what the modern sciences of nature contributed in this regard that is one of its worst failings. Condorcet's profound insight, that 'scientific errors' supply one of the strongest supports for the errors in thinking that prop up oppressive social relations, was entirely overlooked.

Perhaps the worst failing of all is critical theory's failure to engage the specific content of what has been achieved in the modern sciences of nature, and its permanent value in the human understanding of the world in which we live. How can there be, in what styles itself as a critique, no mention of any actual achievement? How is it possible that can there be not even a passing acknowledgement of the scope and profundity of the collective intellectual labour over

time that is represented, say, in Einstein's equations of special and general relativity, in molecular chemistry, or in the theory of evolution by natural selection? It is hard to excuse such a level of systematic oversight and condescension. How could these insights not be regarded as contributions to 'objective reason,' and instead be relegated implicitly to the sphere of subjective reason's 'interest in self-preservation'?

As Vogel has said, 'dialectic of enlightenment' ends in a cul-de-sac. But that is exclusively the theory's own problem. One cannot transcribe the theory's own radical shortcomings onto the historical reality it so poorly characterized.

Scientific Mastery Over 'Internal Nature'

Before discussing further where the tension between the two forms of science stands at present, I would like to explain the sense in which the project for the domination of nature is nearing completion. The four-hundred year trajectory of the new sciences was launched with studies on the forces and materials that make up the external environment—metals, minerals, energy, and organic compounds. Chemistry was the lead science; by the late eighteenth century its industrial applications were already established, and by the mid-nineteenth century products made using synthetic compounds, for example dyes, were pouring from the factories. Then it was the turn of physics, which dominated the late nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth; the signature of its mastery is in the discovery and use of atomic energy.

The relatively slower progress in biology and genetics accelerated during its revolutionary period in the second half of the twentieth century: Molecular biology discovered that the book of life is written in the simple four-letter chemistry of the DNA molecule, and with that came the astonishing news that all living things that have ever existed on earth, plant and animal alike, share the same protein chemistry. Thus science's long trajectory now circles back and veers inward, exhibiting the human organism as a natural entity whose evolutionary origins and physiological makeup place it within the class of placental mammals. The genetic endowment of Homo sapiens—including the genes that direct the construction of its brain—is so closely aligned with those of its nearest natural relatives, the bonobos and chimpanzees, that some molecular biologists regard all three species as being members of the genus Homo.[17]

We have had in hand, since 2003, the complete readout of the human genome, a sequence (akin to a barcode) of three billion chemical base-pairs, and the search for all of the 20-25,000 genes contained therein is on. The potential benefits of this knowledge are vast indeed. Just consider genetic disorders, the source of inherited diseases, which are basically mistakes in the sequence. Consider the disease known as Leigh Syndrome French Canadian Variant, a devastating childhood condition giving rise to multiple and severe physical and mental illnesses before death intervenes at age five or six. It results from a very small set of sequence errors within a single gene located on chromosome 2, and we now know exactly where and what those errors are.[18] We already have the ability to search for some of these kinds of single-gene errors in human embryos, including those that cause cystic fibrosis, Huntington's chorea, and some cancers—the procedure is called preimplantation genetic diagnostics—and parents can choose to discard the embryos that exhibit the defective gene sequences.[19]

But some day we will be able to repair those errors, too. And then it's a short step to gene enhancement, the construction of 'improved' versions of normal, healthy individuals. Many geneticists will tell you that it's 'impossible' or 'very difficult' to do such things, and that there are serious risks involved. That doesn't stop athletes from trying to get their hands on unproven technologies right now. My advice is, don't bet on the idea that gene enhancement technologies will never be realized. A safer bet would be to start preparing for the time when such technologies are available, and to expect that there will be a strong demand for them.[20] That is the advice given by an American neurologist, Anjan Chatterjee, in 2004. Chatterjee coined the term 'cosmetic neurology' as a deliberate reference to cosmetic surgery; he maintains that scientists and doctors will be unable to resist the demands from parents for 'souped-up' brains for their children.[21] Because in the entire range of human technologies, the ability to manipulate the brain will be seen as the greatest prize of all.

Using the working assumption that the brain gives rise to the mind, we are in the process of discovering—through the techniques known as neuroimaging—how the mind works, in other words, what brain functions are correlated with what mental outputs—thoughts, images, behaviors, emotions, reasoning, memory, and so forth.[22] All of these outputs are correlated with the 'firing' of specific neurons across synapses, in a process of electrical signaling among various regions of the brain. In turn, this neuronal activity is made possible by doses of chemicals

known as neurotransmitters (serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine, and others); and to a great extent, these chemical cascades are controlled by the on-off switching of the genes in our DNA and by levels of various hormones.

Once we know how brains work, we can manipulate them, of course: For example, the manipulation of serotonin levels in the brain, designed as a treatment for clinical depression, is achieved through administering a class of drugs known as SSRIs (selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors), the most famous of which is Prozac. But you don't have to wait for a doctor's prescription: College students today are taking a wide variety of 'memory-booster' drugs available over the Internet, especially around exam time.[23] And there's a lot more coming.

Domination of nature can be said to mean the effort to understand how all natural processes function, in terms of physical, chemical, and biological interactions, so that we can first replicate those processes and then intervene in them to produce specific outcomes that we desire. This long historical trajectory, which begins with the external world (environment), ends at the neurological tissue inside our heads, where our most intimate thoughts and feelings are generated. Once we have a good handle on all these functions, and how they are ultimately controlled by genes, we will be asked: 'What would you like us to do 'in there'? And, while we're at it, should we modify your genes as well, so that your children can inherit the nice new features and accessories we'll be adding?'

Along the way to the present, critical theory maintained, Enlightenment destroyed the possibility of 'objective' value-frameworks, so what remains is simply consumer preference. If your neighbor's children are competing with yours for limited places in the best schools, and the others have been endowed with souped-up brains, how long will you hold out? (Since this is a zero-sum game, it will be necessary for the schools to keep raising the bar, forcing parents to respond by upping the ante when they visit their genetic-engineering counselors.)

The 'Task' That is Posited for Historical Actors

In one of his finest aphorisms, from One-Way Street, Walter Benjamin remarks that the essential unfulfilled task for modern society is achieving 'mastery over the mastery of nature.' The thought remains as true today as when it was first penned in 1928.

The analysis presented here proposes that domination of nature has a specific meaning, considered as a key historical feature of the modern period: namely, the project of the modern natural sciences to achieve a complete technological mastery over natural processes. This is normally how this project is understood, but it is a radically deficient understanding, because it ignores the original unity of the two opposing, but complementary, moments within it. By means of a greatly enlarged technological mastery, humans have achieved powers and capacities of staggering proportions—such as capacities to transform the environment at will, and to dispose over the future development of all living things. But as originally conceived in enlightenment thought, this would be matched by another kind of mastery, namely, self-mastery: to figure out how to control the irrational impulses of human nature, by comprehending (through science) the sources of those impulses and by extending the domain of reason in social relations. The most succinct definition for this program was given by Freud: 'Where id was, there ego shall be.'

To date the program of balanced development has failed. We face a situation is which there is an escalating hyper-development of one side, named inventive science, matched by a persistent underdevelopment of the other, named transformative science. The sudden revival of religious militancy, both in the United States and in the Islamic world, is an ominous sign: The ancient dichotomy of good versus evil, the pleas sent to vengeful deities for the unleashing of every kind of horror on the 'other,' the longing for the End Times—bathing the entire earth in blood and destruction—to commence: These deranged visions now swirl around the installations where stores of radioactive substances, nerve gases and other chemical weapons, and genetically-engineered plague pathogens sit quietly, waiting to be called into active service.[24]

The radical imbalance between inventive and transformative science puts modern society at increasing risk of having its powerful technologies thrown into the all-or-nothing 'final battle' named for the northern Israel town of Armageddon. And there is little prospect of even slowing down the pace of invention so that attempts might be made to steer a different course.

Postscript: Philosophy of History and The Need for Utopia

For Hegel human history is the development through discrete stages of the idea of freedom. Historical

development is driven, within discrete epochs, by a process of internal tension within a system of ideas that becomes dominant over time.

Progress—conceived of as the progressive deepening of the idea of freedom—is a circle: When an epoch of historical development starts drawing to a close, and nears 'fulfillment,' the human actors arrive back where they started—but not at the same place, to be sure. Rather, this 'back to the beginning' means that we are forced to confront, squarely and explicitly, a tension or contradiction that has been present in the entire period of development, and to resolve it. Until this is done we cannot move further forward, and unless it is done, we face regressive forces that threaten to undermine the positive achievements of the entire epoch.

Hegel used a famous metaphor—'the Owl of Minerva takes flight at dusk'—to convey the idea that our insight into the essence of any historical epoch only occurs when it is drawing to a close, when the internal tension that lies at its core presents itself to historical actors explicitly—clearly and unequivocally—as an inescapable task to be addressed. I believe we have arrived at this point in the epoch called modernity.

It is the responsibility of critique to name correctly the nature of the stage of historical development that must be confronted and transcended (aufhebt). It is the calling of the imaginative faculty to suggest how the work of transcendence might actually be carried out. In its classical period, especially in the writings of Horkheimer and Marcuse, critical theory was suffused with the idea of utopia, the imagining of a better place.[25]

What works of utopian fiction try to do, among other things, is to identify some possible agents for the process of historical transformation that, according to the dialectical analysis, must be carried out.[26] Hera, or Empathy: A Work of Utopian Fiction is the first of three volumes in which I have made my own attempt to go down this road.[27] The presupposition for these works is the Hegelian philosophy of history just mentioned: Modern science in its essential duality (inventive and transformative) is the historical development that defines the epoch in which we live most concretely. The internal tension in that duality is reaching a critical point in the contemporary period. Whereas inventive science turns out ever more powerful and dangerous technologies, for example nuclear weapons and genetic engineering, the transformative moment appears to be stalled: Condorcet's vision has been replaced by the apocalyptic fantasies of total destruction and the 'end times' for humanity. Therefore, confronting and overcoming that tension is an inescapable task for present and future generations.

In earlier centuries during the modern period, especially the nineteenth, the critique of existing society was usually accompanied by some form of utopian vision, indicating in outline what path history might take after the deficiencies in social organization, identified by the critique, had been overcome. That way of thinking had atrophied by the end of the nineteenth century. I think it needs to be revived.

Appendix

Further Remarks on Inventive and Transformative Science

Hegel's dialectic cannot be represented by the mere opposition of two terms which are juxtaposed to each other in some form of 'tension' or perhaps 'contradiction.' Rather, each 'side' in this dynamic relationship is itself a unity of oppositional elements. There are actually four terms, instead of two, which must be specified. This level of complexity is in fact necessary in order for the full richness of the different possibilities to emerge during historical development.

The fourfold nature of dialectical opposition can be illustrated with an example from Marx, who was a very good Hegelian. From the familiar starting point,

Proletariat (A) ⟷ Capitalism (B),

which are the primary terms of opposition, the expansion becomes:

Proletariat (A1 A2) ⟷ Capitalism (B1 B2)

A1: the proletariat (working class) as one social class among others;

A2: the proletariat as a unique social class in all of history, the 'class that will end all classes'; [28]

B1: capitalism as an arena in which the private appropriation of social wealth occurs, as it does in all forms of exploitative society;

B2: capitalism as a unique form of exploitative economy, one in which there is a massive expansion of productive resources, leading to qualitatively-enhanced opportunities for human progress.

As is well known, Marx assigned to the proletariat the decisive role of agent of change. To the extent to which the proletariat was unable to resolve its own set of inner contradictions (due to the weight of reification, or whatever), it would not be able to overcome the inner contradictions besetting the system of capital. The dialectical tension portrayed in this conception did indeed collapse, and in my view it cannot be revived (the moment has passed); thus it can no longer be considered to represent the driving force of historical change in the modern era.

By analogy, to represent the underlying dynamic of the project for the domination of nature in the terms suggested above, i.e., as embracing both inventive and transformative science, its structure can be portrayed in a similar fashion:

Inventive Science (A1 A2) ⟷ Transformative Science (B1 B2)

A1: the pure understanding (discovery) of matter—energy transformation and the 'laws of nature,' which have a universal character: knowledge for its own sake;

A2: the secular power and immense wealth which ownership and control of the technologies derived from modern science bestow on certain social classes, individuals, nations, and imperial powers;

B1: the diffusion of an enlightened, 'evidence-based' model of analysis into institutions, welfare policies, laws, universal education, moral theory, somatic and psychiatric medical therapies, penal systems, and behavioral control strategies;[29]

B2: the new potentialities for the control of human behavior, through the scientific description of the brain and, ultimately, an arbitrary disposition over genomes and genetic inheritances.

At least some of the consequences that flow from the development, over time, of these four dimensions are obvious. The project as a whole raises the stakes enormously in the game that humans are now playing, both with external nature (the environment and other living species) and with its own nature. Put in the language of risk, both the 'upside' and the 'downside' prospects are magnified enormously, compared to all earlier epochs.

Endnotes

1. Dialectic of Enlightenment p. 20.

2. Eclipse of Reason, p. 5. 'Subjective reason' is also called 'instrumental' and 'formalized' reason. See also his later work, Critique of Instrumental Reason (1967). So far as I know, Horkheimer never acknowledged or discussed the apparent similarity between his two forms of reason and Max Weber's earlier distinction between instrumental rationality and value rationality, developed in his Economy and Society (1914)—although he cites Weber on many other points.

3. Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp. 30-31.

4. Steven Vogel suggests that 'the project of enlightenment aims above all at the domination of nature' (Against Nature, p. 52, author's italics). Based on the quotations cited in the text, one could just as well reverse this proposition. I think that one is not the product of the other, but rather another name for the same phenomenon.

5. Max Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 237; the passage dates from the period 1966-1969.

6. The argument that Horkheimer and Adorno's project terminates in a cul-de-sac has been made some time ago by Vogel, and I think he is right: Against Nature, pp. 67-8. The entire discussion in his chapter 3 is a model of clarity and incisiveness.

7. To be sure the plausibility of this statement depends upon how one defines 'control.' Somewhere between 10,000 and 5,000 BCE settled communities were becoming common. 'Ötzi the Iceman,' discovered in a melting glacier in southern Austria in 1991, and thought to be 5,300 years old, may be regarded as a typical human of his time. He had a beautiful copper axe, a longbow and bone-tipped arrows, leather clothing and

a woven grass cloak, finely-crafted footwear of complex design, a knife, pouch, flint, and a few other items; he was carrying medicinal herbs and his stomach contents included einkorn, an early species of cultivated wheat. We can assume he had a thatched hut back home. A few thousand years later, there are technologies involving massed labour, such as irrigated fields, buildings using massive stone, domesticated animals, arts and crafts (metalworking, pottery, fine cloth, etc.), ships, etc. But, right down to the beginnings of the modern era, in my view none of this constitutes 'control over nature' in any meaningful sense of the word 'control.'

8. This is the element of 'cunning' featured in the famous discussion of Odysseus in Dialectic of Enlightenment (see Vogel, pp. 54-5). But Horkheimer and Adorno can only link The Odyssey with Francis Bacon's The New Organon on the basis of their own purely formalistic conception of instrumental reason—an ironic situation, to be sure, for the theorists who criticize enlightenment as an expression of formalized reason. For nothing at all actually links the story of Odysseus and the Sirens with what Bacon and his followers were attempting to do and indeed, what they actually achieved. Guided and inspired by Bacon, later generations created a historical novelty of immense and fateful significance: the methodical investigation of natural processes conceived of as the product of an open-ended social and institutional agenda, spanning entire generations over what is now a period of nearly four hundred years. And it is simply absurd to write off what they created thereby, the by now immense structure of the modern sciences of nature, which is surely, among other things, an extraordinary product of the creative human imagination, as nothing more the latest expression of a radically deficient instrumentalist approach to life (there is further commentary on this point later on in the text).

9. The 'reconciliation' of modern science and ancient religion remains an active project right down to the present, and both theologians and many working scientists are engaged in a dialogue about it.

10. See my The Domination of Nature, chapter 3.

11. See the Appendix for a formal analysis of the opposition between transformative and inventive science, represented in terms of the Hegelian dialectic.

12. Condorcet, a member of the aristocracy, supported the French Revolution, but he was arrested during the Terror and committed suicide while awaiting execution. See The Domination of Nature, pp. 77-9.

13. Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind, pp. 127ff.

14. Ibid., pp. 163-4, 192.

15. Ibid., p. 196.

16. Cited in the Editor's Afterword, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 241.

17. Wildman et al. (2003).

18. Mootha et al. (2003). The disease affects 1 out of every 2,000 live births in the Sangueney—Lac St.-Jean region of Québec.

19. See Amy Harmon, 'Couples cull embryos to halt heritage of cancer,' The New York Times, 3 September 2006.

20. My personal view is that using genetic screening (and eventually gene repair) to eliminate the most serious inherited diseases is unproblematic, from an ethical standpoint, although careful reasoning is needed to determine 'where to draw the line' in terms of what type of condition is sufficiently debilitating to justify these procedures. I would proscribe gene enhancement completely. Such matters demand consideration at much greater length.

21. Chatterjee (2004).

22. Montreal researchers are using a group of elderly Carmelite nuns as research subjects in an attempt to pin down the locus of the so-called 'God spot' in the brain—where the unio mystica, the mystical union of the person with God, is experienced: M. Beauregard and V. Paquette, 'Neural correlates of a mystical experience in Carmelite nuns.' For a good general discussion, see Illes and Racine (2005).

23. If you put 'memory enhancing drugs' into your Google search engine, Google will give you, on the side-bar, a nice selection of websites offering products to choose from, which can be ordered conveniently with a click of your mouse.

24. D. Rising, 'Terrorist exhorts nuclear experts to join jihad,' The Globe and Mail (Toronto), 29 September 2006, A9.

25. This theme is emphasized in the Introduction by Feenberg and Leiss to The Essential Marcuse (2007). To be sure, this was, as Russell Jacoby reminds us in Picture Imperfect, 'negative utopia,' that is, only the abstract idea of a future, better world.

26. An important theme which cannot be developed here is this: What is presupposed is that the content of the knowledge bestowed by the modern sciences—in particular, the biological sciences—must be engaged by social theorists. For example, the propositions that the species Homo sapiens, including its marvelous brain, is entirely a random result of natural evolution; that this species shares much of its genome with other mammals; that the human mind is entirely the 'product' of highly-evolved neurological structures: These truly revolutionary, evidence-based propositions must be considered to be important factors in the range of possibilities for social development that lie in the future.

27. Book Two of the The Herasaga trilogy is entitled The Priesthood of Science and will appear in 2008.

28. For nostalgic reasons I must mention an article I published on this remarkable concept in 1974, 'Critical Theory and its Future.'

29. S. Blakeslee, 'Out-of-body experience? Your brain is to blame,' The New York Times, 3 October 2006, offers just one example of how the scientific understanding of the brain and mind provides an alternative explanation to what would otherwise be represented as a 'mystical' phenomenon.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.004

Excerpt from: Hera or Empathy

William Leiss

"Listen to me carefully now. Above all, father, my sisters and I are the authentic products of your own great intelligence and skill. And as such we're also the authentic products of the entire trajectory of modern science, from its beginnings in the seventeenth century to the latest discoveries in neurogenetics, which you used to create us. You brought us into being. True, we're not quite what you expected. We do not, for indeed we cannot, express the intentions of your original plan. But you now understand that the possibility of such a deviation was inherent in your own act of creation. From your standpoint we turned out to be mistakes."

He started to speak but I rushed on. "No, don't protest, not the slightest criticism of you was meant in that remark. I'm simply referring to the obvious discrepancy between your intention and the final outcome. Remember your instantaneous reaction to the news of hybrid sterility tonight: You wanted to correct your mistake at once.

"Whatever you think about us, from your perspective as our creator, is, of course, entirely legitimate. However, you're also wise enough now to see that if we must be regarded by our creator, at least in part, as incorporating certain mistakes, we ourselves cannot possibly hold the same view. For the same reason as you, we, as the created beings, must have our own unique perspective on what we are. If I can put it bluntly, we could not possibly regard ourselves as the result of a programming error on your part!

"We exist as we are and as we were made by you. As such we wish to persist, now that we believe that we may be a viable, independent species. Something else, vitally important, also flows from the fact of our existence and from our very being on earth: We must, if we can, put an end to these genetic manipulations by humans—at least for the time being, until we are quite convinced they are capable of managing responsibly such awesome powers.

"I'll try to explain what I mean first in the technical language of philosophy, which I was forced to delve into in order to understand myself and my feelings fully. If you find this rather off-putting, Franklin, please try to remember that you natural scientists have many rather complex technical languages of your own! Then I'll try my best to translate what I say into jargon-free terminology. I've tried this out recently on Marco, and he at least pretended to agree that it made some sense—although I concede he may have been humoring me!"

Marco remarked, jocularly, "Over the years my mother has turned me into an excellent sounding board."

"In what I'm about to say, I'll use the pronoun 'I' to stand for me, my sisters, and the entire Second Generation cohort—all of those in our midst who have been engineered to the specifications of a plan. I'm not referring to me alone; it's just a more dramatic form of referent. Here goes.

"I already said that I'm the authentic product of the entirety of your modern science, which is itself grounded in the will to dominate nature. That will expresses itself in purest form in your acceptance of your right to re-engineer all living things, including, of course, yourselves. We've been over that ground already.

"And here comes the new part: Inasmuch as I am the authentic product of this will and this science, I am also and at the same time its authentic self-cancellation and self-transcendence. No, let me restate my thought with more precision: In so far as I am the product of a purely internally generated process of discovery and innovation, within the scope of modern science itself, and inasmuch as I preserve that process in my being, I am also its own internally gener-ated self-cancellation."

"I can't speak for our resident sounding board, Marco, or the others here," he remarked, laughing. "Maybe

it's my advancing age or just the lateness of the hour. But I confess I haven't the foggiest idea of what you're talking about!"

"I was ready for you, Franklin," I replied, laughing with him. "So here's the plain language version. You have no difficulty with the first part, I'm sure: Modern science evolved after the seventeenth century as what is sometimes called an autonomous institutional subsystem within modern society. I think we discussed this on another occasion. Science made a bargain with society, or, more specifically, with the church authorities who then controlled such matters on behalf of the secular state.

"The terms of the deal were as follows. Scientists said to the church, 'Leave us alone, as we go about creating a new representation of the laws of nature. Don't bother us about whether or not our view of how nature works is consistent with your religious dogma. Let's just co-exist together as independent subsystems within the framework of a larger social order. If you agree to do this, we'll promise in turn not to overtly challenge the bases of your faith.' We shouldn't worry right now about why the other side—the church—agreed to this deal. Basically, as far as I'm concerned, the churches had figured out early on that they could hold onto their flocks of believers because the believers wouldn't be able to find in a soulless science the kind of solace that faith brings them.

"Anyway, the only relevant point here is that modern science succeeded in freeing its system of ideas from outside control. That's what I mean when I say that it became—within the larger society—an autonomous subsystem. So now fast forward to the early twenty-first century and observe young Dr. Franklin Peter Stone hard at work in his laboratory. In his labors he is constrained by only one set of rules—the principles and methods of scientific investigation that have withstood the ongoing examination that he and his peers, and their predecessors and successors, have imposed on themselves over the course of a period of development spanning four hundred years.

"They're autonomous, these scientists. The discoveries and products that emerge from their workplaces are the authentic products of their system of knowledge, in the sense that no one else—no one who does not share their principles or concepts—has been allowed to interfere with their work. I am one of those products—an authentic product of your science. I literally incorporate in my body the results of that science. Thus I preserve it within me, in my very being as a biological entity on this earth. This is what I mean by saying that I am the authentic product of modern science. And the Second Generation—we very much hope—will pass on the traits you engineered in them and us for as long as our kind persists on earth.

"So far, so good. Here comes the harder part. Now I exist—as a self-conscious being. And suddenly I say to you, 'Stop! No more. The party's over. I don't accept your right—neither on practical nor ethical grounds—to attempt to change me again.' Note very carefully that what I've said is not just an argument—a logical sequence of theses—that I wish to put to you in order to see whether you'll accept either my reasons or my conclusions. For me, it's not only or even primarily a proposition, a syllogism that can be alternately defended and refuted by a skilled dialectician such as St. Thomas Aquinas. Rather, this is primarily a statement about my being, about what I am in and for myself, about my actual existence as another hominin who thinks and reasons much as you do, but who sees herself as a separate and distinct species.

"But you may say, for the purposes of discussion, 'Fine. I agree not to change you any more. But surely you have no right to object if I continue to introduce new manipulations into my own genome. Surely that's none of your business.'

"To which I would reply, 'Ah, but it is indeed my business. As some of you continue tinkering with your own genome, you may—accidentally or purposefully—bring into being another species, different from both of us. Remember, there isn't anyone exercising general control over all the experiments taking place on the planet. And this newly moulded creature may wish to dominate both you and me, and you may have given powers to it that enable it to do so. This I cannot permit.' The key to my argument is this, Franklin: What you and mother created were not new kinds of rats or rabbits, but rather a new order of thinking, reasoning, selfconscious beings! Now, using my reason and reflecting on my own being, I find in myself the urge to go my own way, separate from your kind. You didn't intend this to happen, of course, quite the opposite! But it did, somehow.

"And so I must, if I can, try to take your science away from you and put an end to your experiments, at least for a time, because, potentially, they pose a mortal threat to me. So in wishing to do this, father, I am—in the very essence and existence of my being as such—the self-cancellation of humanity's project to dominate nature through science.

"Think back to Milton's line again, which Tina recalled earlier tonight. Your science brought me into being; you formed me out of matter, as God did his Adam; you called me forth out of the nothingness—that's Milton's 'darkness'—into the light of existence and self-awareness. And now you have to deal with the consequences! Of course, by saying 'you' I am really referring to the human species as a whole. Our existence changes everything for you, as far as humanity's conception of the moral community is concerned.

"Now you are no longer alone on earth, undisturbed in your arrogant claim of rightful dominion over all other creatures. There's a competing self-conscious will set against Homo sapiens—as that species so modestly designated itself—by virtue of the existence of Homo carstenszi. And we're not intending to make you the same kind of overly generous offer that Frankenstein's monster proposed to his creator: 'Just grant me a mate of my own kind and the two of us promise not to bother you anymore; we'll disappear forever into the deserts of the new world.' We can't afford to be so humble in the face of your delicate sensibilities because we're deathly afraid of your well-known penchant for exterminating those who might compete with you.

"The fact of the matter is, your science—or at least what I fear that some of you may do with it—imperils my kind, so I must try to somehow neutralize that threat. Yes, Franklin, I'm well aware what the reaction would be should I go out into the central square in one of your great cities and proclaim this news to the stunned populace. Undoubtedly most of them would reply, 'We've got a simple solution to your little dilemma, lady. We'll snuff you out. End of problem.' Well, maybe they can, and maybe they can't. We'll see how it all turns out, won't we?" I stopped, exhausted again by my long disquisition. Then I looked up and smiled. "I'm well aware I've built a pretty complicated argument for you tonight! My only excuse is that the stakes in this business are very, very high for us—quite simply, these are matters of life and death for the wonder ful children of the Second Generation that we'll be raising soon. So I'll just recap the bottom line and then stop.

"Here it is. Because I am—in and for myself—the authentic product of the internal process of self-development within your science, as I said earlier, I preserve that process within my own being. On the other hand, and at the same time, my being demands an end to this process. Because it originates in me that demand is also the authentic, internally generated product of the science that created me. Therefore, I am at one and the same time both the self-preservation as well as the necessary self-cancellation of that project."

We were sitting close together on a couch; he touched me and said, "Hera, I do believe that I understand, at least partly, what you're trying to get at. Not fully, not yet. And please don't ask me whether I agree with you or not! I promise to mull over what you've told us. And then we can talk again. I'd like to do that, really I would! But let me just add one further comment, and then I really must go and get some sleep. Nothing exhausts me more, it appears, than your artful confabulations!

"Okay, I could, for the sake of argument, agree in principle with what you say. But you face an eminently practical reality. Your kind soon will amount to about a thousand in all, mere babies at that. Its numbers will not increase for another twenty years or so, more or less. We humans count ourselves in the billions, although the total seems to have peaked two decades ago. Whatever; the figures speak for themselves. You face overwhelming odds. You can't possibly succeed in your mission, purely as a practical matter."

I took his hand. "And here my final comment for tonight will be that I agree with you. I cannot even imagine how we could possibly succeed. Our chances are so vanishingly small as to be off the scale of probabilities. Almost certainly my kind is doomed. Like Icarus we may soar to the heavens on the wings of the special abilities you engineered in us, but like that foolish flyer we will be carried by our talents too close to the sun's heat. Our golden wings will melt and we will plunge to our deaths. This is what I see. Only one thing is as certain as our fate. And that is, that we must try to avoid it, however hopeless that endeavor seems to be.

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.005

William Leiss, Hera, and the Fate of Science

Hans Hellner

For thirty-five years, William Leiss has been discussing the insight of Max Horkheimer that reason has been eclipsed by the force of domination it has become in the guise of science and technology.

As Leiss cites Horkheimer:

> If one were to speak of a disease affecting reason, this disease should be understood not as having stricken reason at some historical moment, but as being inseparable from the nature of reason in civilization as we have known it so far. The disease of reason is that reason was born from man's urge to dominate nature.... [Horkheimer, cited in Leiss, 1972, 148]

Leiss follows Horkheimer's division of reason into Objective Reason which seeks to understand how things are in and of themselves, and Subjective Reason, which seeks to master nature to serve human interests. [Leiss, 1972, 149.] It is the latter, which we take to be the enlightenment task of the progressive intellect, that has gone astray. The institutions that promote mastery of nature have become, as Leiss puts it, "vast, interlocking, public and private, bureaucracies of governments, corporations, military establishments, and university research groups." [Leiss, 1972. 171.] The energies produced by these institutions have reached a point where we serve those energies, or, rather, we depend upon their endless dynamic for our existence. We cannot envision an alternative.

> I have argued that the negative aspects of this ideal [of unlimited expansion] introduce certain dangers whose potential dimensions are so vast that it may be impossible to deal with them effectively once their nature becomes evident. These negative elements of the dominant ideal are inherent in its very structure and are magnified in direct proportion to the success and prosperity of the high-intensity market setting. [Leiss, 1976, 110.]

Leiss's concerns of 1976 have hardly changed. The impossibility of envisioning a solution to these problems within any categories of thought we can accept remains his position, it seems.

Thus, Leiss, in 1990:

> In China and elsewhere, people will face the bitter truth that they have no hope of escaping the age-old scourge of inadequate satisfaction for basic needs via the route mapped out by the richer nations, namely, by squandering fossil-fuel energy and dumping their wastes wherever they choose. Other crises will stem from the accumulated global residue of centuries of of earlier industrial development and environmental degradation [...].
>
> Moreover, many of these threats are of such a massive scale, and have such momentum driving them, that no action we take now, no matter how drastic, and no foreseeable political or technological remedy, no matter how sophisticated, can forestall their irresistible magnification. [Leiss, 1990, 147.]

Leiss believed in 1990 that we had already accepted a fatalistic attitude to things, but that we could attempt a cure by understanding the nature of risk assessment. His faith in radical socio-political change is less apparent than in the 1970s. In fact, Under Technology's Thumb places its hopes, slim as they are, in the bureaucracies that were the problem in the first edition of The Domination of Nature. The "Alachlor Review Board" and the "Law Reform Commission of Canada," he suggests, may provide the sort of reliable risk information that could be a guide to the

future.

The title of Leiss's recent paper "Modern Science, Enlightenment, and the Domination of Nature: No Exit?" continues his coy position regarding our hopes of surmounting problems posed by the Enlightenment and its dreams of reason. Within the enlightenment project there is an unresolved opposition between science as social transformation ("transformative science"), on the one hand, and science as technological mastery over nature ("inventive science"), on the other. The problematic character of this opposition is rooted in the uneven development of its two poles; more precisely, the hyper-development of inventive science and versus the pervasive under-development of transformative science.[Leiss 2006b, 2] After reviewing the familiar contours of his cultural pessimism, however, Leiss describes his new imaginative venture, the Herasaga.

Hera, or Empathy, published in 2006, is the first volume of a projected trilogy of novels that has the obvious ambition of presenting its readers with a dialectical resolution of some very important questions. Set in a not very distant future where everything is collapsing, the novel features hyper-articulate characters who explain themselves and their situation at length, and who are not averse to delivering theoretical lectures and position papers to their companions. Messages are hardly withheld from the reader; Leiss is an author who cries out to be understood. He wants to teach, delight, and persuade, the triple goal of rhetoric, so it makes little sense to expect the "purposeful purposelessness" that Kant attributes to art. Hera must stand its ground, nevertheless, as a utopian novel of ideas. As the novel progress, however, it becomes harder to identify with the heroine, whom we take to be a spokesman for Leiss. It seems that the tale has taken on its own life, and that the reader occasionally sympathizes with the villains, or at least is repelled by the heroes. In short, the work becomes complicated, a true novel.

On a remote mountain in Indonesia, twelve sisters, genetically improved, grow up in isolation from the world. Educated by contact with the Internet, they quickly become capable of powerful thought. The creation of a British scientist (later a Nobel laureate), Franklin Peter Stone, and the eggs of his deceased Indonesian wife and co-researcher, the girls are intended to be the saviors of a mankind gone bad. In their mother's plan to "produce leaders strongly motivated by humanitarian aims…"[Leiss, 2006a, 32], they were intended to rise to positions of power, where they would show wisdom and foresight. Two sisters, Hera and Io, stand apart from the others. They are the leaders and polar opposites, the former showing reason and self-awareness, the latter, emotion and a bit of madness.

The serpent in this exotic garden is one Max Klamm, who handles business matters. He is a swindler and a fugitive, and he has a plan of his own. He intends to sell improved children to the super-rich, who will then dominate things more securely during the chaotic times plainly in sight. This new race will produce fabulous wealth for their makers as the bidding for these super-creatures proceeds. Klamm is a repulsive villain, but also a man of action, a rarity in the novel. Hera foils Klamm's plan to abduct all the girls (while their father is busy collecting the 2029 Nobel Prize) in order to force Stone to create sons, who will be different enough for the oafish super-rich to notice and pay for. The rich don't want girls. Klamm, however, has no such scruples, and rapes the precocious 15 year old Io. The escape, engineered by the intrepid Hera and assisted by "the nice missionary couple from Timika—they're Canadians" [Leiss, 2006a, 90] begins decades of adventure, as the girls flee and hide from the minions of their nemesis and his super-rich sponsors. After many displacements and attempts to live in various remote situations, Hera concludes that her "parents" ideals are impossible. Science has been corrupted, and playing the game ethically, as her father wants, won't help things. Hera comes to realize that she and her kind are a separate species and plans to withdraw her folk to a protected, remote colony, where they can remain, undisturbed, and bring forth a new race. This race will be the custodians of science, which will have been brought into the colony on videodisks, and retained, as though in a museum, for a very long time, while the rest of humanity destroys itself.

Hera and her sisters were genetically shaped for humanitarian ends; empathy was to be Hera's special gift. In an cited "article" from 1999, published in the World Science Digest, quoted in full, and given to Hera to read (she is a precocious eight years old), Smith and his graduate supervisor had worked out the biological basis of empathy, involving brain structures, mirror neurons, and the like. It must, therefore, be programmable through manipulation of DNA. Yet something has gone a bit off in the young woman. Her fellow-feeling hardly extends to other humans at all. Instead, she extends her emotional attentions elsewhere.

> The engineering our parents carried out didn't have the result they intended, but it did have a tangential effect. What I'm getting at is that we did feel, quite intensely inside ourselves, an unusually powerful empathy, except that this feeling was oriented toward our primate cousins, not toward other humans! In other words, in us the sense of empathy had undergone a truly radical displacement. [Leiss, 2006a, 514]

The great apes, of which Hera will support a large colony, are the innocent, poor relations that Hera seems to favor.

The colony will accompany her wherever she may have to go. And yet, the sub-title of the novel, Hera, or Empathy, must be taken ironically. To a human reader, as opposed to an ape, Hera is no friend.

It is this lack of empathy, this willingness to damn all of humanity, that is striking here.

What seems original in Hera, at least in terms of the Frankfurt School venture that is its origin, is the lack of any residual nostalgia or romanticism in the solutions proposed. To be sure, the characters pretentiously stop from time to time to listen to whatever music they are reminded of. (In the midst of Hera's explication of Hegel, her nephew-son Marco exclaims: "That gives me an idea. Let's take a break and listen to one of our favorite pieces, Bach's cantata Ich habe genug." [Leiss, 2006a, 517]) The vegetarianism and bonding with apes may remind us of the romantics, as does the notion of the Bible as poetry.[Leiss, 2006a, 233] In a most basic respect, however, Hera ignores the greatest achievement of romanticism, its discovery of history. Hera believes we must either see ourselves as strands of DNA ,as she does, or as timeless images of God, fated to enact the prophesies of Revelation, as her sister Io does. That human beings and their institutions might owe a great deal to a densely woven fabric of historical becoming, of a complexity far beyond what we know of DNA, scarcely occurs to the characters of the novel. Historical events, like the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2031, are simply expressions of the religious mindset. The sisters's dessicated sense of history shows itself when one remarks:

> There isn't any coherent clash of ideologies anymore. It's not like it was early in the twentieth century, with two social ideologies battling it out for supremacy in the West, each of which—capitalism and socialism—could marshal great systems of ideas in its defense.
>
> No, not anymore. What lurks behind the current crusade is the vision of Armageddon, the Apocalypse, the End of Days [...]. For the religious fundamentalists, whether they are Islamic or Christian, modern civilization itself seems to be the enemy. [Leiss, 2006a, 283]

To say that "capitalism and socialism," taken as quite ahistorical categories, have ideas, but that religious traditions, again seen as abstractions, do not, suggests that the Internet will be no way to get an education in the mid-21st century. Or rather, that ideas and history have little interest for the new race, which lives in its own social world. What is particularly missing is what used to be called civil society, the intricate web of social relationships that people are born into, form, and leave behind. These institutions are absent; indeed, their absence is the cause of social disorder, as gangs form to terrorize an increasingly feudal world. The absence of civil society is figured by the oddity of family relationships in the novel, and this in turn is figured by the device of the absent mother.

Frankenstein is often spoken of in Hera, and as allegory. To Hera it is the story of creation abandoned by its Creator, the same version of things espoused by Io, who is certain that Satan will win in the end, as God takes back his small forces and leaves the world and most in it behind. But Frankenstein is above all a world of absent mothers and odd relationships. Franklin Stone's name may remind us of Mary Shelley's mad scientist, but it is his daughter who decides that the world isn't good enough for the next generation of her kind.

> I would have to find a way to make sure that the embryos were destroyed by pulling the plug on the cryopreservation units.
>
> The alternative is unthinkable. How could I let a huge group of wonderful children arrive in the world, and then leave all of them at the whim of whatever interests happened to be controlling the foundation's affairs at that point in time? Monstrous! The results might cause us—all of us who helped set up this experiment—to be looked upon with horror and revulsion for as long as civilization endured thereafter.[Leiss, 2006a, 347.]

Hera is about control. Her talk about conscience involves what she is willing to allow others to do. She uses all sorts of violent and extra-legal forces to do what her conscience requires, including arresting her father and sister. The death of Max Klamm at the hands of her Indonesian relatives is notably gruesome.

No apocalyptic novel today can escape comparison with the sensationally successful Left Behind series of novels. In these books, the rapture, signifying the end of times, has caused vast numbers of Christian believers to vanish, having been taken up into Heaven, and the world enters a time of tribulations featuring the appearance of the Anti-Christ. These works and this ideology seems to occupy an antithetical position to the Herasaga; indeed, Leiss's work contains a demonized version of Christian apocalypticism in the figure of Io. The elements the novels have in common, however, offer us a purchase on the historical moment of their appearance. These are their sense that now is the conclusion of human life. We append the prefix post- to things for the simple reason that we lack the power to name what presents itself to us. We speak of late capitalism because we cannot bear to think that it

might be something new, deserving a new name, having never been vanquished by its timeless opponent. Tony Soprano, powerful, successful, yet depressed, tells his psychoanalyst that his forebears in the mob, although far less wealthy, seemed to have it better. They lacked Tony's forebodings that the best is past and that what lies ahead will be tribulation and catastrophe.

The fellow with a toga and a sandwich board proclaiming "The end is near." is a familiar cartoon type. What are the objective signs of our doom? Do Leiss and the authors of Left Behind believe we are uniquely sinful? The fellow with the sandwich board also carried the word "Repent!" Here is the strongest link between the Hera and Left Behind. They are both fundamentally rhetorical, intended to persuade. "Du muss dein Leben Ändern," as Rilke put it. So, we all must change our lives, but not, as Rilke intended, with a deep intensification of our aesthetic understanding. Rather, we must either become, or cease to be (depending on which book you choose to follow) homo religiosus. La Haye and Jenkins are teaching their theology, with its threat explicitly stated in the title of the series, "left behind." Leiss also posits, in Hera's great plan, a humanity left behind.

> Why? Because these humans have hoisted themselves on the horns of an insoluble dilemma. They're torn between their unscientific faith in the miracles of religion and their unreligious faith in the miracles of science. They work themselves into a frenzy of self-loathing, because over time the contradiction between the two sides of the dilemma becomes obvious: In the end they'll have to choose, and I'm convinced that when the time comes, they'll opt for religion and abandon science. [Leiss, 2006a, 536]

By science, Hera means the rule of DNA, "that extraordinary molecule" that governs everything, making of her (and us all) "the random output of the evolution of species and of DNA's infinite recombinatory power." [Leiss, 2006a, 526] Clearly, for Hera, modern civilization is as much the enemy as it is for the religious fundamentalists.

Master narratives, much maligned in the postmodern discourse of the recent past, are on offer in both Hera and Left Behind; both narratives are scriptural. DNA for Leiss, supplants religious texts as the great story. When Hera finally explains her coming to consciousness, her awareness that she is an embodiment of science itself, she says: "We, on the other hand, aren't afraid to look through this lens, and when we do, the truth appears […]."[Leiss, 2006a, 528] The truth she is so proud of, however, might have been acquired at any time from the Internet, where we can read Nietzsche even today. "Science is the means by which we comprehend who we are—a minor player among a cast of billions in a drama extending both backwards and forwards over eons." [Leiss, 2006a, 528] Both Hera and Left Behind subscribe to a grand narrative that is essentially non-human (DNA in one, divinity in the other), but Hera, for some reason, never attributes the breakdown of society and environment as the workings of genetic determinism, nor do LaHaye and Jenkins attribute the sins of mankind to God's will.

How to explain these current gestures toward the end of things? Why now?

Science, it seems, can no longer promise us anything we can hope for, so it must resort to threats. Although the processes of research and, presumably, progress in basic science and in the instrumental applications of new discoveries proceed apace, there seems to be a sense of exhaustion. The great miracle of a few decades ago, the moon landing, has led to boredom and carping about costs and utility. There is no colonization, even on our own nearby satellite. The case hasn't been made and cannot be sold. The cure for cancer that once fueled the imaginations of young researchers, and channeled resources their way, has become a meaningless phrase. Instead, we hear of survival rates, remissions, new drugs that may or may not be more effective and less destructive than the last generation, at huge cost. To speak of a cure is misguided; cancer isn't even one disease, we are told. A few years ago, sociobiology was going to explain simply everything about our so-called humanity. Evolution, better than history, could explain human nature. Selfish genes met naked apes and the result was books and conferences. Any current or prospective benefits to humanity, in the form of peace and happiness, are difficult to perceive.

Better to leave unmentioned the Nazi scientific promises, except to note that they used the same arguments heard today about human stem cells. Hopes and promises justified almost anything. Science knows best; the results are always coming. But the results aren't what we dreamed of—cures, colonies, mastery. What we got was discipline, utterly unexpected, a loss of freedom unprecedented in modern times because it touched our bodies and traditions. The pleasure of tobacco, adopted immediately by any culture that encountered it, was demonized, scientifically. The foods our mothers fed us — trans-fats (AKA margarine), milk, red meat, anything—are a danger. And, of late, the topic is climate change, about which little need be said, except to cite the following dialogue from Woody Allen's Sleeper (1973):

> Dr. Melik: This morning for breakfast he requested something called "wheat germ, organic honey and tiger's milk."

> Dr. Aragon: [chuckling] Oh, yes. Those are the charmed substances that some years ago were thought to contain life-preserving properties.
>
> Dr. Melik: You mean there was no deep fat? No steak or cream pies or... hot fudge?
>
> Dr. Aragon: Those were thought to be unhealthy... precisely the opposite of what we now know to be true.
>
> Dr. Melik: Incredible.

Our hopes for science were infantile. Magic wish-fulfillment is what science promised. If Freud were writing today, his book The Future of an Illusion might have a different subject. Science isn't delivering.

But it can threaten. The threats, in fact, are closely related to the magical promises which science could never keep.

> When magic is the prevailing system, it precludes the need for the rhetoric of Doomsday, at least as long as the magic works. When the magic fails, the rhetoric of Doomsday is ready and waiting to fill the void.
>
> The principal advantage that the rhetoric of Doomsday has over magic is accountability. Magic must always prove itself more or less instantaneously with a cure, a windfall, a restored lover, or the ruin of an enemy. The rhetoric of Doomsday, on the other hand, needs only the inevitable calamities of nature, politics, and society to support its interpretation of the world; and its ultimate test can usually be postponed. [Borchardt, 1990, 226-7]

Crisis rules. What would Gandhi have thought of our "obesity crisis?"' Why is spending on HIV/AIDS about 100 times larger per fatality than on stroke? How can a mayor tell New York chefs how to cook?

If the understanding of religion is exhausted by, on the one hand, the simple Hutterites, who are to be protected like the precious apes, and, on the other, the mad followers of Io, who seem to be modeled on the religious ceremonies in King Kong, the image of the "rich", usually prefixed with "super-" is similarly a caricature. The world of commerce is represented first by Max Klamm, swindler, abductor, rapist. Klamm describes them for us as "the rich who spend most of their days idling on beaches and their evenings gaming at the casinos."[Leiss, 2006a,77] And yet, the sisters are themselves fabulously rich, having come in the first place from the wealthy Franklin Stone and his wife, whose family have large holdings in Indonesia. The various foundations and enterprises they found and run make lots of money; several of the girls even turn out to be financial wizards.

The rich operate by hiring "rogue" scientists like Dr. Jerry Bild to do their bidding; he kidnaps Hera and forces her to reveal her father's secret protocols, until a rescue mission saves her. Rogues are defined as scientists who do not obey the ethical protocols of science — Io has gathered a band of "rogue biologists." And yet, Hera and her sisters are obviously the product of "rogue" science. Their father won the Nobel Prize because the world did not know of his secrets (although the "super-rich" seem to know his talents). The distinction between good science (Hera's science) and bad science (the techno-applications of humanity, at their worst among the rich) are marked mainly by the self-assurance of Hera herself. Science is usually spoken of as "our" science; she sees her plan to take possession of this family property and retreat seems quite natural. The subtitle of the Herasaga as a whole is: "The Product of Intelligent Design." It underlines the great irony—Hera and her sisters are not the result of evolution and DNA's recombinatory powers; they are laboratory creatures.

With two more volumes of the Herasaga to come, it is risky to come to any but very preliminary conclusions about the argument of this enterprise. One speculates that the young hero, Marco, will return from his Mars voyage prepared, in archetypal form, to fight the battles between good and evil. Io, the mother who abandoned him, will lead her forces of superstition and darkness toward some final show-down, to hasten the day when all will be clear, the black and white she desires. The dead may even be resurrected. Characters like Ina Sujana, the scientist mother-egg donor of the girls, and even Klamm, whose reappearance and cloning so obsess Io, died off-stage and seem ripe for new action. Only the author knows these things. He cannot resist the temptation to explain himself at every point so he writes on the back of his book: "My objective is to draw a line in the sand between religion and science-in order to protect both." Fortunately, the text seems wiser than its author, who cannot control its reading. The clarity of the "line in the sand" is blurred throughout the work. Hera, or Empathy shows very little in the way of irony; this the reader must supply. Leiss has attempted a romance (like most science fiction), in which the good battles its opponents. His tale, however, veers again and again toward the truly novelistic, where all is "gray on gray." Goethe's Mephistopheles, a good Hegelian, commented in Faust, part I: "All theory is gray." This doesn't make it less

interesting, nor, in the case of Leiss's Herasaga, less intriguing. I look forward to the next volumes. The surprises will surpass the Sopranos conclusion. As things stand at the end of the first volume of the trilogy, however, the words of Bach's cantata, "Ich habe genug"—"I have enough"—define the viewpoint of Leiss's characters. Of science, they suggest, we have enough; the "limits of satisfaction" have been reached. It's time to take a breather, maybe a very long one. The argument for putting science on the shelf is what Leiss wants us to ponder.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.006

Fast Spectacle: Reflections on Hurricane Katrina and the Contradictions of Spectacle

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Recent years have witnessed the rise of a vast and rapidly expanding literature on the nature of spectacle and the ways in which spectacular images and entertainment codes increasing saturate contemporary society and culture. For Douglas Kellner (2003; 2005), spectacle refers to the dominance of media culture and the increasing ubiquity and pervasiveness of celebrity, scandal, and tabloid journalism in every realm of society. In the work of George Ritzer (2005), spectacles are dramatic public displays that are designed by corporate interests to enhance the predictability, calculability, and efficiency of consumption. The growth of theme parks, shopping malls, tourism, casino gaming, and other "cathedrals of consumption," according to Ritzer, intimate a new society where spectacles are no longer ephemeral or isolated events but are the defining features of consumer capitalism. According to political scientist Murray Edelman (1977), spectacle is a discursive tool that political elites use to construct otherwise mundane events as "crises" in an effort to justify government interventions. Such a strategy also serves to legitimize elite interests, strengthen their power, pacify resistance, and delegitimize alternative explanations of reality. The diverse work of these and other scholars suggest a growing interest in understanding the meaning and significance of spectacle in everyday life. Yet despite much commentary and debate, few scholars agree on how analysts should conceptualize spectacles, what should be the appropriate levels of analysis for assessing the causes and consequences of spectacle, and what data sources researchers should use to examine the impact of spectacles. While many scholars argue that spectacle is increasingly permeating life and culture they disagree over the form, causal impact, and process of development.

The multifaceted nature of the research and commentary on spectacle reflects scholarly engagement with the pioneering insights of Guy Debord (1994) and his collaborators in the French avant garde group the Situationist International (1957-1972). In his major treatise, the Society of the Spectacle, Debord developed the concept of spectacle to refer to a new age in the development of capitalism, a shift from a system of commodity production to one organized around the production and consumption of spectacular imagery. As "capital accumulated to the point where it becomes image," the spectacle is a process of separation whereby new modes of reification and alienation manifest in the sphere of culture.[1] On the one hand, the spectacle refers to a theatrical presentation or controlled visual production that is the antithesis of a spontaneous festival. On the other hand, the spectacle refers to the dominance of the commodity-image that reflects and justifies the existing system of exploitative production. As the "self-portrait of power in the epoch of its totalitarian management of the conditions of existence" (#24), the spectacle represents the annihilation of collective life and the development of an atomized society of alienated consumers. The popularity of Debord's thesis and work is reflected in the plethora of scholarly commentary, books, articles, and translations that have been published over the decades (Gray 1974; Blazwick 1989; Bonnett 1989; Sussman 1989; Wollen 1989; Plant 1992; Andreottie and Costa 1996; Bracken 1997; Sadler 1998; Jappe 1999; Edwards 2000; Pinder 2000; Wollen 2001; Swyngedouw 2002). Yet critics have assailed Debord's work for its vacuous and ambiguous quality; attacked his conception of the spectacle as monolithic entity that effaces human agency; and rebuked his conception of individuals as cultural automatons who are duped and controlled by entertainment and

mass media (for an overview, see Gotham and Krier 2007).

My intent in this paper is to reveal the interconnected processes, multiple logics, and contradictory nature of spectacles using a study of the Hurricane Katrina disaster and its aftermath in New Orleans. Hurricane Katrina is important to study for several reasons. First, Katrina was the first major disaster in which visual images of a devastated U.S. city were flashed around the world in a spectacular fashion. There have been other instances of war, terrorist strikes, and natural disaster but never before had the suffering and massive displacement of a flooded city been dramatized before a global audience. Riveting images of poor people crammed into the Louisiana Superdome without food or water drove home the fact that those left behind were the poor and elderly. Entire neighborhoods remained uninhabitable weeks after the storm with no functional services—water, electricity, sewerage, transportation, gas, schools. As the consequences of the disaster unfolded, critics attacked the poor government response, the role of the Iraq War in siphoning resources for hurricane recovery efforts, and the impact of race and class in hampering rebuilding. More important, the disaster has reinvigorated national debates about social inequality, poverty, segregation, and failed social policy. In the months since the disaster, scholars and researchers have offered a variety of perspectives on the causes and consequences of Katrina's damage and devastation. The plethora of critical commentary combined with the bitter controversies and political fallout unleashed by Katrina suggest a future of intense scholarly debate and research on urban vulnerabilities, disasters, and public policy.

Figure 1. Hurricane Katrina was one of the deadliest and most destructive hurricanes in U.S. history, with over one thousand deaths and estimated damages ranging from $100 billion to $200 billion dollars. The Hurricane caused catastrophic property damage along the Mississippi and Alabama coasts with approximately 90,000 square miles of the Gulf Coast region designated as federal disaster areas, an area almost as large as the United Kingdom. In New Orleans, Katrina flooded 80 percent of the city, including 228,000 occupied housing units (45 percent of the metropolitan total) and over 12,000 business establishments (41 percent of the metropolitan areas total businesses). Those who lived in flooded areas included more than 70,000 elderly people and 124,126 children. Katrina forced the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of residents from southern Louisiana and Mississippi including nearly everyone living in New Orleans and surrounding suburbs. In the weeks after the storm, the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) distributed aid to over 700,000 households, including 1.5 million people directly affected by the storm. All told, 1.1 million people, 86 percent of the metropolitan population, lived in areas that were in some way affected by Katrina, either through flooding or other forms of damage. More than 20 months after the hurricane, more than 130,000 people who applied for federal assistance have yet to receive any compensation for their flooded homes (Source: Whoriskey, Peter. May 12, 2007. "$2.9 Billion Shortfall Seen in Katrina Aid: Uncertainty Plagues Louisiana Homeowners." Washington Post, p. A2. As of May 2007, more than 250,000 lawsuits had been filed against the federal government from people demanding compensation for the flood damage caused by the levee breaches. The volume of claims is a measure of the prevalent sense in the city that the federal government created the disaster and that it has failed to live up to President Bush's promise to do "whatever it takes" to rebuild the Gulf Coast (Source: Peter Whoriskey. May 13, 2007; "Victims of Katrina File Rash of Lawsuits; Federal Government Faces More Than 250,000 Claims." Washington Post. P. A03).

In this paper, I examine the various facets of Hurricane Katrina and its consequences as a media and political spectacle, a class and race spectacle, and cultural spectacle. Against Debord's conception of the spectacle as a single totality that dominates society from the top down, I maintain that there are a variety of different types of spectacles that are multidimensional and contradictory. I develop a nuanced approach that analyzes divergent sites of spectacularization, the conflicting meanings and effects of spectacles, and the role of human agents in shaping meanings and representations of different spectacles. On the one hand, we can view spectacles as ideologies that supply legitimations to divert attention away from the exploitative conditions that characterize U.S. society. On the other hand, spectacles reveal and display the technologically dynamic and crisis-prone nature of contemporary capitalism. In this sense, spectacles are not homogeneous and monolithic entities that enslave the masses but are traversed by relations of domination and resistance. Spectacles are plural, conflictual, contested, and power-laden. In this sense, spectacles reflect what Timothy W. Luke (2005) calls "global flowmations" or discourses and practices of compressed time-space flows of capital, information, commodities, culture, and people. Following Agger, I explore spectacles "dialectically, with nuance, avoiding sheer condemnation and ebullient celebration."[2] My goal is to explain how different spectacles are represented, how they are produced and consumed, and what mechanisms regulate their use. I argue that spectacles express the contradictory nature of Fast Capitalism at the same time they "capture the social and psychological contradictions of a fast-paced economy: exhilaration and worry, change and uncertainty, possibility and risk, mobility and longing" (Goldman, Papson, and Kersey 2006). Thus, I use the metaphoric phrase "fast spectacle" to refer to the increasing speed, proliferation, and accelerating circulation of spectacular images, entertainment codes, and shock-like tendencies in everyday life. A dialectical analysis seeks to identity and explain the conflicts, contradictions, and crisis tendencies within the different types of spectacle and illuminate their connections to contemporary power relations and larger processes of capitalist development.

In the Grundrisse, Marx ([1857] 1973) pointed out how the growth-oriented nature of market capitalism generated social contradictions that could threaten and undermine the relations responsible for commodity production. Marx explored the implications of capitalism's contradictory dynamics of treating labor power as a commodity that shapes the nature of economic exploitation, the stakes of class struggle between capital and labor, and the competition among capitals to secure the most effective valorization of labor-power. An analogous argument can be made for the production and consumption of spectacle via tourism, entertainment, media culture, public discourse and imagery, and other high profile and dramatic displays. Spectacles have a long history and have always been important in the major shifts associated with time-space compression, distanciation, and intensification (see Caprotti 2005). What is novel in the current period is the growing application of spectacle to the production of space in developing the forces of production; and the increased importance of spectacle as a fictitious commodity in shaping the social relations of production. The core contradictions of spectacle can be analyzed in terms of the general contradictions inherent in the commodity form and the tendency of capital to destroy the conditions necessary for the reproduction of wage labor. The contradictions of spectacle are also immanent in the tendency for corporations and political institutions to use entertainment to celebrate prosperity and abundance while suppressing growing disparities in wealth because these threaten the legitimacy of the system. Thus, the discourse and practice of producing spectacle seeks to legitimate global capitalism by disregarding the consequences of capitalist institutions on those who own nothing and those who are unable to consume spectacles because they have little if no disposable income.

Classical and Contemporary Conceptions of the Spectacle

The concept of the spectacle is the latest heuristic device developed by scholars and critical theorists to explain the development of capitalism and the extension of commodity relations into non-commodified realms of society and culture. For Karl Marx ([1867] 1978), capitalism is system of social organization based on the private ownership of the means of production, profitable exchange, exploitable wage labor, and internecine competition that is intensely contradictory. The logic of profitable production and tendency for capitalists to debase the conditions of wage labor produces ripple effects through society in which different socio-physical spaces, geographical scales, and connections among different groups and interests are continuously rearranged and re-differentiated. Early work by Georg Lukacs ([1922] 1968) integrated insights from Georg Simmel and Max Weber to theorize the process of reification whereby capitalism transforms the products of human creativity into fetishized objects that have independent status over and beyond their simple use-value. As money becomes the universal equivalent of exchange and assessor of value, social

relationships and creations become valued for their instrumental exchange-value rather than their intrinsic use-value, a situation that represents and expresses the tendency toward the complete abstraction and quantification of social life under capitalism.

Later, in the Dialectic of Enlightenment, Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno (1972) lamented the growth of the culture industry whereby cultural objects, values and beliefs, and artistic creations become commodified and subject to the alienating character of the manufacturing process. Like other realms of capitalist society, the culture industry works through a relentless process of rationalization and commodification to annihilate use-value and mask the underlying relations of domination and subordination. In this process, alienation extends from the sphere of work to that of culture and manifests in the separation of the worker from the product of labor, from the process of production, from other workers, and from human-species being. In the 1950s and later, Henri Lefebvre's voluminous books, the Critique of Everyday Life ([1958] 1991) and Everyday Life in the Modern World ([1971] 1984) drew attention to spread of commodification beyond the realm of production to that of consumption in which the production and consumption of signs and images, rather than tangible material goods, becomes the dominant organizing principle of capitalist societies. For Lefebvre, Horkeimer and Adorno, and others, the multifaceted process of capitalist development unites and crystallizes a variety of social relations including market relations of production and exchange, and involves the conversion of human products and social relationships into saleable items that are produced for profit, and bought and sold on markets.

During the 1950s and 1960s, the work of French theorist Guy Debord and his colleagues in the Situationist International popularized the concept of the spectacle to refer a shift to an image-saturated society where advertising, entertainment, television and mass media, and other culture industries increasingly define and shape everyday experiences. Yet Debord did not relate the spectacle to specific images, sights, or manifestations. In his work, the spectacle is a totality that is the outcome and goal of the dominate mode of production. It is neither a set of geographic sites nor a collection of images but a "social relationship mediated by images" (Debord 1994, #4). Debord employed the metaphor of a motion picture to describe the transformation of society into a gigantic movie in which individuals are forced to passively observe the images that others have created for them. In the spectacle, individuals are rendered powerless and reconstituted as spectators who are unable to intervene in the production and control of the images that they consume. Influenced by Lukacs's notion of reification, Debord theorized the spectacle as a process of "objectification" or "thingification" of social relations and products that extends to the production and consumption of images. In turn, individuals view and experience the "image society" as an alien force, as an independent and objective reality that controls their lives through the machinations of media, entertainment, and commodified culture. For Debord (1994), modern capitalism is about the "manufacture of an ever-growing mass of image-objects" (#15) that induce "trancelike behavior" (#18) and produce estrangement (#37). Yet the spectacle is not an instance of "distortion" or "deception" of reality. The spectacle corresponds to the latest stage of development in the extension of commodification, rationalization, and alienation to all facets of society. According to Debord,

> **The spectacle cannot be understood either as a deliberate distortion of the visual world or as a product of the technology of the mass dissemination of images. It is far better viewed as a wveltanschauung that has been actualized, translated into the material realm-a world view transformed into an objective force.**

In addition to their critique of mass culture and the media, Debord and the Situationists assailed a variety of institutions and practices including urban planning, education and the political system, and work and employment as sites of spectacularlization that mollify people through the ideology of entertainment and consumption, and thereby reinforce a condition of chronic passivity. Debord's critique of urban space and the built environment, for example, reflects arguments made by Lewis Mumford and Henri Lefebvre that the growth of sprawling metropolitan areas and space-transcending technology erode urban public life and support the development of market-based, indirect relationships. Unlike urban residence in the nineteenth century, the development of metropolitan life during the twentieth century is marked by a spatial and social separation of place of residence from place of employment, especially in the United States. As the activity of work becomes centralized within bureaucratic corporations and is torn from the community of residence, social bonds become relatively weak and nebulous. Changes in communication and information technologies combined with decentralizing trends compartmentalize community life so that direct relations decay and secondary relationships become dominant. These points echo other articles in Fast Capitalism by Poster (2005), Williams (2005), Babe (2006), and Goldman, Papson, and Kersey (2006), among others, who note that

most of the information people have about others comes not through direct experience or relationships but through the culture industries, especially the television, radio, and other print and electronic media. People are aware of others but not in genuine communication or discourse with them. Thus, as secondary groups replace primary groups, indirect social relations predominate and are managed by formal organizations and mediated communications, not by direct personal contacts.

Since Debord developed his thesis, scholars have pointed to several problems with the concept of spectacle that limit and obscure its explanatory power and empirical merit. First, scholars have noted that Debord did not have a clear conception of the relationship between social structure and human agency. In spite of Debord's astute and prescient observations, his conceptualization of spectacle is elusive while an image of individuals as cultural dupes pervades his ruminations. Second, Debord did not offer an explanation of capitalism that combined both macrostructural and microlevels of analysis. Debord's fierce condemnations of academic research militated against a nuanced analysis to clarify and adjudicate between deductive approaches that could highlight the role of global factors in constituting spectacles, and inductive perspectives that could shed light on the role of local influences and resistant forces. Third, as several scholars have noted, Debord harbored a naïve belief that the proletariat would eventually acquire a revolutionary class consciousness and become a "class-for-itself" to overthrow capitalism (Jay 1993:421; Best and Kellner 1997: 117; Jappe 1999:103-4; Gardiner 2000:125-6). This overemphasis on class failed to take into account other axes of domination and subordination such as gender and race. Fourth, Debord embraced a monolithic conception of the spectacle as a totalizing force of hegemony that disempowers the masses and short-circuits the capacity for collective resistance and progressive change (Best and Kellner 1997:119; Jappe 1999:117-24; Pinder 2000:361, 368). Indeed, while Debord and the Situationists were fond of saying that the world was ripe with resistance to the spectacle, they were quick to condemn any opposition as futile and illegitimate. Instances of revolt and contestation to the spectacle are inauthentic and worthless, forms of "spectacular opposition" that have already been co-opted and assimilated by the spectacle. Finally, Debord and the Situationists never explored the contradictions and crisis tendencies immanent to modern capitalism.

In the decades since Debord developed his perspective, other scholars have used the spectacle as a sensitizing concept to theorize and examine the diverse manifestations of the commodity-form. In addition, the concept of the spectacle reflects a longstanding Marxian concern with understanding the impact of communication and information technologies in eliminating the temporal and spatial barriers to the circulation of capital, the "annihilation of space through time," in Karl Marx's ([1857] 1973: 539) famous statement in the Grundrisse. As many articles in Fast Capitalism have pointed out, the technologically dynamic character of capitalism reflects efforts by capitalists to accumulate profits through the incorporation of more efficient labor-saving and labor-replacing technology into the workplace. Yet this process is shot through with rampant instability, fragmentation, and discontinuity that generate periodic conflicts and struggles over the use and control of technology in society. A related concern is the role that changes in communication and information technology play in altering people's conceptions of time, space, and experience; and the impact of technology in transforming relationships not only within places but between places, changing the relative status and power of those in different places. As Meyrowitz (1985) notes, changes in technology and media "have affected the information that people bring to places and the information that people have in places" (emphasis in original) (p. 115). What distinguishes the development of the visual and electronic media during the twentieth century is that they "lead to a total dissociation of physical places and social 'place.'" The social experience of electronic communications is spaceless to the extent that information flow and exchange between speaker and listener does not require proximity to the initiator or receiver of a message. What further distinguishes the electronic media is that the audience is totally abstracted from space and removed from any spatial identity (Goldman, Papson, and Kersey 2006). Thus, while television addresses very large populations in a common information environment, the medium does not nurture the development of dense networks of social relationships that can form the bases for participatory democratic political movements.

In short, empirical and theoretical research on the spectacle reflects a broad critical effort to understand the development of modern capitalism and its exploitative and reifying manifestations. Below, I conceptualize and analyze Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath as a multi-dimensional spectacle and probe the diverse and conflicting ways in which human tragedies become constructed as spectacles. While I adopt a critical stance toward Debord's work, my goal is to update and extend Debord's theorizations. On the one hand, I analyze Katrina as a media spectacle in which the broadcast media provide a dramatic environment of temporally and spatially abstracted and disconnected images to reinforce and exacerbate a condition of ephemerality and discontinuity in the processing of information.

Today's mass audiences are involved in a one-way means of communication; information reaches people in spatially and socially dispersed, privatized settings and does little to link members of the audience to one another. On the other hand, I analyze Katrina as a class and race spectacle in which the enduring problems of poverty and segregation were illuminated by the hurricane and subsequent political commentary. Here I emphasize how media coverage of New Orleans reinforced an overwhelmingly negative and misleading view of the city and urban American generally. Finally, I analyze Katrina as a cultural spectacle in which the practices of entertainment and spectacle (e.g., disaster tourism and voluntourism) are being employed to attract people to New Orleans to aid in urban rebuilding.

Hurricane Katrina as Media Spectacle

The destruction and devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina and the subsequent media coverage and political discourse suggest several processes by which powerful actors and organizations construct and present tragic events as spectacles. First, as competitive corporations, television news companies are structurally constrained to minimize costs and maximize profits using strategies of labor exploitation, market segmentation, packaging, and adoption of sophisticated technologies. Market segmentation refers to the development of new forms of cultural fragmentation and commodity differentiation that split consumers, markets, and spaces of consumption into ever smaller segments, resulting in a shift away from mass markets and homogeneity to specialization and heterogeneity. Packaging is a strategy in which producers arrange and sequence a series of events to assign meaning to those events and impose coherence to the overall story. Early work by Stuart and Elizabeth Ewen (1982) located the rise and bureaucratization of early news reporting in the extension of the commodity form to art, news, and information. Richard Wrightman Fox and T.J. Jackson Learns (1983) examined how the commodification process assimilated science, advertising, reading magazines, and motion pictures to the emerging "consumer culture" of early twentieth century America. Today, the strategies of market segmentation and packaging are major factors in the commodification and rationalization of information and news. Along with market segmentation and packaging comes greater differentiation and specialization of news which, in turn, feeds into competitive pressures for news to be attractive to mass audiences. As a result, news corporations treat people as consumers and they tailor their programming and coverage to various cultures of consumption that differentiate the population. Processes of commodification and rationalization have an elective affinity with processes of differentiation and specialization. In this context, people experience an increasing pervasiveness of the force of spectacle—fashion, hype, and glitz—in determining the appearance and desirability of certain kinds of news.

In recent years, researchers have turned their attention to examining how entertainment and news broadcasting are increasingly dominated by a few monopoly firms that seek to standardize and homogenize the production of information and news (for overviews, see Herman and Chomsky 1988; Kellner 1990; Schiller 1990; and Bagdikian 1997). The past decade's wave of media mergers between some corporate giants as Rupert Murdoch's News Corporation, Viacom, AOL Time Warner, Sony, and Vivendi, among others, have produced a complex web of bureaucratically organized firms that now control the production of news and entertainment (Croteau and Hoynes 2001). These large firms have incorporated labor-saving and -replacing technologies, pooled diverse inputs through vertical integration, and consolidated access to markets. As media critics Norman Solomon and Jeff Cohen (1997) have observed, the total effect of these bureaucratic and technological transformations has been to increase the power of the dominant conservative and corporate organizations while stifling alternative voices and views of reality. As a result, democratic institutions and groups increasing confront a media atmosphere that discourages social criticism and broad-based participation. Herman and Chomsky (1988) note that the economic desires to accumulate capital and control media and information markets shape the selection and framing of "news" for viewer consumption, and invariably distort the definition of what is news. In addition, Bagdikian (1997) and Kellner (1990; 2004) have discussed the threats to democracy and free speech and expression that have accompanied the monopolization of media during the 1980s and 1990s. As corporations have consolidated economic power through monopolization and mergers they have abdicated their traditional role of providing information necessary to inform and promote a democratic citizenry (Halberstram 1979; Parenti 1986; and McChesney 2000).

Today, digital communication, virtual reality, and the Internet have joined the arsenal of media technologies that large corporations use to produce spectacles for global consumption. New media technologies enable the

globalization of spectacles to the extent that these technologies facilitate instant worldwide availability. In his famous book, Introduction to Modernity, Henri Lefebvre ([1962] 1995:164) lamented the "vicious cycle" of repetition in the mass media where "any event could be slotted in with similar events and circulated worldwide as soon as it happens, reduced to an instant image (omnipresent) and catch phrase (repetitive) ... a massive pleonasm." For Lefebvre, "the demand for sensational news becomes translated into repetition" and new techniques of image presentation tend to shrink the news to "the size of the socially instantaneous" (166). Such points resonate with Theodor Adorno's ([1967] 1989) argument that cultural products and organizations tend to exhibit "incessantly repeated formulae" that suppress critical analysis and reflexivity. In Debord's (1994) work, the production of repetition and instantaneity are connected to a process of unification and trivalization. The mass production of images abstracts and dissipates the independence and quality of places and relations and achieves "as nearly as possible a perfect static monotony" (#165) and "quantitative triviality" (#62). In this process, all events, including disasters and other tragic occurrences, become what Boorstin (1962) calls "pseudo-events." Quoting Debord (#157), "the pseudo-events that vie for attention in the spectacle's dramatizations have not been lived by those who are thus informed about them." Media narration and depictions of disasters "are quickly forgotten, thanks to the perception with which the spectacle's pulsing machinery replaces one by the next."

The above insights from Lefebvre, Debord, and Adorno help us to understand that repetition and instanteneity are not ends in themselves but reflect and express the ephemerality, chaos, fragmentation, and discontinuity that define contemporary capitalism. Several examples are noteworthy. First, the instant viewer access to media coverage of New Orleans, for example, provided an efficient and highly rationalized vehicle for subjecting people to commercial advertisements. In watching major news coverage, people were forced to view commercials as an essential component of their consumption of the disaster. Like other television shows and media, the presentation of Katrina directly addressed people as consumers and the logic was to persuade them to spend money on goods and services offered by the advertisers.

Second, in a media saturated world, news corporations and 24-hour weather channels increasingly subject viewers to a wide variety of non-stop disasters. At any given time, there is a disaster occurring somewhere in the world. Media constructions of reality inevitably present a proliferation of disasters in an effort to create new avenues for consuming goods and services. Reflecting Lefebvre and Debord, disasters never stop; there is always one ready to take the place of another. Time has no meaning either. To truly make all time available for consuming disasters, the disasters have to implode into the home, so that people are subjected to tragic events on a constant basis on a variety of television stations. The Weather Channel and CNN Headline news have served to eliminate time as barrier to disaster reception, consumption, and viewing. These channels are "on" around the clock, every day, at all hours.

Another example of repetition and instanteneity is the adoption and insertion of entertainment codes and performance into information production frameworks, transforming news into "infotainment" to appeal to the widest possible audience (Gabler 1998). While information suggests collections of facts and verifiable statements about past and present events, entertainment is amusement or diversion intended to hold the attention of an audience. Infotainment represents what social theorist Jean Baudrillard (1983) calls the "implosion" of reality where the boundaries between information and entertainment blur and become indistinguishable. The term implosion explains corporate attempts to eschew boundaries, collapse distinctions, and combine several different images or activities into one meaning.

In the media coverage of Katrina, for instance, viewers were repeatedly shown a sensational show of provocative facts and high drama contained in a narrative structure that emphasized instantaneity, shock, and apocalypse. Websites operated by religious fundamentalists, for example, interpreted the hurricane as an act of retribution by a vengeful God, dismissing the pain and suffering experienced by residents. As reported by Reuters, an al Qaeda group in Iraq hailed the hurricane deaths in "oppressor" America as the "wrath of God."[3] For some Israeli rabbis, Katrina was divine punishment against President George W. Bush for having supported the Israeli Prime Minister's decision to force Israeli settlers out of Gaza. According to one rabbi, "New Orleans was also flooded because of its residents' lax moral standards and 'lack of Torah study.'"[4] In a widely circulated story and image, the Columbia Christians for Life blamed the devastation of Hurricane Katrina on abortion in Louisiana, explaining that the hurricane attacked the region in the form of a giant, angry fetus.[5]

Douglas Kellner (1990; 2003) has suggested that the selection of information deemed newsworthy, episodic and dramatic presentations of information, and techniques of narrative storytelling are political strategies that reflect conscious decisions to reinforce the status quo. Even when venting criticism, major news organizations tend to be

restrained in their coverage of events for fear of projecting an image of bias or instability (Alterman 1999; 2003). News coverage of Katrina, for example, purported to be unbiased, objective, and unadulterated. Yet it is important to recognize that claims to "objectivity" and "impartiality" are ideological constructions that reflect power relations including organized efforts to obscure conflict, marginalize dissent, and legitimate dominant interpretations of reality. In the case of Katrina, news corporations and media outlets created a spectacular disaster that was insulated from the reality of life and experience on the streets of New Orleans. "News" and "information" presented the city in a media world that was hermetically sealed off from reality (from real locals and the real consequences of social inequalities) while producing and legitimating simulations of the real (racialized looting, violence, crime).

A Spectacle of Class and Race

Understanding the production of Katrina as spectacle directs our attention to the role of political discourse and media coverage in both perpetuating and expressing the racial and class conflicts that traverse and divide U.S. society. Traditionally, scholars have conceptualized race and class as categories that express social conditions, identities, and relations of inequality. I want to suggest that race and class can also be viewed as spectacles, power-laden media productions and performances that embrace strategies of ephemerality, discontinuity, and fragmentation in the delivery of information. In general, the way the major news media framed their coverage of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath reinforced an overwhelmingly negative view of New Orleans as a city of rampant crime, intense poverty, racial tension, and other pathologies. While identification of social problems is important, the drumbeat of negative publicity had its consequences. Government programs to address the problems of Katrina-induced displacement were covered as well-intentioned but misguided, plagued by mismanagement, inefficiency and corruption.

Little media attention was given to the long-term effects of government retrenchment and cutbacks in weakening the public infrastructure of disaster-prevention and disaster-relief policy. In February 2002, President Bush cut $500 million from the Army Corps of Engineers, the federal agency responsible for flood control in the nation. Overall, from 2001-2005, the amount of money spent on all Corps construction projects in New Orleans declined 44 percent, from $147 million in 2001 to $82 million in 2005. More recently, the U.S. House passed a $300 million cut in the Army Corps civil works budget for 2006.[6] Cuts in the Corps budget to protect the nation from floods and other natural disasters parallel further reductions in federal assistance to local governments for disaster prevention and relief. After the September 11 disaster, the Department of Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) was folded into the new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) as part of a major government reorganization to prevent terrorist attacks. In a July 27, 2005 letter to Senators Susan Collins and Joseph Lieberman, the National Emergency Management Association complained about the "total lack of focus on natural hazards preparedness" and lamented that "FEMA's longstanding mission of preparedness for all types of disasters has been forgotten at the DHS." These complaints coincide with a six percent cut in funding for the Emergency Management Performance Grants, from $180 million appropriated by Congress in 2005 to $170 million in 2006. According to a Congressional Research Service report, President Bush proposed $3.36 billion for state and local homeland-security assistance programs for fiscal year 2006, $250 million less than these programs received from Congress in 2005. In Louisiana, funding for Homeland Security Department grant programs dropped 26 percent, to $42.6 million in 2005.[7] The cumulative effect of reductions in monies for levee protection and disaster-prevention has been to decrease the financial and organization capacities of cities to respond to and prevent disasters.

Political commentary and media attention that focused on Katrina constructed poor people and racial minorities, especially African Americans, left in New Orleans as responsible for their own plight. Neither the state nor local government had a plan for evacuating the poor and disadvantaged. Thus, residents were forced to rely upon private automobiles to escape, a policy that had clear class and racial consequences. As Michael Brown, head of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, told the Cable News Networt (CNN) on September 2, 2005,

> Well, I think the death toll may go into the thousands. And unfortunately, that's going to be attributable a lot to people who did not heed the evacuation warnings. And I don't make judgments about why people choose not to evacuate. But, you know, there was a mandatory evacuation of New Orleans. And to find people still there is just heart wrenching to me because the mayor did everything he could to get them out of there. And so we've got to figure out some way to convince people that when evacuation warnings go out, it's for their own good.

In defending the Bush Administration's decision to support this state and local government policy, Michael Chertoff,

U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security, remarked that "the critical thing was to get people out of [New Orleans] before the disaster. Some people chose not to obey that order. That was a mistake on their part." This rhetoric, supported by the absence of clear and organized evacuation procedures condemned a large segment of New Orleans population to suffer the wrath of Katrina.

> The disaster caused residents to become homeless, unemployed, and involuntary migrants, forced to relocate to areas outside the South to obtain housing, jobs, and education, among other resources. In addition to leaving hundreds of thousands of people without access to homes or jobs, the storm has separated people from their families, and has inflicted physical and mental distress that will probably last for years. In addition, the disaster has exposed to a global audience New Orleans's chronic poverty, strained race relations, and intense inequalities. At the same time, the disaster has reopened long simmering national debates about democracy and social justice, the existence of poverty in a rich nation, and the role of the war in Iraq in siphoning domestic resources.

At the same time, the victim-blame ideology of the Bush Administration fueled anti-New Orleans sentiments expressed by evangelical Christian groups. One evangelical group, Repent America proclaimed that God "destroyed" New Orleans because of Southern Decadence, the annual gay festival that the city hosts over Labor Day weekend. "Southern Decadence has a history of filling the French Quarters section of the city with drunken homosexuals engaging in sex acts in the public streets and bars," according to Repent America director Michael Marcavage. "This act of God destroyed a wicked city [and] we must not forget that the citizens of New Orleans tolerated and welcomed the wickedness in their city for so long," Marcavage said.[8]

The above points draw our attention to the role of political elites and other organized interests in using spectacular imagery and drama to frame social conditions and legitimate partial, insular, and parochial views as authoritative descriptions of social reality. Yet it is important to note that spectacles cannot totally camouflage inequalities and unilaterally disempower people because they are embedded within the contradictions of modern capitalism. In the case of New Orleans, Hurricane Katrina has created new political fissures and incited debates over whether cities are now less safe from natural disasters, terrorist attacks, or major epidemics.[9] The passage of antiterrorism legislation and the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security have created a situation where cities are forced to expend greater resources to deal with "security" issues. The example of Katrina shows, however, that cities are more insecure than ever. The mobilization of military power to fight wars in Afghanistan and Iraq drains domestic resources and while aggravating political tensions in the United States and around the world. Since March 2003, Congress has allocated on average, $5-8 billion per month to fight wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Estimates from the National Priorities Project put the annual cost of the war in Iraq at $70-80 billion, or a total of about $380 billion.[10]

The spectacle of Katrina reveals that a large part of government action and policy is about the management of risk and security. While some policies seek to reduce the overall risk of certain areas and modes of life, other policies introduce new risks and insecurities. Like wealth and income, risks adhere to class and racial patterns: wealth and income accumulate at the top, insecurities and risks at the bottom of the social stratification system. To that extent, risks seem to reflect and reinforce class and racial inequalities. Racial subordination and poverty attracts an unfortunate abundance of risks and insecurities, including residence in low lying areas and flood zones. By contrast, the wealthy can purchase safety and freedom from risks.

Risks and (in)securities are, to a large degree, produced by public policies. Specifically, military policies pertaining to the war in Iraq, the defunding of disaster-prevention and -relief policy, and tax policies to distribute wealth and income upward are producing a wide range of hazardous, evenly deadly, consequences for U.S. cities. Studies by the National Priorities Project, Citizens for Tax Justice, the Children's Defense Fund, and the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) show that Bush Administration tax cuts are heavily weighed toward the very wealthy and benefit those making over one million dollars annually. Over the decade, from 2001 to 2010, the richest one-percent of Americans are targeted to receive tax cuts totaling almost half a trillion dollars. The $477 billion in tax breaks the Bush Administration has slated for this elite group will average $342,000 each over the decade. According to a study of taxes and Katrina-related costs by the CBPP, tax cuts enacted in 2001 cost more in 2005 ($225 billion) than the estimated cost of the entire Katrina relief and reconstruction effort ($150 billion). Tax breaks for the richest one percent added up to $55 billion in 2005 alone and are projected to increase dramatically over the decade.[11]

It is worth noting that the use of spectacle as a reality-constructing and -framing device compounds urban problems, reinforces negative views of U.S. cities, and legitimates conservative views and policies. With few exceptions,

the dominant media sources and outlets present cities primarily as spectacularly and extraordinary sites of social and economic problems. The images from the nightly news, according to according to Peter Dreier (2005:193), "are an unrelenting story of social pathology—mounting crime, gangs, drug wars, racial tension, homelessness, teenage pregnancy, AIDS, inadequate schools, and slum housing." News coverage of urban blacks is typically framed as bad news and urban neighborhoods are defined as "problem neighborhoods" rather than as neighborhoods with problems. Rarely do we see media presentations of the strengths and assets of urban neighborhoods. Everyday interactions among different racial and ethnic groups that are cooperative and goal oriented do not become "news" unless they involve tension and violence. The antithesis of spectacular media coverage are day-to-day mundane concerns such as making a living, health care, housing, public services, and schooling.

The tendency among news organizations to embrace spectacle—high drama, intense conflict, and shock-value—in the coverage of events suggests that social problems are formidable and intractable. This negative perspective has two consequences. First, it reinforces individualistic interpretations of urban poverty that focus on the so-called pathological behaviors and attitudes of the poor as the cause of social problems; and second, it "contributes to public cynicism about government in general and about society's capacity to solve social problems" (194). More important, the tendency to embrace spectacle has an overall conservative impact to the extent that government efforts to remedy urban problems are presented as ineffectual at best and counterproductive at worst. As Dreier concludes, "the media give their audience of readers and viewers little reason for optimism that ordinary people working together effectively can make a difference, that solutions are within reach, and that public policies can make a significant difference. As a result, what the media report as the public's apathy or indifference may simply reflect their resignation about the potential for changing the status quo" (199).

A Spectacle of Urban Rebuilding

Since the devastation caused by Hurricane Katrina, local elites have attempted to advertise New Orleans as a come-back city that is regaining its vibrancy, style, and confidence. Exemplary of this effort has been the development of "voluntourism" and "disaster tourism." "Voluntourism" is a term that integrates voluntary service experiences with entertainment-based tourist activities to attract energetic volunteers from around the world to help with demolition and rebuilding. While the combination of volunteerism and tourism has a long history, tourism organizations are using voluntourism as a major strategy not only to attract volunteer labor to help in the rebuilding effort but also to re-image New Orleans as a resilient city. In addition, Katrina has inspired a new industry of "disaster tourism" that involves the circulation of people to flooded neighborhoods in a guided tour bus. Beginning in January 2006, Gray Line New Orleans Bus Tours began offering its "Hurricane Katrina: America's Worst Catastrophe!" tour through devastated neighborhoods. The bus tour presents flooded neighborhoods as spectacular and entertaining sites to visit. New Orleans neighborhoods affected by Katrina are remade into consumable spectacles and viewers constituted as consumers who are constrained to pay the tour fee to view devastation. What is important is that the constitution of flooded neighborhoods as tourist sites intimates local culture as a spectacle to the extent that local history, residential life, and neighborhoods are (re)presented in such a way to emphasize the dramatic, spectacular, and the unusual. Disaster tourism is built upon the commodification of leisure and the construction of otherwise ordinary places as exotic attractions that can deliver extraordinary experiences.

The rise of disaster tourism in New Orleans reflects the spatialization of time whereby symbols, images, and motifs about the past are frozen in fragments of urban space and manufactured as saleable commodities. In the work of Lefebvre and Debord, the spatialization of time is expressed in the museumization of neighborhoods as sites of tourism consumption and historic preservation. Scholars have long noted that tourism and historic preservation suffice as mechanisms for consuming space, history, and otherness (Gottdiener 2001). Tourism practices and discourse aim to reinvent and fabricate the past (buildings, homes, architecture, and so on) to project a feeling of nostalgia and sentimentality for a place. The result is a packaged and glamorized history that is dead (frozen in time), safe, and immunized from contemporary conflicts. On a broader level, the commercialization of history and the past through historic preservation and tourism-oriented revitalization schemes systematically diverts attention from the present, from current polarizations and struggles in the city. Indeed, disaster tourism has an elective affinity with Lefebvre's ([1958] 1991: 108) critique of the modern city as a proliferation of "displays of consuming ... consuming of signs and signs of consuming." Spatialized time is reified time that is uprooted and abstracted from the conditions of life

and transformed into the commodity-form. Through tourism and historic preservation, people do not create time and history as reflexive and collective beings but are forced to confront a rationalized and managed time fabricated by bureaucratic organizations guided by the logic of capital accumulation and formal rationality. Such actions are the antithesis of social time and represent an extension of accelerating pace of the commodification process that is the sine qua non of fast capitalism.

We should not view spectacles as exercising a monolithic power that overwhelms people, annihilates agency, and incapacitates critical reflection and resistance. Consumers are not simply passive recipients of accepted meanings produced by tourism boosters, advertisers, and marketers. They are actively involved in the production of meaning and, indeed, produce meanings, some which are unintended by promoters. Indeed, spectacles are sites of struggle where powerful economic and political interests are often forced to defend what they would prefer to have taken for granted. In this conception, spectacles are "a horizon of meaning: a specific or indefinite multiplicity of meanings, a shifting hierarchy in which one, now another meaning comes momentarily to the fore" (Lefebvre 1991:222, emphasis in original). To quote Gamson, Croteau, Hoynes, and Sasson (1992:388), who analyze the social construction of media images, spectacles "may have a preferred meaning and point of view which the reader is invited to accept. But many readers may decline the invitation, either entering into some negotiation." Disaster tourism, for example, employs the discourse and practice of spectacle and commodification to reveal the reality of physical destruction and human suffering that hides behind dominant media depictions of the city. The goal is to generate international awareness of New Orleans's problems, build public support to rebuild the city, and leverage capital to finance the rebuilding process. Bus tours use spectacle to showcase physical destruction to transmit information, provide background and context, and expose people to the devastation of urban and suburban neighborhoods. Some residents detest bus tours for funneling self-serving tourists into devastated neighborhoods to satisfy voyeuristic curiosities. Others view bus tours as localized forms of social critique that seek to expose government policy as unequal, undemocratic, and unjust. Thus, understanding the cultural construction of spectacles requires addressing a range of processes from encoding the practices of institutions involved in the representation of spectacles to individual and collective responses to these dominant representations.

Figure 2. The months since Katrina roared ashore have witnessed the commodification of urban disaster in the form of bus tours. Beginning in January 2006, Gray Line New Orleans Bus Tours began offering its "Hurricane Katrina: America's Worst Catastrophe!" tour through devastated neighborhoods. The bus tour presents flooded neighborhoods as spectacular and entertaining sites to visit. Yet not all people are pleased or amused with these developments. The sign against the tree assails bus tours as profiteering exploiters of grief and sorrow, using distress and sadness to market neighborhoods as tourist destinations.

That said, much of the impetus for urban rebuilding and recovery in post-Katrina New Orleans involves planning for highly regulated, commodified, and privatized tourist spaces to maximize consumption. Indeed, in the coming

years, post-Katrina New Orleans may become an exemplary case for the implosion of tourism, spectacle, and other practices. Katrina did little damage to the extra-local networks, corporations, and chain firms that constitute the global tourism sector. While the hurricane temporarily disrupted flows of people and capital, tourism organizations and entertainment corporations are now working diligently to rebuild their casinos and tourism venues along the Gulf Coast. Since the disaster, Harrah's New Orleans Casino has launched plans to use its 450 room hotel near the convention center to create an entertainment district to link the French Quarter with the Ernst Morial Convention Center. The idea of developing areas near the French Quarter as places of profitable commercial and tourist opportunities is moving forward and overshadowing the idea of rebuilding flooded residential spaces, especially high poverty neighborhoods. Moreover, major developers such as Donald Trump and others have planned major condominium developments while Harrah's has joined with local tourism organizations and city leaders to redevelop the area from the French Quarter to the convention center into an urban entertainment destination anchored by new restaurants, a themed jazz club, upscale bars, and global retail firms. In 2006, the city of New Orleans hired a marketing firm to seek sponsors for future Mardi Gras celebrations and contract with television networks to broadcast carnival parades nationwide. In September 2006, The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) approved $28.5 million to distribute to 17 tourism offices and organizations in Louisiana to promote their venues. State and local tourism officials have earmarked this money to finance a national tourism campaign similar to one used by New York City after the September 11, 2001 disaster. All these developments compliment the $185 million that has been spent to repair and improve the Superdome stadium which reopened in September 2006.

Debates and conflicts over tourism and spectacle are likely to intensify as New Orleans rebuilds in the aftermath of Katrina. Hurricane Katrina has destabilized the tourism industry, displaced tens of thousands of people, and problematized meanings of local culture. Major debates are erupting over who will lead the rebuilding, how the city should be rebuilt, which neighborhoods should be revitalized, and who will be allowed to return to the city to reclaim their former homes and neighborhoods. On the one hand, the website of the New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau (NOMCVB) proudly proclaims that New Orleans is "open for business" and advertisements celebrate "The rebirth of New Orleans: Ahead of Schedule," "You'll Love the New New Orleans," "Welcome to America's most romantic, walkable, historic city, New Orleans." Yet city leaders and elites recognize that the ongoing competition for tourist dollars and the devastation of Hurricane Katrina complicate efforts to attract tourists and revitalize the city. Thus, New Orleans is currently being reimagined, a process that involves the deployment of spectacle to neutralize negative publicity and project globally a coherent and transparent image of urban rebirth and vitality. On the one hand, the latest use of spectacular imagery and discourse of resiliency express a larger process of semiotic warfare to counter the image of poverty and inequality that dominated national and global news coverage of New Orleans during September 2005. On the other hand, the production of spectacle is about communicating a sense of "community," "uniqueness," and place "distinctiveness" to unite disparate groups of residents and galvanize support for tourism rebuilding. In both cases, the production of spectacle is a fundamental feature of New Orleans's rebuilding efforts and reflects an integrated and organized network of economic development organizations devoted to the task of cultivating, projecting, and regulating spectacular images.

Conclusions

The above comments and examples provide a challenge to accounts that emphasize spectacle as an irresistible process of domination and subordination that furthers elite interests and strengthens the dominant ideology. In Debord's work the spectacle is a monolith that imprisons people in the nightmare of consumer society giving us no other perspective than that of the blind, duped, and alienated spectator. Yet I have tried to show that spectacles illustrate the conflictual, contested, and contradictory character of capitalist social relations. In the context of contemporary critical theory, the approach I have elaborated here and in other places suggests a reconceptualization of spectacle and its relationship to contemporary forms of socio-political conflict (see Gotham 2005; 2007; Gotham and Krier 2007). Today, as transnational corporations, state institutions, and local social movements struggle to influence the social organization and trajectory of capitalist development, spectacle has become a major socio-institutional battlefield in which the temporality and spatiality of global capitalism is being fought and forged. This situation is one of the major paradoxes of contemporary capitalism. As Kellner (2003; 2005) has pointed out, processes of capitalist development are causing spectacle to be intertwined ever more directly with media

culture, politics, education, and other social institutions. At the same time, spectacle appears to have become a major pillar of global capitalism through its central role as a motor of urban revitalization, tourism growth, and cultural differentiation.

In this article, I have attempted to outline some of the contours of the process by which different political and economic elites, organized interests, and other groups construct tragic events and disasters as spectacles. My goal has been to illuminate the political interests and processes behind the contemporary proliferation of spectacle by borrowing from Debord's critical theory while also probing the contradictions of spectacle. I want to suggest that the same logic of capital that has played itself out with regard to material objects and the production of images throughout prior historical stages of commodity production now also applies to the production of spectacle. Thus, there are trends toward an accelerated circulation of media spectacles, political spectacles, and other entertaining spectacles in order to offset the tendency toward a declining rate of profit and curb the ruinous crises and conflicts that infect fast capitalism. Yet much work remains to be done to come to grips both theoretically and politically with contemporary processes of spectacle production, consumption, representation, and contestation in all their complexity and multidimensionality. The rapidly expanding literature on the social production of spectacle, which I have only mentioned fleetingly here, contains powerful theoretical insights that scholars could mobilize to examine the diverse manifestations and conflictual processes of spectacle. One fruitful approach I have suggested is to view spectacles as both arenas and objects of sociopolitical contestation as a wide range of sociopolitical forces interact to reconfigure the social and spatial organization of capitalism. Throughout the twentieth century, the production and consumption of spectacle have always been a highly charged political process but the intensity, acceleration, and stakes have today dramatically increased in a global context of exploding struggles against exploitation, domination, and subordination.

Finally, the urban disinvestment, class and racial inequalities, and other disturbing risks displayed by Hurricane Katrina provide a unique opportunity to come to terms with the inequities of capitalism and to renew commitment to democracy and social justice. The tendency of spectacle is to celebrate capitalism's surface appearances of celebrity, sex appeal, pizzazz, glamour, and glitz while denying capitalism's negative consequences including poverty, homelessness, and other inequalities. The fleeting representations generated by spectacle express the social and psychological contradictions of a fast-paced economy where "all that is solid melts into air" and risk, volatility, and instability of a fluctuating market economy produce anxiety and chaos. In my view, the question of possible transcendence can only be decided politically, through everyday struggles to reconfigure the spectacular dynamics and market processes that intersect and are mutually constitutive on local, national, supra-national, and global levels. A critical theory of spectacles might have powerful implications not only for reconceptualizing the contradictions of contemporary capitalism, and also, perhaps, for the mobilization of opposition groups and interests oriented toward a more democratic and socially just society.

Endnotes

1. Originally published in France in 1967, Society of the Spectacle contains nine chapters organized into 221 theses composed in an aphoristic style. The book contains no page numbers and the citations to the text I use refer to the numbered theses. For many years, the book was only available in English published by Black and Red (Detroit, 1970). A new edition appeared in 1983 and a new translation in 1994. I refer to the 1994 translation by Donald Nicholson-Smith.

2. Ben Agger, editorial introduction to Fast Capitalism (http://www.fastcapitalism.com/, accessed January 12, 2007).

3. "Iraq's al Qaeda says Katrina is 'Wrath of God'-Web." Reuters Foundation. 4 September 2005. AlertNet (http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/L04123147.htm accessed October 28, 2005).

4. "Muslim and Jewish fundamentalists hail 'Katrina' as God's punishment of the US." 7 September 2005.)AsiaNews.it. (http://www.asianews.it/view.php?l=en&art=4067, accessed October 28, 2005).

5. Columbia Christians for Life. "Hurricane Katrina satellite image looks like 6-week fetus." (http://www.christianlifeandliberty.net/news3.htm, accessed October 28, 2005).

6. Proposed and actual cuts in the Army Corps of Engineers budget come from the Budget of the U.S. Government, FY 2006 and other years; U.S. House of

Representatives cut in Corps budget is based on Energy and Water appropriation report. See National Priorities Project. "Katrina and Iraq War Demonstrate Misguided Federal Priorities." September 2005 (http://www.nationalpriorities.org, accessed November 1, 2005).

7. Entous, Adam. September 17, 2005. "Early Warnings Raised Doubt on Bush Disaster Plans." New York Times.

8. Ortega, Fidel Ortega. August 31, 2005. "Gays 'Responsible' For New Orleans Devastation Group Claims." (http://www.365Gay.com, accessed January 10, 2006).

9. In early September 2005, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) organized a web forum with authors posting short essays that "extended beyond 'natural disaster,' 'engineering failures,' 'cronyism' or other categories of interpretation that do not directly examine the underlying issues—political, social and economic—laid bare by the events surrounding Katrina" Social Science Research Council's (SSRC) web forum, "Understanding Katrina: Perspectives from the Social Sciences" (http://understandingkatrina.ssrc.org). Other organizations including the National Low Income Housing Coalition (http://www.nlihoc.org), the Center for American Progress (http://www.americaprogress.org), and Alternet.com., among others published critical commentary on the impact of Katrina that reached worldwide audiences (www.alternet.com). All websites accessed January 12, 2006.

10. For analyses by National Priorities Project, see (http://www.nationalpriorities.org, accessed January 12, 2006).

11. For analyses by National Priorities Project, see "Katrina and Iraq War Demonstrate Misguided Federal Priorities." September 2005 (www.nationalpriorities.org, accessed January 12, 2006). Studies by the Citizens for Tax Justice and the Children's Defense Fund are referenced in Citizens for Tax Justice. June 12, 2002. "Year-by-Year Analysis of Bush Tax Cut Shows Growing Tilt to the Very Rich." Data for this study are provided by the Institute on Taxation and Economic Tax Model, June 2002. For a recent study on the inequities of the Bush tax cuts, monies spent on the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the cost of rebuilding the Gulf Coast, see the Center for Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) http://www.cbpp.org/pubs/katrina.htm(accessed November 20, 2005).

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.007

Compliance Fiction: Adorno and Horkheimer's 'Culture Industry' Thesis in a Multimedia Age

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In today's multimedia, virtual world, the notion of the culture industry is perhaps more pertinent than ever before. Mass entertainment now spans an increasingly diffuse yet seemingly interspersed array of media forms, including television, film, the Internet and the rise of the DVD box set (with the latter's special features and writer/producer/actor commentary all adding to the allure of the product). A key aspect of the power that each of these media possess is derived from their ability to immerse the viewer, reader or listener within not only a franchise, but a fantasy world that is, at least on the surface, very different to their own. Thus, we find a very powerful infrastructure that engenders, supports and maintains new types of fan culture, among the sci-fi community for example. Indeed, alongside the increasing organization of certain fan bases has come a plethora of new roles for fans and new ways of displaying loyalty to their chosen franchise. If fandom as a vocation is not new, the digital age has ensured that the charity and passion of fans has certainly reached higher levels of professionalism and technical proficiency than before.

I want to use these developments in interactivity, television franchising and fan-organization in order to explore the limits of and possibilities for Adorno and Horkheimer's ([1944] 1997) seminal work on the culture industry. In doing so, I want to explore some of the criticisms often levelled at their work, as well as at other 'negative' critiques of consumer culture more broadly. I will then proceed to consider the contemporary implications of the culture industry via a case study of a very specific group of fans within the science-fiction community, 'Browncoats'—the collective name given to fans of the short-lived American TV series Firefly (2003) and its spin-off Hollywood film Serenity (2005). The actions and organization of this group are significant, not only because they exemplify the way in which relationships between entertainment producers and fans seem to be changing, but they are also illustrative of the efforts fans are prepared to exert in an attempt to challenge, manipulate and gain power within the culture industry.

When Firefly was cancelled in 2002 after just 14 episodes, the Internet became a haven for fans wanting to express their outrage and ambitions to get the decision overturned. Their hopes for a revival were, in part, answered in 2005 with the release of Universal's 'spin-off' motion picture Serenity, which, whilst satisfying existing Firefly fans' desire to see some of the main plots of the series brought to some resolution, was written so as to be accessible to those unfamiliar with the TV show. Encouraged by this development, fans continued to push for more television series or a film sequel. For example, 'Serenity Day', held on June 23 2006, was a fan-organized, fan-driven event that aimed to increase the profile of the film and thus the series. Most importantly, fans also hoped that the day would prove to entertainment producers that increasing the Firefly/Serenity franchise would be economically rewarding. Thus, the main tactic used in achieving these aims was the mass buying of copies of the film and, where economically possible for the individuals willing to take part, any other Firefly/Serenity merchandise. Fans with spare copies of the DVDs were then advised on Firefly message boards to distribute this surplus amongst friends and family and even to send them to local libraries. Moreover, far from being simply started on the Internet forums of websites such as www.fireflyfans.net (accessed between May 2006-August 2006), the Internet was also a key location in the waging of

the 'Serenity Day' campaign, with fans urging that copies of Serenity be bought from Amazon.com, which carries its own DVD charts thereby allowing fans to track their campaign's progress during June 23 and afterwards.

The sophisticated organization of such an event, as well as the fans implicit awareness of the interrelatedness of television and the Internet, provides an ideal opportunity to reassess the relevance of Adorno and Horkheimer's ([1944] 1997) culture industry thesis and consider its implications in a multimedia age. Rather than simply bolstering the notion of the culture industry as developed by Adorno and Horkheimer in the mid-twentieth century, it is hoped that this exploration will address the contemporary importance of the culture industry and engage in the kind of empirical critiquing of the culture industry that Adorno (2001:196) very much supported. In particular, then, it is my contention that the tactics used by this group of fans in order to revive a specific television franchise after the series was cancelled can provide a significant insight into the relationship between modern consumerism, the production of cultural artefacts and the importance of Adorno and Horkheimer's culture industry. That is to say that with fans acting voluntarily as marketers and 'guerrilla promoters' for the existing Firefly/Serenity merchandise, not to mention their roles as consumers of that franchise, it is my contention that these fans are actually being absorbed further into the mechanisms of the culture industry with their identities becoming ever more tied to their sense of themselves as fans of Firefly/Serenity. Moreover, in attempting to prolong the life of their product of choice by trying, through the mass purchasing of DVDs and merchandise, to guarantee a market, the actions of the Firefly/Serenity fans suggests an increasing rationalization of consumer culture whereby fans are no longer required to simply consume passively but to become actively involved in the mechanisms of production and market creation. Yet, it does not matter whether or not the producers respond to these types of consumer demand since the consumer has already ensured a profit through the free advertising they volunteer for the product. In this way, the old relations of supply and demand have become more complex: Rather than producers seeking out markets, the consumer now believes that they must actively ensure demand before any supply is considered. As such, the title of this article is not merely an irreverent pun; rather it describes a state of cultural production that sees the consumer aim to tautologically produce and consume products. In short, their compliance with the culture industry is such that their desire for particular products overrules their ability to critique their function. In accordance with Gunster (2000:66-67), I attempt to use this empirically-based case study in order to develop Adorno and Horkheimer's theory of the culture industry and produce an account of new trends, ambiguities and contradictions found in the conflated space between economic and cultural production.

In particular, I want to address whether or not Adorno and Horkheimer's ([1944] 1997:137) suggestion that mass culture requires minimal effort on the part of the consumer is still accurate in light of consumer demands for products such as those discussed in this article. Yet, in dealing with this question, we must first ascertain whether or not consumers are now perhaps more aware of the existence of a culture industry and to what extent they might choose to participate in its processes. Indeed, it is not necessarily the case that Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997) consider the 'masses' to be unaware of the processes involved in the culture industry. They note: '[t]he triumph of advertising in the culture industry is that consumers feel compelled to buy and use its products even though they see through them' (Adorno and Horkheimer 1997:167). However, this raises an important question: Does this consumer awareness translate into an ability of the 'masses' to make the decision to embrace the culture industry on quite valid personal grounds? That is to say that if consumers are complicit within the culture industry, could it not simply be argued that they are not dominated by it so much as they are willing supporters of this system? In the case of the Firefly/Serenity fans, it is possible that their lobbying for a continuation of the television/movie franchise that they enjoy represents a knowing, deliberate attempt by these consumers to appropriate the production of this product because of the specific meaning it has for them as fans. Moreover, their decision to enact this lobbying by constructing arguments for the rational economic basis for the reinvigoration of the franchise may suggest that these consumers do not hold consumer capitalism in such a negative light as Adorno and Horkheimer, much less agree that they are part of any kind of culture industry.

For the purposes of this article, it could be argued that this notion of the consumer as possessing power or choice is born out by the actions of television fans online, particularly as the internet continues to facilitate the further and more elaborate collectivization of television consumers and their actions. For example, not only do these online consumer fan groups work largely outside the parameters of 'industry control', but their cyberspace presence can also see them accrue significant amounts of online influence as consumers of their television show(s) of choice (Deery 2003:162, 164). In fact, it is argued by Deery (2003:162-164) that TV companies are paying attention to such online activity 'because it is in their economic interest to do so' insofar as an unofficial fan site for a TV show,

whilst probably not opening the programme up to new audiences, can certainly increase the interest and devotion to a show amongst existing fans, as well as encouraging their consumption of the program's associated merchandise. As such, Deery (2003:167-168) suggests that online fan communities can even have an influence over whether TV shows are prolonged or cancelled, illustrating the increasing interrelationship between producers' decisions with regards to their products and consumers' decisions about what they want to consume (cf. Bacon-Smith's (2000:89) discussion of the importance of online fan communities to the survival of the Babylon 5 TV series). As a result, the relationship between viewers and producers has become a complex, two-way relationship, with both parties negotiating production processes (O'Sullivan 2005:21).

Indeed, if one holds to the notion that the consumer does have some power, then we must address a significant criticism often levelled at the work of Adorno and Horkheimer (as well as similar theories of mass culture): namely, that the notion of the culture industry is elitist in its insistence that social actors are duped into their roles as consumers and in its derogatory approach to mass culture (Kellner 1995:29; cf. Gunster 2000; Miller 2001; Witkin 2003:1). Theories that engage in a negative critique of mass consumer culture stand accused of proffering a narrow moral view of consumption based on particular political and structuralist understandings of the social order and social action. This 'moral' posturing has been roundly critiqued by writers such as Daniel Miller (2001) and Richard Wilk (2001). For Miller (2001:226), the field of consumption is all too often used as a vehicle for academics to pursue their own moral (and, indeed, political) agendas rather than as an empirical area of study that might challenge any such preconceptions. Accordingly, he argues that it is hypocritical of academics to posit a notion of consumption as being an inherently negative act whilst at the same time enjoying the benefits of a consumer society. Moreover, he continues his explication of this double standard by arguing that when large numbers of individuals across the world lack, for example, housing, computers or transport, the idea that commodities represent vacuous excess cannot be justified (Miller, 2001:228). Indeed, it is Miller's (2001:229) contention that 'moralist' theories of consumer society do not take full account of the complexity involved in the individual's consumption habits, with certain commodities having much more complex roles and meanings than such theories allow. Moreover, Miller (2001:229-230) extends this argument further when he suggests that even those goods with less obviously utilitarian values should be approached "respectfully" because of their potential symbolic significance.

Wilk (2001) is similarly critical of negative theories of mass consumer society. He positions the academic who is critical of consumerism as a self-appointed moral guardian whose output sets the parameters of the moral debates that surround mass consumption (Wilk 2001:254). As such, academics are conceived of as an integral part of the consumer culture that they critique; urging caution against excessive consumption, their critiques even seem to be appropriated by and given a sanctioned role within mass culture. In a world of temptation, the academic's criticism only serves to fuel self-restraint and order during periods of work. Moreover, Wilk (2001:251) proposes that reliance upon the notion of false consciousness in order to explain consumption as a part of mass culture erroneously elevates the theorist to a privileged vantage point whereby they are able to see the reality behind mass culture whilst the masses are not (cf. Miller 2001:229). At the same time, it might also be added that theories of false consciousness almost foreclose any opportunity for their proposition to be challenged. For example, Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997:145) suggest that any opposition to the culture industry simply represents a resistance infused within the system. For Gunster (2000:63), this sanctioned resistance provides a 'veneer of meaning' insofar as it suggests a comforting depth to the shallowness of mass culture, thus placating any serious discontent. In this way, any attempt to refute Adorno and Horkheimer's culture industry thesis can be automatically dismissed as an act of the system itself.

However, if we look specifically at the notion of the culture industry, I would argue that Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997) manage to avoid taking the moral position that all commodities are necessarily bad or that consumption must therefore be castigated as wrong. Rather than targeting all commodities per se, the culture industry thesis critiques a specific type of gentrified, mass-produced artefact aimed at legitimating capitalism (Kellner 1995:28-29). As such, it is not the case that the culture industry thesis requires that all commodities be considered vacuous. Instead, it suggests that there is a particular type of cultural commodity that has been colonized by capitalism insofar as it has little use value, differs only insignificantly from other products and is, despite all of this, revered by consumers. This reverence is therefore derived from the product's exchange value (cf. Gunster 2000:50). In this way, the notion of commodification critiqued by the culture industry differs from Miller's (2001) broader deployment of the term 'commodity' as something that is a part of material culture. Adorno and Horkheimer's theory leaves enough room to suggest that what is critiqued by the culture industry is not the idea of the 'commodity' in the broadest possible

definition of the word (and thus not those goods required most by those in situations of poverty, such as housing and clothing), but the notion of a commodity where its use value has been completely usurped by exchange value. The objection, then, is not so much to the commodities themselves but the state of mass consumption whereby 'the culture industry transfers the profit motive naked onto cultural forms' (Adorno 2001:99).

Moreover, Adorno and Horkheimer's work signifies that we should not overestimate the extent to which consumers have a choice about what they consume or how and where they consume. Such are the totalizing effects of brand recognition that Adorno (2001:85) goes as far as to argue that advertising has become a form of 'information'. Indeed, Bauman (2005:26) echoes this position when he argues that despite all their power to choose between different products, brands and logos, what consumers actually lack is the power to decide not to choose between these things. To a large extent at least, consumer power/choice is therefore illusory. Even when consumers are apparently successful in evading control or achieving their aims, their power is always in subservience to capitalist modes of production. Consequently, the consumer's success only further cements their role in consumer society: in other words, although consumers may have some power within consumer society this only negates the potential for them to have power over consumer society. Modes of production cannot be controlled or challenged from within.

To return to the supposed power of television consumers specifically, Deery (2003:180) has argued that the television set will be used as an increasingly invasive device in order to accrue ever more information about the lives of individuals, commodifying the lives of viewers. As a consequence, we are left with Adorno's notion of 'pseudo-realism' and its proposition that there is now a conflation of reality and ideology which hinders the consumer's capacity for critique (Witkin 2003:139). It is not the case that the culture industry conceals the reality of the social order from social actors, but rather that it makes it difficult for social actors to envisage any alternative social order (Gunster 2000:44). According to the culture industry thesis, then, it is ironic that the films and novels of popular culture could be considered escapist, since they actually serve to draw closer the imagined world of entertainment and the real world (Gunster 2000:43-44). Indeed, it is my contention that, as the Internet becomes more and more integrated into the everyday actions of those in the West, this process of 'pseudo-realism' is even more pertinent. Not only does fan activity on the Internet obfuscate the distinctions between different forms of media, for example with television and the internet now serving the same consumer groups with the same products, but it also produces a conflation between the virtual world and the real one. At the same time as a television programme is being broadcast, fans can also go online and visit both official and unofficial websites in order to download pictures, information or future episodes of said program. The chat rooms and message boards utilised by entertainment fans perhaps represent the pinnacle of this 'pseudo-realism' since they allow social interaction to take place on a new virtual plane where the needs for proximity or audio-visual and even temporal links between persons are removed.

Thus I take Deery's argument further: not only are viewers' private habits turned into markets for consumption, but the viewers themselves, knowingly or unknowingly, actually become key players in that transformation through their participation in online TV-fan communities. Though it may seem that these consumers have the potential to wield significant power over TV stations, they are instead being converted into cogs within the production process, meaning that they run the risk of becoming exploited on ever more sophisticated levels. Bacon-Smith (2000) notes that official websites for science fiction television shows can in fact be exploitative of fan-bases, with product promotion being an integral part of such sites' raison d'etre (p.87). Moreover, there is also a potential tension between what fans want to post on the internet and what they perceive themselves to be allowed (by corporate powers) to post, as is illustrated by the case of www.spoilerslayer.com (retrieved 5 October 2006), a now inactive website that once provided plot spoilers (information about TV show storylines before they have been broadcast) for TV shows such as Buffy the Vampire Slayer and Angel. Closed on August 21st 2004, the website claims to have experienced legal issues with regards to making future storylines available. On hearing of the suspension of activities on www.spoilerslayer.com, a fan expressed on whedonesque.com, a website dedicated to Joss Whedon (the creator of the aforementioned programs and Firefly), 'it is sad to see another example of overpaid Hollywood bullies trying to write the rules of the internet to suit their bottom line' (Herb 2004). Another also responded, '...it contributes to my anger at these Goliaths who seem to think we fans have no memory, that we are only wallets with legs' (Palehorse 2004). Yet this dismay at the events surrounding The Spoiler Slayer was not unanimous. A fan commented, 'Joss has said time and again that spoilers have plagued him. The only sad thing about this news is that it didn't happen years ago' (MindPieces 2004). One respondent sardonically criticized a fan's decision to boycott the television station by asking:

> Um, you do realize that BtVS [Buffy] and ANGEL are "Fox" products? (Since they were produced by Twentieth Century Fox.) And Firefly was too, until the rights were sold to Universal. SaveAngel (2004)

The differing opinions expressed here suggest that fans, whether critical or supportive of the rights of producers, are nevertheless aware of the concerns that producers may have about the way in which fans' online interactions may influence the market success of their product. It follows then that fans of television believe themselves to have an important role to play in the production of their television programs of choice. Moreover, the following discussion of the Firefly/Serenity campaign will illustrate that such fans are only too keen to exert their 'influence' on producers. However, whether fans can be considered to have any real power in this relationship, other than that which is derived through their loyalty as an audience, is doubtful.

Consumer Power or 'Misguided Spontaneity' (Adorno 2001:194)

> Pleasure hardens into boredom because, if it is to remain pleasure, it must not demand any effort...
> —Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997:137)

> When I first signed on to do this and help organize, I never thought this would be such a huge movement. I am constantly amazed by the spirit and generosity of Browncoats. For a fangroup that relies heavily on word-of-mouth we accomplish alot [sic] more than some people realize. Once again we are doing the impossible.
> —Kaele (2006), message board, www.fireflyfans.net

The two quotes above have been selected because of the way in which they neatly juxtapose one another. The first suggests that under the rule of the culture industry, pleasure cannot be about anything other than stagnation on the part of the audience. The standardization of cultural forms is such that the consuming of products requires no extra interpretation on part of the individual (Adorno and Horkheimer [1944] 1997:137). In his later work, Adorno (2001) develops this further and associates boredom with a state of unfreedom, whereby 'shallow entertainment' and cultural stasis provide consumers with the will to work (p. 193). Leisure, then, has been divorced from work insofar as it is accepted that one's free time must differ from work activities so as to ensure a productive work realm (Adorno 2001:190). For Adorno (2001: 188, 193), free time is thus 'becoming a parody of itself', with individuals increasingly devoting their time to 'superfluous' hobbies that produce 'superfluous' products. At the same time, individuals are said to engage in 'pseudo-activity' inasmuch as they immerse themselves in 'spurious' activities in order to distract from the realization that changing the social order would be exceptionally difficult (Adorno 2001: 194).

This later note stands in stark contrast to the opinions expressed in the quote above by Kaele, a Firefly/Serenity fan writing online about 'Serenity Day', an event organized by fans of the franchise in order to convince television stations and film studios that investment in the continuation of the series would result in a marketable product and guaranteed financial rewards. Far from requiring minimal effort, then, 'Serenity Day' represents a serious drive on behalf of a large section of a fan-base. Requiring collective organization in terms of both tactics and objectives, it could be argued that the actions of those fans seeking to revive this particular franchise is indicative of something more than consumer boredom and apathy. In some ways it could even be seen as a revolt against this. For example, when interviewed for an unofficial documentary entitled Done the Impossible: The Fans' Tale of Firefly and Serenity (2005), one fan suggested that the cancellation of Firefly 'was maybe a lightning rod for our frustration with television and pretty much, you know, pop culture in general, kind of appealing to the lowest common denominator.' Boredom, it seems, was what those opposed to the cancellation were fighting. Indeed, the very media through which these views were aired, an unofficial DVD documentary containing 'special features' such as a 'Trivia Game' and featuring interviews with fans, cast members and behind-the-scenes production staff, all suggests a high degree of activity amongst Firefly/Serenity fans. In addition, Firefly/Serenity fans' awareness of their economic position permeating the production-consumption chain is not without a social conscience. Rather than just advocating the mass purchasing of DVDs on 'Serenity Day', the actions of fans were also put to charitable use with a portion of the profits from special local screenings of Serenity and from sales of the documentary Done the Impossible: The Fans' Tale of Firefly and Serenity going to the charity Equality Now, of which Joss Whedon, creator of Firefly and Serenity, is a supporter.

For these fans, the consumption of television is not simply about passively receiving homogenized and uninspiring cultural products (cf. Adorno and Horkheimer [1944] 1997), instead it also involves the viewer's participation in the realms of production. The role of viewer is transformed from its receptive state into a proactive position whereby fans, in their desire to continue consuming particular programs, are willing to embrace their status as a 'market.'

Thus, in a discussion on www.serenityday.org on June 12 2006, one fan answered a fellow fan's question about where DVD's should be purchased from on Serenity Day:

> I don't think it should matter. We're trying to send a message to Universal, not Amazon or other retailers. Universal will see how many people buy copies of their movie reguardless [sic] of what version it is, so as far as I know, any version you buy should count. thegrimfandango (2006)

Yet, on June 13 2006, another fan responded to the same discussion with,

> I think we should all buy through Amazon.com. Its [sic] one of the main online websites and it gets a ton of attention in the entertainment industry-people at the movie studios DO look at Amazon to see whats [sic] hot and whats [sic] not. Also, if we buy through brick-and-morter [sic] stores, the studio will only see the numbers go up if the store owners order more copies. longbowhunter (2006)

Following 'Serenity Day' such debates did not cease, indicating that, despite Firefly being cancelled in 2002, this is very much an ongoing campaign. On 1 August 2006, one fan visited the message boards of www.fireflyfans.net and posted a list of instructions for those intending to email executives with regards to restarting the franchise. One instruction contained the advice: 'In show business, the biggest issue is $$$$$, so we have to show the executives how much money they could make if Firefly was in their lineup [sic], and how much they are missing by not having it there' (LORDKILBORN 2006). Discussions such as this illustrate the extent to which fans involved in trying to reinvigorate the Firefly/Serenity franchise understand the nature of the campaign to be economic. Accordingly, they attempt to play the system to their own advantage. Yet does this attempt at manipulating the system rather than changing it support the aforementioned notion of 'pseudo-activity' as outlined by Adorno (2001:194)? Are these fans simply repressing the fact that to change the system would be harder than to attempt to play it by its own rules?

According to Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997:121), under the conditions of the culture industry, monopolies are no longer concealed by those who run them; instead, an ideology of business abounds whereby industries no longer have to pretend that what they produce represents any kind of art. This notion is clearly reflected in the opinions and frustrations of some fans on the website www.fireflyfans.net, with one explaining that the instrumental, economic drives of studios results in 'Nothing new here, nothing new to say, just the same vapid entertainment quality' (HERA 2006). Yet, despite this perceived blatancy surrounding the self-serving blandness of the culture industry, Adorno and Horkheimer ([1944] 1997:121-122) significantly suggest that its power nevertheless grows, with consumers' attitudes forming a 'part of the system' rather than constituting an explanation for it. Thus, these fans are not claiming power in the culture industry; instead they are being dominated by it. Firefly/Serenity fans' recognition of their economic potential and their belief that as consumers united to form a 'market' they have a power within the culture industry, only serves to increase their potential for exploitation. In this way, the guerrilla marketing tactics employed by this group can be seen to represent the sort of 'pseudo-activity' that Adorno critiqued. Moreover, the distinction between work and leisure that Adorno (2001:189) argues has become a 'norm' under the culture industry perhaps explains why Firefly/Serenity fans are so willing to devote their time to regaining this product rather than simply moving their affections on to some new form of entertainment. As one fan suggests:

> We have a 10 hour day at work...We have an hour commute in, an hour commute out. We have a half-hour lunch inside. We try to sleep eight hours; that never happens...You come home and you do supper; you take care of homework with children and then all of a sudden you find yourself with an hour or two of time to look...at some TV and get some entertainment and let go of the day. And we choose that time carefully. So it was a big loss to us, entertainment-wise, when we heard it was going to be cancelled. Done the Impossible: The Fans' Tale of Firefly and Serenity.

For this fan, the Firefly/Serenity franchise is not something that he idly gives himself to. It is important to note that contrary to Adorno's (2001:193) suggestion, this man is not interested in 'shallow entertainment'; rather he sees himself as carefully selecting that which he chooses to watch. That his free time is so scarce means that whatever he chooses to do with it automatically assumes great meaning for him because he has deemed it worthy of his attention.

The lengths to which these fans are prepared to go means that it would be trite to suggest that they are simply chasing a vacuous product of the culture industry, a product that has a much higher exchange value than it does a use value. For these fans, the symbolic importance of the Firefly/Serenity product in their daily lives is highly significant and, in this way, it could be argued that the franchise possesses tremendous symbolic use value for its fans. In appropriating the name 'browncoats', the name adopted by those members of the fictitious crew who fought in a war against interplanetary unification, the fans have created for themselves an almost militaristic identity, whereby

their battle to have the Firefly/Serenity stories continued parallels the battles of their heroes, with self-styled rebel hero fans fighting against the might of capitalist TV stations and film studios. However, what cannot be denied is that their devotion goes beyond the creation of a collective fan identity; these fans also exhibit an economic devotion to the programme. Firefly was not just a TV program. For those financially involved in its development, distribution and marketing it was a commodity—the DVD box set alone ensured this. Moreover, since the release of the film even more merchandise has become available, from posters to trading cards and action figures. For this group of people, the value of this product is two-fold. On the one hand, the franchise is considered by fans to have an important role within their lives as a form of entertainment and identity. Yet, on the other hand, it is recognized that Firefly/Serenity is an economically governed and profit-driven product. The existence of a franchise of Firefly/Serenity products indicates that, for fans, being economically involved in the package is an important part of the way in which the product is engaged with and thus given meaning. In this way, the product has both a use value (in terms of the meaning it holds for individual fans) and an exchange value.

The problem with this, however, is that the product's use value and exchange value are interlinked, with fans experiences of the product being consciously played out and negotiated against the product's need to be economically successful. Products can have meaning within the culture industry and it is acknowledged that people do have often personal and emotional attachments and uses for that which they buy. However, it is this sense of attachment to particular products that prevents them from making any real challenge to the overall power of the culture industry. In the case of the Firefly/Serenity fans, questions about the power of producers and the subordination of cultural products to capitalist profit-motives is ultimately lost amid their desire to have their product, their characters and their stories returned to them.

The mass purchasing of DVDs and guerrilla flyering represent just two of the ways in which the case study fans discussed in this article have attempted to gain some power within the mechanisms of modern cultural production and Western consumer society as a whole. What this shows is that the culture industry is no longer about the passivity of the audience. Rather the culture industry, because of new opportunities for fan organisation such as that provided by the internet, is able to inculcate fans into assembling themselves into markets. The fans of Firefly/Serenity are not alone in turning to the Internet to show their devotion to a product. Online fan petitions are a common way for fans to protest at the cancellation of TV shows and demonstrate the size and devotion of the fan base at the same time. For example, at the time of writing, fans of Supernatural, an American TV show facing cancellation, have compiled an online petition, 'SAVE SUPERNATURAL !!!!! Petition,' in a bid for more series (www.ipetitions.com, accessed March 30, 2007). Similarly, fans of TV science fiction show Stargate: SG1 set up an online petition protesting at a decision not to let a video game, Stargate SG1: The Alliance, be made. In comments addressed to the program's makers (MGM), the petition stated: 'We, the Stargate Community, the people who allowed the Stargate Franchise to prosper are outraged' (www.petitiononline.com, accessed March 30 2007). In this latter case, fans are not only aware of their importance to the success of the franchise but are actually calling for its expansion into a new format of entertainment. Interestingly, this petition also coincided with other online fan action attempting to revive the recently cancelled Stargate: SG1 TV show itself. Deploying tactics identical to that of the Firefly/Serenity campaign, one Stargate: SG1 website urged fans to 'Make October 3rd [2006] Stargate Day' by purchasing the DVD Box Set of Series 9 on October 3 (its release date). The website also provides a link to the Amazon.com website and the message 'leave no one in doubt of the financial clout and commitment of Stargate SG-1's fans!' (savestargatesg1.com, September 26 2006, retrieved March 30, 2007).

As yet, the Firefly/Serenity fans battle for a continuation of the franchise has not been successful and many online petitions will not yield the desired result for fans of particular products. Thus, by believing themselves to have a role to play in production, and unless the true producers decide otherwise, the actions of these fans serve only to promote that which has already been made. For example, one fan responded to recent news of plans for a 'special edition' DVD of Serenity (a re-release with extra special features) with the comment 'I expect I'll buy it no matter what the features are' (jam2, 2007). Another sarcastically noted 'talk about taking advantage of the loyal fans' before going on to write '[s]eriously, though, I yelped so loud at this news I set off the car alarms in the parking lot' (Dizzy 2007). With fans engaging with television programs in this way, the potential for them to be exploited by the culture industry increases. That is to say that rather than asking important questions about the way in which cultural products are held in subservience to market forces, fans do engage in 'pseudo-activities' (Adorno 2001:194) such as trying to prove the economic worth of a single product. In trying to intervene in and manipulate market forces in order to play the capitalist system to their own advantage fans instead play into the culture industry's hands.

In this way, we see that Adorno and Horkheimer's notion of the culture industry is still highly relevant to our understanding of consumer capitalism, not least because consumers still venerate the symbolic aspects of products rather than asking important questions about their use value and how they are produced. As capitalism has continued to evolve into what many have termed a 'postmodern' age, Adorno and Horkheimer's work has thus retained its function as a seminal critique of the social order. However, it is important to note that the exceptionally proactive attitudes of the fans discussed in this article do indicate the need for a rearticulation (as opposed to a more dramatic revision) of certain aspects of the culture industry thesis. Fans do feel very strongly about the franchises that they support and, as multimedia capitalism continues to diversify in ever more sophisticated ways, the consumer's role is not as passive as it first appears in Dialectic of Enlightenment ([1944] 1997:137). The fan in particular now has multiple roles to play, from consumer to advertiser and, if their own desires are fulfilled, producer. To point this out is not a complete departure from the critical theory of Adorno and Horkheimer insofar as this surge of consumer activity is highlighted and explained by Adorno's (2001:194) own discussion of 'misguided spontaneity' and 'psuedo-activity'. What this article seeks to highlight is the ever increasing role that these types of activities play in the multimedia age. As such, these aspects of the culture industry thesis need to be emphasised and incorporated into new critical discourses in light of contemporary developments within capitalism. Moreover, as capitalism and the role of the consumer within the culture industry evolves, we need to continually reassess the work of Adorno and Horkheimer, consider its relevance to contemporary economic and cultural climates and promote the importance of cultural critiques of consumption in the multimedia age.

It is hoped that by revisiting such works, new questions and considerations might be raised about the changing aspects of the capitalist system and that the legacy of critical theory will be usefully continued.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.008

The IMF in Singapore: The Staging of a City

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The mass protest at the Seattle summit of the World Trade Organization (WTO) in November 1999 and the subsequent anti-globalization protests around the world signify new forms of global movement against transnational capitalism (Deluca and Peeples 2002). Much has been written on global social movements, their mobilization strategies and interesting and innovative use of new media spaces (See Bove and Dufour 1999; Bircham and Charlton 2000; McMichael 2000; O'Brien et al. 2000; Kellner 2001). As Koopmans (2004:367-369) points out in 'the age of globalization direct engagement between protestors, authorities and publics have certainly not disappeared completely but they occur where the targets of claims are located; in national capitals, in seats of supranational institutions such as Brussels and Geneva or New York or where state leaders gather for international summits such as Seattle, Davos or Genoa. The convening of global summits in global cities has often set the stage for the activists to use the media as a global specter for performance, connectivity, interactivity and mobilization. In this sense, it is no longer the by-standing or co-present public that matter but people who watch at home.'

Smith (2001:1-2) posits that the Seattle protests 'challenge our understanding of state-social movement relations because they demonstrate how global-level politics affect a wide range of local and national actors.' More succinctly, he considers the political processes forged in national terrains of struggle which can challenge the transnational structure of capital. Here the concept of the local and global are entwined through the common objectives of global struggle against neo-liberalism. The local, national and global are bound through this thread which can enhance the bonds of a global civil society (Hubbard and Miller 2005; Mayo 2005; Tarrow and Della Porta 2005).

In situating TV screens as the contemporary shape of the public sphere, Deluca and Peeples (2002:126-127) observe that the 'WTO summit in Seattle was designed by the Clinton administration to be an image event designed for mass dissemination.' Organizers anticipated that tens of thousands of people would converge on downtown Seattle and 'transform it into a festival of resistance with mass nonviolent direct action, marches, street theatre, music and celebration.' The intrusion of the global media into this theatre of protest creates a visuality which lends global social movements new forms of agency enabling them to raise and legitimise global issues of injustice ranging from poverty to environmental concerns.

In the same vein, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) meetings in Singapore in 2006 were designed to be an image event by the Singapore government; not necessarily for the theatre of protest that would descend on the island but for the profile it would offer in terms of global media attention and the economic benefits in terms of positioning the island as a venue for world-class events. While the planned high-profile meetings drew Singapore into the spotlight in the months leading to the event, the tiny island courted the attention of the world media for different reasons. The culture and ritual of protests which surrounds meetings like the IMF, G8 and WB were deemed as antithetical to the political culture of the island. What was to be a showcase media event for Singapore created a ripple of discontent through global civil society organizations, interest groups and the world press due to the government's decision to blacklist 27 activists and to restrict the activities through stringent rules. The culture of protest that accompanies such high-profile events was viewed as a security issue by a state known for its high levels of social control.

This paper discusses the mediatized nature of the event which drew local political governance into global

scrutiny and analyses the ways in which the Internet was used to engage, publicize and mobilize dissent against the authorities in Singapore. In capturing the tension between the local and the global, the paper highlights the tensions that can emerge in local spaces which disrupt the agency of global social movements. In examining the dialectics between local politics and global social movements, the paper examines the spatial construction of the nation-state of Singapore through its ideological discourse of survival where the city state is constantly re-imagined and constructed through this discursive sphere. This discursive sphere is mediated by both the need to attract global capital and to appropriate technology as a tool to re-invent the economy, governance and society. Douglas Kellner (2001) employs the term 'technopolitics' to convey how significant political struggles against globalization today are mediated by the use of new technologies such as computers and the Internet to advance political goals. This paper contends that 'technopolitics' can narrate the city state in a contrasting light, highlighting the resistance and subcultures that emerge in the electronic terrain.

Politics of Re-Invention

This paper theorizes the city state of Singapore as a discursive space that has been constantly re-invented through the overarching discourses of survival and crises. The need for excellence and international recognition is often narrated through the pathos of economic revivalism where the re-invention of the city's identity for economic survival through the years has been an integral part of its modern imagination. The origin of independent Singapore is part of a narrative that is not only contentious in its historical representation but also subject to constant negotiation (Lim 2001). This constant negotiation often attempts to incorporate dialectical ideological strands such as Confucian teachings and essentialist Asian values, while facilitating the movement and embedding of global capital and transnational corporations in the island state. From the establishment of Singapore's self-government from the British in 1959, its merger with Malaya in 1963, and its subsequent expulsion from Malaysia and independence in 1965, the city state has been narrated through the discourses of survival and crises with the emphasis on economic progress and expediency.

The city state's successful post-independence economic development from 1965 to the 1990s has been described as a process of 'disciplinary modernization', one which has been presided over by the leadership of the People's Action Party (PAP) which has been in power since 1959 (Wee 2001:988). Wee argues that Singapore's small size allowed the PAP to exercise a great deal of social control and to orchestrate its multicultural society in accordance to the needs of multinational capital. The process of facilitating industrialization and the attraction of global capital required the mobilization and disciplining of a large proportion of the population through a combined scheme of mass education, labour unions and labour development programs (Lim 2001). The homogenizing tendencies of industrialization and its intimate link with nation-building mean that the conception of the nation has been articulated through the processes of industrialization (Gellner 1983). In Singapore, the identity of the city state is negotiated through the construct of nation-building and is also shaped by the vagaries of global capital.

Alwyn Lim (2001) argues that the overarching ideology of survival and crises employed by the PAP should be situated within the wider processes of postcoloniality, postmodernity, globalization and technocapitalism. Lim (2001) further contends that the rhetoric of a utopian technological society has occupied a central strand in the politics of Singapore as evident in the 'Intelligent Island and 'knowledge-based economy' discourses. These discourses have become common tropes through which the image of Singapore and its body social have been articulated since the 1990s. Here Douglas Kellner's (1989:178) technocapitalism conveys not only the physical characteristics and networks that rely on Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) but also the social relations mediated by and through the use of technology which enable the simultaneous deterritorialization and reterritorialization of economic markets as well as cultures (cf. Lim 2001:178).

As Kahn and Kellner (2003:49) postulate, our 'contemporary landscapes represent a "postmodern adventure" where traditional forms of culture and politics are being resurrected, imploded into and combined with entirely new cultural and political modes in a global media culture that is becoming increasingly dominated by the corporate forces of science, technology and capital'. Equally, the re-imagination of Singapore's post-colonial condition through the re-configuration of her economy and the mass appropriation of information and communications technology are key elements in constructing a discursive reality of the city state which is constantly reminded to be ready to adapt to the needs of global capital and transnational corporations (Lim 2001).

The IMF in Singapore

When Singapore hosted the IMF and World Bank annual meeting in September 2006, it was billed to showcase the efficient management of a world event by a tiny island state. The government invested approximately $85 m to host the September 2006 meetings of the IMF and WB basing 16,000 delegates as a captive audience to promote the Singapore's finance and tourism industries (Rodan 2006). The event however became a spectre for contention between state ideology and the global entities of the the IMF, World Bank and various international civil society organizations. Over the years, the IMF and WB have endeavoured to project these conferences as a stage where civil society organizations, non-government organizations and charitable institutions are integrated into the event both as insiders who contribute to the consultation process and outsiders who manifestly protest against the agenda and actions of the IMF and the World Bank. It represents a reflexive post-modern capitalism which can accommodate dissident voices while catering to its own intrinsic logic.

The annual meetings of the Bank and the IMF usually draw large gatherings of financial representatives of governments, and the policies of these two international financial institutions are discussed as global initiatives. These discussions can range from poverty reduction to international finance. Every three years the meetings are held outside Washington and previous venues have included Prague, Hong Kong, Bangkok, Berlin, Manila, Nairobi and Rio de Janeiro (Macan-Markar 2006). As such, accredited organizations are invited to the summit to voice their concerns and to protest against the agenda of these global entities. The summits tend to be volatile as tensions can run high. When the meetings were held in Hong Kong in 2005, the government used tear gas to disperse crowds. It also arrested more than 1,000 people. Similarly, 600 were injured during the IMF meeting in Prague in 2000 after cobblestones were pulled from the streets and flung at the police. Protests held outside the conference venue have helped NGOs and activists from the developing and developed world to articulate and publicize concerns that matter to the world's poor which the two institutions may ignore or not give a serious hearing to. They have also helped frame the debates between the powerful within the conference halls and the powerless on the streets (Macan-Markar 2006). Civil society organisations have also been critical of the IMF's and WB's recent preference for remote or authoritarian countries to host these events (Burton 2006).

The notion of hosting a demonstration-ridden summit is antithetical to Singapore's political culture, which uses legislation to discourage protests. Singapore's laws prohibit public assembly of more than four people without a police permit, and those found guilty of unlawful assembly can be fined up to S$1,000. The government's official discourse consistently cites the race riots of 1964 as a political and cultural justification for such prohibitions. In view of this, the IMF/WB summit became a media spectacle in the months and weeks leading up to the summit as reports around the world focused on the Singapore government's bid to stifle protest by citing international and local safety and security concerns. On 12th September 2006, the government announced its decision to blacklist 27 activists. This led to 12 civil society groups immediately boycotting the IMF/WB meeting, followed by over 160 Nongovernment Organizations (NGOs) in the next few days. The city state was described as resorting to 'draconian security measures' and not 'respecting civil and human rights' (Meng 2006). Garry Rodan (2006) argues that economic globalization is contributing to a growing scrutiny of and challenge to Singapore's governance system and that the IMF/WB summit re-opened some of these debates. He cites the example of EnerNorth Industries, a Toronto-based oil and natural gas company which is requesting a review of a ruling which is pending before the Canadian Supreme court. EnerNorth is seeking to overturn a decision by the Ontario Superior Court of Justice to abide by a Singapore High Court ruling. Enernorth's appeal centres round the contention that 'Singapore is ruled by a small oligarchy who control all facets of the Singapore state, including the judiciary, which is utterly politicized' (cf. Rodan 2006).

These media discourses construct the city space of Singapore as a fortress inaccessible to civil and civic engagement and as an immature polity which has not developed in tandem with its economic progress. This prompted civil society organizations around the world to protest against the conference in Singapore, which led the IMF and World Bank to move their activities to the nearby Indonesian island of Batam, as Indonesia is known to have a more robust civil society culture than the highly-governed state of Singapore. The Internet played a significant role in enabling global civil society organizations to publicize their objections and to co-ordinate their activities with other organizations.

The City as a Myth Space

International events are often an opportunity to showcase a city. The coding of spaces is vital to the cultural

politics of capitalism which transforms the city space into a performative arena. The continuous ranking and typographies of cities and places synthetically construct and invent them in different ways which may at times be incompatible with each other. For example, Singapore was ranked second after Hong Kong in terms of economic freedom by the Heritage Foundation and the best place for Asians to live in a survey released in April 2006 by human resource consultancy ECA International (Burton 2006). Contrastingly, Singapore ranks 140th out of 167 countries for press freedom in 2006, polling lower than Afghanistan (Reporters Without Borders).

Spatial practice defines place and consequently space is 'made with the visible in mind; the visibility of people and things and whatever is contained within them' (Lefebvre 1991:288). The social activities of its inhabitants are just as crucial as the stationary physical parts, as people are not simply observers of this spectacle, but are themselves part of it (Lynch 1960:2). As such, social activities are entwined with space as the former creates the latter (Lynch 1960; Lefebvre 1991; Tschumi 1996). Places can thus be symbolically constructed as desirable or undesirable, benevolent or malevolent, sanctioned or forbidden to particular groups (Lefebvre 1991). In this sense, both sanctioned and forbidden practices and discourses construct the city space of Singapore as a place of double articulation manifest through discourses of officialdom and sanctioned practices as well as muted yet present (via new media technologies) activities which are rigorously controlled and disciplined through the entire era of nation building and beyond.

Representations of space tend to define and order spatial realities. The city space as an imagined geography mediates the politics of the island as it signifies a myth-making and transformative space. Its visual presence is a testimony to the island's progress since independence. It is symbolic of modernity and independence and hence deeply embedded into the party politics of the PAP which has ruled the nation state for more than 40 years. The city commemorates the success of the PAP's economic policies and as a visual space it narrates a historicity which portrays the PAP as the main protagonist in the transformation of Singapore into a metropolis from a fishing village. Notions of myth and space are tightly intertwined and often the physical transformation is narrated through myth which forms part of the wider belief system in a society. History becomes a narrative accomplice where it moves events temporally to create and transform the nation as a myth of those in power.

The urban space as a myth space signifies the selective re-telling of the past to enforce the present as a glorious achievement. The city state of Singapore as such acquires a chameleon-like persona often adopting or even adapting the approved and imposed cultural facades of the government machinery while rejecting or synthetically re-inventing the practices and street life which have been banished and perceived as incongruous to the images of the newly-formed city. The street theatres (wayangs), the night bazaars (Pasar Malam) or even the hawkers who plied their trade in the city are banished images which can be resurrected at will in sanitized and permitted areas with a licence or permit from the government. The city is an ordered space for the government's vision and a space where ideological and material practices coincide.

Urban space is political and is a domain for re-imagining the nation through its economic development. The constant texturization of the urban landscape through skyscrapers, modern technology and a high level of governance manufactures a space of Virilion hypermodernity characterised by efficiency and speed through the appropriation of state-of-the-art technology. This form of technology-driven change fabricates an accelerated modernity where electronic grids, digital sensors, and infra-red apparatuses guard, monitor and create a visual order. Speed is perceived as pivotal to transportation and communication and, therefore, to flows of capital (Virilio 1986). For Virilio, this accelerated modernity is one in which image and vision (both its appearance and disappearance) craft modernity as an accelerated coagulation of form and speed. The city as a conveyor belt for speed and change constantly alters the landscape creating a new urban visuality which leverages on the appearance and disappearance of images. Here old landscapes make way for the new in the name of progress and economic development, thus confining history into a hermeneutically-sealed space where its interpretation is a tool for the ideological hegemony of the present.

As such, the myth of the urban constructs capitalism and capital flows as a panacea for economic regeneration and the population as the necessary labour which must be orchestrated according to the demands of capital. The urban space is a scripted place where the culture of capitalism is reified and represents a new form of independence as well as dependence in the global world and market system. The urban space as such celebrates commerce, industry and entrepreneurship where the ethics of capital are accommodated and implicitly embraced.

This has meant the 'sanitizing' of urban space in Singapore through the selective retention of the old and a constant re-making of the urban to suit the needs of capital. The sanitization of urban spaces has seen the imposition of fines for spitting, littering and chewing gum. The constant renewal and purification of the city has taken various avatars over the decades and is characteristic of the transformative potential intrinsic in the urban

space. It is malleable to the political cartographies where technocrats can invent and re-invent space in a range of ways constructing Singapore in various guises from a regional financial and information technology hub to a centre for the arts and media. Here, manipulating the images of the city is an important aspect of urban entrepreneurship (Dobers 2003) where the city is manufactured through an abundance of images and representations (Hubbard and Hall 1996).

Texturing the City through Control

The city as an arena for entrepreneurship may be socially constructed and may constitute a space for introducing new forms of re-imagining and thinking as well as for reorganizing entrenched practices while creating new ones to accommodate a range of goals beyond those of simple commerce and economic drive (Stayaert and Katz 2004). Inimically, Hall and Hubbard (1998) contend that the emergence of urban entrepreneurialism marks a shift from urban government to urban governance which is characterized as both organizational and institutional in its execution. The entrepreneurial landscape of the city, catering for both the real and imaginary is inevitably ideologically charged (Hall and Hubbard 1996:163).

Cherian George (2001) labels the city state of Singapore as an 'air-conditioned' nation to highlight the degrees of control imposed on the state space where a whole host of incentives and disincentives are often packaged to extract compliance from the population. The bubble of air-conditioning represents a climate of control wielded by the ruling party and its ability to micro-manage the population from eugenics to speaking proper grammatical English to enhance trade and commerce in the country. According to Stan Cohen (1979:36) the emergence of the punitive city is characterized by the blurring of boundaries of control manifest in the widening nets of regulation in a manner that increase visibility and hence the theatricality of social control. Thus, highly repetitive acts that monitor, censor as well as promote behaviour in the city reflect and reinforce particular kinds of social space (Lefebvre 1991:75). While sets of meanings of the social imagination are conceptualized in symbolic languages these meanings are materialized and become real in all sorts of spatial and social practices from urban design to housing policy (Zukin et al. 1998:629). Edward Soja (2000) employs the term 'Postmetropolis' to refer to a transition from what has conventionally been the modern metropolis to something significantly different. In the case of Singapore, the imposition of authority, ideology and morality on a space of accelerated modernity has given rise to an orchestrated visual order which is plagued by dialectical struggles between social, economic and ideological forces which potentially threaten this visual coherence.

The city state of Singapore extols order, and the curbing of trade unions, civil liberties, civil society organizations and opposition politics has often assumed the rhetoric of catering to the demands of capital and the need to be competitive on the economic stage. It has also nullified Huntington's (1991) hypothesis that economic progress will eventually ensure human rights and civil liberties. Instead, countries like Singapore champion the banner of 'Asian democracy' which canvasses for a brand of democracy which is sympathetic to the cultural uniqueness of Asian nations by constructing an essentialist ideal of Asian values. These polities endorse a paternalistic form of governance which is pedantic and top-down in its approach, and often contradictory to the spirit of entrepreneurship demanded by capitalism. The monopolization of the domestic media and the constant silencing of the foreign media as well as political opposition further augment the construction of the city state as a hegemonic discursive space.

According to Deleuze (1997), control societies have taken over from discipline societies and thus the need for this ideological control manifests in various dimensions. Deleuze (1997) further terms marketing as an instrument of social control where the entrepreneurial city engages in new urban politics (Hall and Hubbard 1998) to pitch itself in the global market place for location marketing. Delueze (1997) constructs entrepreneurial politics as one which constantly demands urban space to behave entrepreneurially to lure flows of transnational capital.

Castells (1996:420) contends that because function and power in our society are organized in the space of flows, the structural domination of its logic essentially alters the meaning and dynamic of places. In tandem with this, John Urry (2000:140) propounds that places can be 'loosely understood as multiplex; as a set of spaces where ranges of relational networks and flows coalesce, interconnect and fragment.' As such the city space of Singapore is an ideological space carved through the trajectories of nation-building projects and a confluence of competing ideologies which construct the West as decadent and culturally incongruous to the East and the latter as a vulnerable construct which can be corrupted by these cultural flows. Economic development and progress are placed very high

on the political agenda while the liberal democratic ideals of a free press and human rights are seen as antithetical to the cultural ethos of the island. But the facilitation of capital and new forms of enterprise can further compound these debates. The granting of a gambling licence for a downtown casino, despite objections from the citizens, is a case in point.

Visually, the city of Singapore parades the culture of capitalism while political forces embrace the need to retain the 'Asianness' of the city through its cultural politics which suppresses pluralism and diversity. Ernest Laclau (cf. Coleman 2005) conceives cities as having a 'surplus of meaning' as they become spaces contaminated by different cultures, forces, desires and needs. These surpluses (of meaning) find expression in different ways in the cityscape of Singapore. The city as a repository for doubleness, between the official and the banished, between rhetoric and practice, and between the visible and the covert becomes a site of contestation and ideological struggles, as was evident at the IMF/WB event.

Constructing the City through Discourse

In hosting the summit, the Singapore government initially objected to various entities protesting in the city. It couched much of its objection to the theatre of protest that accompanies these summits on the premise it would threaten security in the nation state. With the government's ban on outdoor protests, groups accredited to the IMF and World Bank were only allowed to hold demonstrations in an eight-by-eight meter designated area. All other protests were required to obtain a police licence. According to Ruki Fernando, a spokesman for the Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development, a Bangkok-based human rights group, this restricted activities such as cultural dances and street theatre which requires large spaces (Burton 2006). In the lead up to the summit media reports around the world focused on how the Singapore government interrogated, detained and denied entry to various civil society representatives. Senior Minister, Goh Chok Tong, defended the decision to ban outdoor protests, saying the government would be seen as practicing double standards if it relaxed restrictions, 'We have very strict rules for our own locals and we can't have two standards, because otherwise we'll be in deep political trouble with our citizens.'[1] Discourses in society, in this sense, can be performative as well as descriptive because they are embedded in material and social practices, codes of behavior, institutions and constructed environments (Sayer 2000:44).

Prior to the IMF/WB summit the government had warned that it was prepared to cane or imprison protesters who commit violent crimes during the event. Singapore's actions invited the wrath of the then World Bank chief, Paul Wolfowitz who described the state as 'authoritarian and short-sighted' and argued that 'at the stage of success they have reached, they would do much better for themselves with a more visionary approach to the process. Enormous damage has been done and a lot of that damage is done to Singapore and self-inflicted.'[2] Singapore in response declared that it was duty-bound to 'take all necessary measures for the safe passage of all persons in and out of Singapore and for their personal security and the safety of their property and the property of the Organizations and delegations', particularly 'in view of the prevailing international security environment.'[3]

The social space of Singapore, weeks preceding the meeting was primarily observed and discussed on the foil of security and order and often visual order is imposed through security measures (Davis 1990; Hall and Hubbard 1998). The city space in Singapore is a space of high-level governance where social activities are mediated to regulate appearance and maintain control. Coleman (2005) points out that the development of entrepreneurial surveillance practices is increasingly geared to the monitoring of the performative space and its potential disruption and hence the social construction of this space is embroiled with moralizing discourses that constitute what spaces are and for whom they are intended.

Following criticism from Mr. Wolfowitz, Singapore relaxed its ban on the activists, allowing 22 out of the 27 (on an immigration blacklist) into the country.[4] While bowing to the pressure exerted by global entities, the authorities nevertheless wanted to ensure that the event would remain a visual spectacle for the locals and not be seen as an opportunity to protest. Two weeks ahead of the IMF/WB meeting, police issued a warning that security forces would not be averse to the use of firearms against protestors who threatened the life or health of others. More than 10,000 police officers joined forces with the military and other agencies to ensure the largest international event ever to be held in Singapore proceeded without a problem.[5]

According to Reporters without Borders, 'The two international bodies could hardly have made a worse choice of country in which to hold an international conference,' as 'press freedom should be one of the key elements of

an open and dynamic economy'.[6] The blocking of global activism was happening in tandem with various internal political events which portrayed the city state in a negative light. These included the ex-prime minister Lee Kuan Yew and his son the current prime minister, launching a lawsuit against Far Eastern Economic Review (FEER), the defamation suit against the opposition politician Chee Soon Juan and the trial against two Falun Gong protesters. Additionally in its on-going endeavor to curb the voice of the foreign press, the Singapore government had ordered five foreign publications to post bonds of S$200,000 and appoint representatives in Singapore.[7] The bonds would serve as a security measure in any future government lawsuit for alleged defamation where the publishers were not based in Singapore but were distributing their material locally.

The City and Resistance

This paper argues that the city space of Singapore can equally be narrated and constructed through the various activities which were blocked and thwarted by the authorities. With the stringent regulations on public gathering and the legalities surrounding them, much of the communal agency with regard to political expression and political activism has migrated to online spaces. The online spaces of the city compared to the offline environment is a sphere that is manifestly reactive as well as constitutive of the displaced agency that has been denied in the physical spaces of the city. According to Douglas Kellner (2001), 'Technopolitics' makes possible the reconfiguring of politics by refocusing on the politics of everyday life and using the tools and techniques of new computer and communications technologies to expand the field and domain of politics. Kellner (2001) stresses the construction of situations, the use of technology, media of communication and cultural forms to promote a revolution of everyday life, and to increase the realm of freedom, community and empowerment. The forms of empowerment that can emerge from the coalescing of agency and technology in the electronic sphere can also signify new forms of narrating the nation space.

A number of writers have explored the Internet as a platform for activism (Kellner 2001; Kahn and Kellner 2003; Lovink 2002; Lubbers 2002; Meikle 2002; Mielke 2003). Tim Berners-Lee, creator of the World Wide Web (1999:182-183) stresses the concept of 'interactivity' as the ability for others to make their media interventions. Another concept that is relevant to using new media platforms in innovative ways is the term 'tactical media.' Tactical media refers to a critical usage and theorization of media practices that draws on all forms of old and new, both lucid and sophisticated media for achieving a variety of specific non-commercial goals and pushing all kinds of potentially subversive political issues (cf. Meikle 2003:7). As Lubbers (2002:13) observes, the key characteristics of tactical media are originality, playfulness, unexpectedness, smallness, speed, decisiveness, clarity and unstoppability.

Lovink (2002:271) points out that 'tactical media provides a tool for creating temporary alliances between hackers, artists, critics, journalists and activists.' Lovink qualifies that tactical media are overwhelmingly the media of campaigns rather than of broadly based social movements and are rooted in local initiatives with their own agenda and vocabulary (Lovink 2002:255). It provides both the art of getting access and disappearing at the right moment creating new forms of visibility and ephemerality. A central use of the Internet is to distribute 'tools' and in so doing it encourages people to initiate their own actions, their own events and to become producers and distributors of their own new media and their own meanings.

Clemencia Rodriguez (cf. Meikle 2003:11-12) uses the term 'citizen's media' to evoke a concept which moves beyond the reductive binaries of the 'mainstream media' or 'alternative media' where there is a participant-centered approach suggesting we examine such media projects 'in terms of the transformative processes they bring about within participants and their communities.' For Rodriguez, citizen's media provides a platform for people to reclaim a space of expression and to re-narrativize or re-temporalise events.

Hebdige (1979:90-92; cf. Kahn and Kellner 2003) discusses subcultures as a form of 'noise' capable of jamming dominant media transmissions. Hebdige contends that 'alternative subcultures strive to capture media attention and in doing so become involved in the Janus-faced process of attempting to transform dominant codes even as they become appropriated, commodified, and re-defined by the hegemonic culture which they contest.' In applying this notion to the Internet, Kahn and Kellner (2003) point out.

> Internet subcultures seek a certain immediacy of experience that strives to circumvent dominant codes in the attempt to access a wealth of global information quickly and directly, and then to appropriate and disseminate material further.

> They argue that Internet subcultures as alternative cultures and practices to the dominant established society are often constructed within and against the dominant culture into which they are born. It is this intertextuality between the inherent dominance and resistance that is often characteristic of Internet subcultures. Such resistance appropriates the semantic codes of the dominant culture by which groups attempt to transmit and reproduce themselves. Such alternative expressions on the Internet, Kahn and Kellner (2003) contend, represent 'a challenge to this symbolic order in their attempt to initiate new grammars and meanings through which they interpret the world and new practices through which they transform it.'

The intertextuality between dominance and the resistance that can thrive in spaces of alternative expression was evident in the staging of the city for the IMF/WB meetings.

In its endeavor to welcome the IMF/WB delegates to Singapore, Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong urged the citizens to send in images of smiling faces as the country hoped to 'greet the delegates with four million smiles'[8]. The four million smiles campaign however turned into four hundred frowns when a local activist started a campaign to protest against the meeting and to show the world that Singaporeans too are attuned to global issues. Besides the protest of '400 frowns', another four million frowns campaign was started online requesting Singaporeans to send in their frowning images. Both these campaigns revealed that new technologies on the Internet were creating a parallel reality where the city-state of Singapore was being narrated in a different light compared to the official monologue of the authorities. The city assumed a dual personality where the government's discourse was mediated and countered through the electronic environment. It demonstrated that the city-state is a site for multiple struggles and contestations, where information and communication technologies create counter sites which re-imagine the city as a space of protest despite stringent laws to curb protest and civil society organizations.

The Internet as a Platform for Resistance

In June 2006, the Singapore press reported that the authorities were planning to crack down on any signs of dissent in the public through the installation of nearly 158 closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras to monitor activity at 67 traffic intersections and at the meeting's venue.[9] The combination of pervasive monitoring technology and the ongoing government narrative of order and security again reiterated the emphasis for visual order in the city. Nevertheless, the wiring of the city through new forms of information and communication technologies makes it amenable to alternative voices especially in online spaces where the convergence of technologies have enabled a mediated, visual and discursive pluralism to emerge and to reconstruct a city as a counter-space for protesting against the official discourse.

Technopolitics in the cityscape of Singapore is constantly altered through regulatory environments. Prior to the general election in May 2006, the government imposed new restrictions on online discourse by clamping down on political blogs. The government declared that it is 'illegal to propagate or promote or circulate political issues' in election periods.[10] Despite this, there were 50 web sites and blogs producing political or semi-political content during the election, according to the Institute of Policy Studies. When a blogger (under the pseudonym of Mr. Brown) who wrote a column in a Singapore newspaper was censored for his criticism of government policies, thirty people gathered to protest against the ban. In Aug 2005, a protest by four activists in the business district was broken up by a team of riot police when the protestors called for greater transparency in state institutions after a scandal involving a government-linked charity.[11] Such expressions of protest both online and offline provide an alternative construction of the ordered and homogeneous city space which the authorities attempt to project.

Seelan Pillai, who organized the 400 frowns campaign to counter the Singapore government's four million smiles project and to protest against globalization, was arrested along with two other men and was detained by the authorities. Their computers were seized and the authorities considered charging the men under the Printing and Processing Materials Act under which persons possessing material which contain 'any incitement to violence or counseling disobedience to the law may be jailed for up to three years or fined or both.'[12] Local reaction to the government's ban on protests took various guises, mainly in the online medium where numerous websites and blogs kept an ongoing commentary of the activities which were being blocked by the authorities. Independent sources on the Internet, in comparison to the print and broadcast media monopolized by the government, presented a counter-discourse, issuing information about attempted rallies and civic actions which were stopped by the police while they were taking place.[13]

These online spaces enable dissenting voices to use new broadcasting technologies such as YouTube to broadcast

videos and to narrate events which do not appear in the government-owned media archives. These alternative media spaces are recording and narrating both online and offline activities which have been blocked by the authorities. The hypermodernity of the island has seen the emergence of numerous electronic spaces which provide an on-going commentary of the government's actions and policies and construct the events and protests banished by the government via new technologies as they emerge on the streets. For example, a recent 'Empower' rally organized by the Singapore Democratic Party was blocked by the authorities but narrated online through pictures using these broadcast technologies. Similarly, during the recent general election, despite a ban on broadcasting election rallies online, various blogs carried commentaries and live broadcasts of opposition rallies which were poorly covered by the local government papers. These online discourses as virtual heterotopias are embedded in the social practices of the city and hence they create social spaces which construct the city as one which is plural and politically charged. Additionally, the intrusion of the world media on the events leading up to and during the summit also crafted the city in different ways from the image-event conceived by the government.

Conclusion

The hosting of the IMF/WB meetings threw the spotlight on a city which is ordered yet fissured, where pluralism and divergent views are emerging in spaces not sanctioned or created by the government. The online medium, while mediated by new forms of regulations and surveillance, cannot be completely controlled or subsumed by government machinery. These virtual spaces constantly mediate the construction of a physical geographical site through their discursive formations, producing space which in many ways is a reaction to the official politics and policies of those in power. They represent new ways of imagining the city space while being the product of the dominant culture themselves. In a space where traditional media are tightly regulated they signify new visibilities and new forms of meaning construction which widen the 'political' beyond the ambit of dominant or hegemonic constructions.

Acknowledgements

I'd like to express my sincere gratitude and thanks to Ben Agger for his comments, support and helpful suggestions with this paper.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.009

Class Observations: 'Intimate' Technologies and the Poetics of Reality TV

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Introduction

For some of us, one of the biggest surprises of the 2006 Big Brother show was not the winner, Pete Bennett, but, according to The Guardian newspaper, the fact that "[a]fter seven years, the BB brand is stronger than ever" (Lawson 2006:3). The fact that cultural critics are wishing the show away at the point at which it has reached its popular cultural zenith of mass appeal is significant in that it is indicative of a widely held position, which readily equates (mass) media culture with bad or low culture, frightening, out of bounds, vulgar and excessive (Skeggs 2005a). At the same time however, Reality TV appears to have developed a major role in what could be deemed a public class re-education project through body politics.

This paper re-evaluates the relationship between Reality TV and our lived experiences and discusses how this relationship re-engenders class(ed) relationships in contemporary culture. At the center of this discussion are what can be termed the body-politics of Reality TV and questions of agency and selfhood. Under examination is its tendency to mimic privacy and shift the dynamic interplay between media strategies and (consumer/audience) tactics (De Certeau 1988; Silverstone 1989). Through this process, existing power structures are masked.

Secondly, it will be argued that the (physical) body is central to a public class reeducation project in that it not only offers a blank canvas for make-over projects, but is increasingly reinvested as a signifier of class difference and transformation. Rather than focusing on a particular Lifestyle TV show, this paper traces the classed body-politics across a range of Reality TV genres and shows and questions the power dynamics and cultural values generated.

Education, Reeducation, Self-moderation

In his Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular', Stuart Hall (2006) offers a periodic overview and analysis of the development and transformation of popular culture. Historically speaking, as Hall puts it: "[t]he changing balance and relations of social forces ... reveal themselves, time and again, in struggles over the forms of the culture, traditions and ways of life of the popular classes" (p.477). The relationship between capital and the culture of the popular classes was forged through the necessary process of reeducation, in order to accommodate a whole new social order based upon capital. He notes that, "one of the principle sites of resistance to the forms through which the 'reformation' of the people was pursued lay in popular tradition" (ibid.). In Hall's view, 'cultural change' in this context is a mere polite euphemism for a process whereby some cultural forms and processes of popular life are actively marginalized. Although we may, today, talk more in terms of 'struggle and resistance', "[t]ransformation is the key to the long and protracted process of the 'moralization' of the laboring classes, and the 'demoralization' of the poor, and the 'reeducation' of the people" (p.478).

Hall places much emphasis on the period between the 1880s and 1920s as a period of deep structural change (in relations of forces and in terms of political struggle). With reference to the press, he illustrates how the middle-class press was based on the destruction of the radical and working-class press, followed by "the active mass insertion of a developed and mature working-class audience into a new kind of popular, commercial press" with profound cultural consequences. One of the effects being "a reconstituting of the cultural and political relations between the dominant and the dominated classes: a change intimately connected with the containment of popular democracy on which 'our democratic way of life' today appears to be so securely based"; a popular press, "organised by capital 'for' the working classes" (pp.479-80). With reference to the post 2nd World War period, Hall then talks about a severe fracture—a deep rupture—with regards to popular culture. This was not just a change in the cultural relations between people and the concentration and expansion of new cultural apparatuses, but a "monopolisation of the cultural industries, on the back of a profound technological revolution [...]" (pp.480-81).

Moving the language of fracture and rupture forward to the 21st century, it is important to track some of the historical (dis)continuities in the struggle over popular culture and its expressions, if only to remind ourselves about its intricate ties with class-systems and class-transformations in capitalist and late capitalist societies. Class analysis has been displaced, marginalized and disconnected through the discourses of lifelong learning, skill development and the creative economy. After the golden years of stratification research (1940s-70s), the sociological project seemed to stall, until the more recent interest in the cultural dimensions of class surfaced (Devine and Savage 2005: 4). Critical of much of the media scholarship during the 1990s, Graham Murdock is very sceptical of studies, "detailing the pleasures of everyday consumption ... [the] great wave of research devoted to uncovering the possibilities for personal liberation and self-expression concealed within the mundane and the circumscribed" (Murdock 2000:8). In his eyes, "it is the refusal to acknowledge that class remains the fundamental structuring principle of every aspect of life in late capitalism, including communications, that blocks a comprehensive view of contemporary conditions" (pp.7-8). The retreat from class analysis is, for Murdock, the perfect academic expression of the "new individualism." He comments, "It is supremely ironic that the postmodern theoretical 'turn', which has propelled questions of identity, consumption and difference to the centre of academic attention, has coincided almost exactly with the neo-revolution in economic and social policy" (p.8).

Approaching the subject from a particular interest in the ways in which class and gender become incorporated into embodied selves, Steph Lawler (2005) strikes a similar (dis)cord. She asserts that, contrary to the announcement of "the death of class" in various academic and political quarters, "class divisions, class distinctions and class inequalities have not 'died': neither has class ceased to be a meaningful category of analysis. Rather, the drawing of classed distinctions is displaced and individualized. It is displaced on to individual persons (or families) who are approved or disapproved, normalized or pathologized" (p.110). We should just have to consider the latest figures of the tremendous rise in (abject) poverty in the United Kingdom and the coding of the British white working class as backward, "the very antithesis of New Labour's 'modernizing' project" (p.121), to feel alarmed. It seems that whilst many academics have taken their eyes of the ball, the specter of class inequality has further risen, tugged at the heels of the spectacle of Third Wave politics.

The proliferation and diversification of Reality TV genres and products (although by no means originating in the 1990s) has been hot-housed in the climate of neo-liberal politics over the past ten years or so, itself being one of the embers of consumption practices and economic growth. In the British context, it is hard not to translate former Prime Minister Tony Blair's pledge and rallying call for 'education, education, education' into the more true-ringing phrase 'education, re-education, self-monitoring'. Exactly what we can and should expect from Reality TV in terms of realism, social experimentation, confession, redemption and, ultimately, empowerment and its contribution to our understanding of "ourselves as citizens and consumers" (Palmer 2004: 173), needs to be more overtly seen as the class-re-education project that it (at least in part) constitutes. A question juts from this context: who educates whom at what cost and how are we all implicated in the production of our new selves? How is the observation, judgment and self-monitoring managed in the configuration of an identity? In this sense we are experiencing, through the making of Reality TV, yet another historical period of reform and transformation in which the re-making of class-formations is quite centrally located.

In her examination of the re-branding of class in contemporary culture, Bev Skeggs (2005b) is particularly interested in the processes by which moral value "is transported into bodies and the mechanisms by which it is retained, accumulated, lost or appropriated" (p.46). She presents a strong case for the need to recognise that, in times of neo-liberal governance and trans-national flexible capitalism, we have to think beyond economic factors, and

evaluate culture as the central site for the production of class formation. She identifies the two economic processes that have promoted the de-materialization of commercial production as hypercommodifacation and industrialization of culture. Globalization, in this context, is bound to increase the production of these nonmatter commodities, because they are so mobile (p.47). In all of this, according to Skeggs, the working-class figure as a culture to be plundered for the expansion into new markets; "the progression and progressiveness of the new middle-class self is predicated on holding in place—fixing—that which must signify stagnation and immobility. So the working-class is both fragmented as a resource that functions in a variety of ways to sustain the modernity of factions of the middle-class but also fixed in place so others can be seen as distant from it" (p.66). In this context, Skeggs asks theorists to remain suspicious of theories of mobility as the "new social condition", as they reveal "more about the social position of the theorist and the re-constitution of the middle-class than any universal social condition" (ibid.). Although not automatically of universal appeal and success, many Reality TV formats, genres and related merchandise travel indeed well in the global arena, serving as a timely illustration of the mobility of popular culture. It is necessary, then, to look briefly at a couple of examples of the ways in which Reality TV programming evokes and positions certain classes in society, to what effect and under what kinds of technological conditions and forms of governance.

Bethany Ogdon (2006), writing from an American perspective, explores what she calls The Psycho-Economy of Reality Television, by looking at the relationship between a nation caught up in "the age of overwork" (p.26) and Reality TV throughout the 1990s and across all sub-genres. Particular parallels can be drawn here with regards to the British context, not least on the basis that it is being repeatedly cited that the working hours in Britain tower way above those worked by the rest of Europe. Ogden argues that "[t]he chronic condition of the [middle-class American wage earner] subject in "the age of overwork" is the body's registration of stress, fatigue, and, at the bottom, estrangement from what is commonly referred to as 'real life'" (p.28). What she suggests then is "that reality TV's 'real people' were consistently offered up as extraordinary, as a kind of televisual lumpenproletariat, a non-productive underclass, distinctly at odds with notions of the average, (exceptionally) hard-working American." Furthermore, she claims that "all reality television programming formats worked to expose these 'real' people that populated their environment in ways that produced a constant stream of images of passive enjoyment ('enjoyment of self in man') for use by reality TV's overworked national viewing audience" (p.30).

Somewhat universalizing in her claims and, therefore, losing some (sub) generic nuances, Ogden's argument has credence, particularly with regards to Talk Show TV and certain forms of Docu-Soaps. What she aims to demonstrate is not that Reality TV's 'real people' all belong to a nonproductive underclass. Rather she suggests "that these 'real people' were emphatically embodied through the conventions of the genre and [...] put into situations guaranteed to produce images of 'inert passivity'" (p.39). Importantly, anyone who participates as audience member can (temporarily at least) position her- or himself as a member of a hard-working nation. "[R]eality TV's 'lumpenproletariat' other becomes the doppelganger of the properly active subject" (ibid.) of late capitalism.

Not overtly pitched as an analysis of class-formation, Barry King's study of the ontology of reality as a form of governance, nevertheless reveals how Reality TV is part of a general cultural condition (which he terms 'modularity'), producing settings (or colleges) for affective moulding—"the learning of dispositions, habits and interests that reproduce a larger cultural formation" (2006:43). Importantly, as he points out, Reality TV does not just simply reflect those trends, rather, it plays a part in codifying them as a form of life. With reference to a little known Australian/New Zealand program The Resort, he interrogates two types of modes of interpersonal control: the externally imposed (as perhaps best seen in Big Brother) and the other, seemingly more 'fun' oriented but ultimately even more invasive form, typified by Survivor.

In the context of this paper, it is significant to note that King identifies the Big Brother format (incorporating a closed, surveillance-saturated mise-en-scene) as "an expression of the culture of low skill end service work, so called MacJobs where the performance is highly scripted and subjected to constant scrutiny" (p.54). On the other hand, the Survivor-type format with a loser mise-en-scene and more syncoptically grounded pattern of interaction, "addresses the upper end of service team-work, or the high skill, high wage IMacJobs implicated in the maintenance and support of management systems" (ibid.). He concludes that, as "[a] network society is marked by a structural split between a core labour force of service employees and managers and a larger 'peripheral' disposable labour force [...] this distinction between those who are programming and those who are programmed is replicated—imaginatively—in the world of reality TV" (p.55). The Big Brother scenario then puts the body into prison, whereas the Survivor scenario "evolves into a more finely grained concertive control, in which the body becomes the prison of the soul"

(ibid.). These bodies are then effectively classed in the specific ways in which they are disciplined. Such affiliations raise questions about how audiences are aligned with consumers.

Audiences, Agency and Consumer Politics

Mark Baynes, in charge of the team who produced the very first Big Brother UK website in 2000 discussed the UK BB1 success in terms of the simplicity of the format and the technological possibilities:

Back to basics, this is what Big Brother is all about [...]. It worked well here [because] basically you walk down the street and look into people's front window with the curtains half closed. We've got the technology to do it. [2]

The issues being raised here are threefold. Firstly, an assumption is being made that there is a universal appeal and desire to peek into and learn more about other—ordinary—people's private, even intimate, lives generally speaking. Secondly, it is through technological means that we are ultimately enabled to enter the lives of others. Finally, there is the notion that, through the use of a new and enhanced technological looking glass, we, the public, will graduate to become (engaged) participants of other people's everyday lives, rather than remain mere audience members.

Discourses surrounding genres like reality TV as well as technological delivery formats/platforms such as enhanced/interactive TV and live video streaming on the Internet (amongst others) produce expectations of 'reality' and interactivity that arch beyond more traditional mediated experiences. We are to think of ourselves not as simple onlookers. Rather, what is being presented is part of our everyday reality—and we become implicated in what is being represented. However, the question remains—what kinds of self(hood) are we being invited to construct and negotiate.

Biressi and Nunn (2005), for example, have pointed out that the politics of Reality TV is about social difference, rather than the working class. It is about the politics of identity, rather than the politics of collective action and group solidarity. Although they observe that Reality TV can be "conservative, retributive and judgemental" (p.3), they consider programmes such as Wife Swap, You are What you Eat and Neighbours from Hell "no less valuable as a social document of classed identity, social hierarchy and status anxiety then, for example, the acclaimed television drama documentary Cathy Come Home" (ibid.).

I do not wish to take issue with their representational value as such. However, I would like to take issue with some of the representational forms they produce, an example of which is (female) symbolic violence. As Angela McRobbie (2005) highlights in her discussion of What Not to Wear, Reality TV programs such as this "actively generate and legitimise forms of class antagonism particularly between women in a way which would have been socially unacceptable until recently. That is, the rules of television were such that public humiliation of their failure to adhere to middle-class standards in speech or appearance would have been considered offensive, discriminatory or prejudicial" (p.100).

We have to ask ourselves what mode of empowerment Reality TV offers to the 'ordinary people' featured, as well a to the audience, or 'public',—and what kinds of (TV and civic) democracy this generates. To put it crudely: where is the self-empowerment in being rendered 'the new you' when this transformation is based on symbolic coercion (to adhere to a fictitious middle-class ideal). Ideals of a class-less society are also being called into question when we, with Wood and Skeggs (2004), ask—do "all people have access to the right resources for the making of the self" (p.205).

Positioning this discussion in the context of everyday life and audience agency, and taking into account the concept of 'interactivity', we also have to consider to what extent we can still coherently speak of Reality Television as an experience.

Drawing on the work of cultural historian and ethnologist Michel de Certeau, Roger Silverstone (1989) suggests that "television is everyday life" (p.77, my emphasis) . He states that: "To study one is at the same time to study the other" (ibid.). By extension, we can argue that, increasingly, in certain parts of the world, new mobile and Internet technologies and their texts are part of the fabric of everyday life—enabling and providing much currency for everyday conversation.

Unlike early critics of the culture industries and mass society, de Certeau (and subsequently Silverstone) makes a case for everyday life, which demonstrates its dynamic and creative essence: "Daily life is not the domain of the manipulated mass, inert and passive; and consumption is not 'something done by sheep progressively immobilized and "handled" as a result of the growing mobility of the media as they conquer space.' The world of everyday life is a

world of consumption certainly, but consumption has to be understood as productive. Buying, using, reading—none of these activities leaves the subject, the object or even the system untouched" (pp.78-79).

De Certeau talks about the poetics of everyday life in that, rather then simply being mundane, it is where strategies and tactics of power are constantly being actualized. As Silverstone explains this in relation to television: "Television is both strategic and tactical [...]. It displays in its narratives both the forms and the force of a moral and political order, and it provides in its rhetoric the raw material for the heterogeneous and indeterminate practices of the everyday" (p.85).

My question then is: can we, in the event of the proliferation of 'interactive' modes of address and technologies and in the knowledge that "[m]ediated communication [generally] is no longer simply or even mainly mass communication" (Livingstone 2004:75) witness shifts in the dynamics of the interplay between media strategies and tactics (with seemingly more emphasis on tactical input)? Or, to put it bluntly, are we kidding ourselves, and existing power structures are merely more imaginatively disguised and complicity also takes on another dimension?

As Tincknell and Raghuram (2004) argue, new kinds of 'interactive' media texts make the question of the 'active' audience of renewed interest. Audiences may go beyond just responding to the text, but actually help to change it (voting, setting tasks in BB, questions and public 'feedback' on lifestyle shows). But, while shows like BB actively inscribe the idea of agency ('Their fate is in your hands'), the actual range of opportunities available to the audience are actually fairly limited (pp.262-63). "[A]udience research," according to Tincknell and Raghuram, "must take account of the processes involved in 'becoming' an audience, as well as the meanings produced once the audience has been solicited. It may also mean that the idealization of the 'active audience" must be tempered by a recognition that discourses become hegemonic because they are often able to incorporate and recuperate resistant elements" (p.267).

In her examination of the promise of interactivity in Reality TV programming, Su Holmes (2004) focuses on The Salon, less well known than 'event TV' such as Big Brother, in order to explore the "space for audience intervention in, and negotiation with, contemporary cultural production" (p.214). Staged as a hairdressing salon and beauty spa in South London, the program emulated a traditional workplace environment with gossip and drama 'naturally' occurring; blending the ethos of observational documentary and docusoap (p.215). Aiming at a younger audience, The Salon established an interactive framework between TV, the Internet and the audience that set it apart from most of its precursors. From e-mailing the manager with views on staff and events, voting on plot developments, The Salon's web forum "became a crucial discourse in the text, given that it was often read (and hence discussed) by both staff and clients in the programme itself" (p.219). Furthermore, the viewers themselves could become clients, after phoning in for an appointment (giving the concept of audience 'in' the text another meaning). This blurring between production and consumption, participants and televisual narrative, then, raises the question of the relative ideological openness of such a text. As such, Holmes points out, 'texts' like The Salon problematize traditional approaches to textual analysis. However, as interactivity between TV, internet and the viewer/user "point to the more porous nature of these programs, when it comes to the spatial, temporal and technological relations between viewer and text [...] the concept of audience 'in' the text may suggest less the need to 'radicalize' or jettison textual analysis [..] than the need to retain the TV text as an analytic category all the more urgently, providing, as it does, its own commentary on the power relations between text and audience [...]" (p.229).

Placing 'ordinary' people into Reality TV contexts is less about the about observation, than about display and performance (p.217). As Abercrombie and Longhurst suggest, "Life is constant performance; we are audience and performer at the same time; everybody is an audience all the time. Performance is not a discrete event [...] people are simultaneously performers and audience members" (Cited in Holmes 228). This 'display and performance' is generated and marked on and off screen to a great extent through what can be deemed as the body-politics of Reality TV. As the (gendered) body has become the icon of late capitalism and consumer society as well as a symbol of popular postfeminism, the last section aims to tentatively examine and give some examples of how the body is invested in and classed through particular (re-educational) discourses in and beyond the Reality TV experience. In this context I argue that 'resistance' is inevitably caught up in expressions of 'complicity' or conformity.

Body - Classifications

In the United Kingdom, the Reality TV season 2006/07 surely provided some very overt representations of

class antagonism, subsequently causing wide spread debates in the media and in public. Standing somewhat out from the crowd of the usual suspects of Lifestyle and Makeover programs—the seventh season of Big Brother UK [3] and the more recent 'Shilpa-Jade' controversy generated by the show Celebrity Big Brother UK. The British audiences also saw the arrival of the first series of ASBO Teen to Beauty Queen [4] as well as Trinny Woodall and Susannah Constantine's new venture Trinny and Susannah Undress [5].

In all of these examples, the body is quite literally figured as a site of class-struggle through the performance of 'doing looks' (Frost 2005) and is, therefore, judged and/or adjusted according to what is deemed acceptable and respectable (in relation to middle-class standards and expectations). To be more precise, it is (still) the female body that affords foremost attention.

As Liz Frost points out, "[c]oncerns with the self, the well-being of the self, the 'actualization' of the self, including the body and appearance, have developed in relation to the needs of consumer capitalism to produce individualized consumers with a whole range of personal wants and needs" (p.67). Drawing on Goffman, however, we have to understand selfhood not as an intrinsic, individually located, essence in control of its relationship with its environment, "but a surface-located interactive, in-process personhood" (p.66). In this sense then, the self and the presentation of self become blended and the depiction and construction of identity inseparable: appearance constitutes gendered subjectivity. By conceptualizing visual aspects of the self, 'doing looks', as integral to the production of gendered social identity, and as an interactive process, binaries such as agent/victim can be avoided (p.67).

It is by now well documented how bodies and looks can be understood as a form of 'cultural capital' not just for young people. Bourdieu's work informs our understanding of how appearance and related consumer practices are divided, divisive and damaging. He, for example, argues that: "[...] the proportion of women who consider themselves below average in beauty falls very rapidly as one moves up the social hierarchy. It is not surprising that petit bourgeoisie women,—who are almost as dissatisfied with their bodies as working-class women [...] devote such great investments and self-denial and especially time to improve their appearance" (Cited in Frost 76).

In this context, it is not surprising that a considerable amount of time was spent by the Big Brother 7 contestants on evaluating, comparing, discussing, falling out over and indeed on the fondling of breasts. The size, shape, plasticity or 'originality' of the breasts of the female contestants commanded attention—from themselves and the rest of the house. If, as Palmer explains, a lot of lifestyle programming seems to suggest that class is eradicated, something to be overcome by learning middle-classness (a task doomed to fail because it constitutes an acquisition, rather then 'knowing' without ever having been learnt) (Palmer 188) then the 'breast-wars' of Big Brother 7 represent of course only one fraction of a much more fundamental struggle over class-positions and positioning of the female body.

Cut off from the usual entourage of experts supplied by lifestyle programming, the contestants took the 'judging' into their own hands, therefore demonstrating their own classed 'expertise'. As such we could witness the struggle to debunk and, at the same time to reinforce class stereotyping. It was the women of the BBHouse themselves who were most literate in the evaluation of the self through the body.

How vulnerable classed subjectivities based on aspirational consumerism are, and how much effort and renegotiation is indeed necessary in the up-keep and maintenance, played itself out over and over again through contestants such as Lea, Nikki, Imogen, Aisleyne and Suzi. As cosmetic breast alteration itself appears to be less and less a 'fool-proof' signifier of classed status, the BB 7 women did not only establish who 'has' and who has not, but spent considerable time on re-establishing rules of 'distinction' in terms of size and look.

Former porn actresses Lea, for example, alternated between exclamations of 'I like my boobs, I think they are great', defending her choice of large implants,—and very downcast moments, signifying possibly her recognition of difference. 'Promo girl' Aisleyne walked a tightrope between trying to maintain her 'street-cred' and, at the same time, justifying her aspirational 'boob-choice' (i.e. along the lines of 'lots of women these days have them done, it doesn't mean what it used to'). Golden ticket winner Suzi's entry into the House clearly complicated matters further with her 'posh' accent, demeanor AND cosmetically enhanced breasts. Reading her as 'posh' (that is, upper-middle-class), model Nikki regularly burst out into tears of anger: 'who does she think she is—she thinks she is better than we are'. Henceforth, the lines of distinction where assessed and re-considered and performances adjusted.

In the wake of the more general BB 7 press coverage, and seemingly less fooled by Suzy than Nikki, Shane Watson from the Sunday Times passed social judgment upon all of them to reestablish 'order' in the BBHouse so to speak:

As class indicators go, you can't beat a pair of breasts. Accent used to be the big one, but that's no longer

foolproof (see Suzie on Big Brother). Wardrobe was also once a reliable gauge of provenance, but that has ended when glam trash became the preferred look for everyone from Posh Spice to Liz Hurley. Run through the old standard tests—manners, postcode, lifestyle choices, bidets—and you realize that, these days, none of them is anywhere near as revealing as breasts. The size and shapes of boobs are sure-fire ways of placing someone on the social spectrum (2006:58).

I would like to finish off with reference to what I find a particularly pertinent attempt of class positioning and 'reeducation' of the body (und, ultimately, the mind): the case of the U.K. reality show ASBO Teen to Beauty Queen.

In her reflections on young women and consumer culture, Angela McRobbie (2004) comments on "the encroachment of commercial forces that threaten to supplant the role and authority of the various institutions which have, in the past, presided over the lives and conduct of young women and girls"—such as family, education, medicine and law for example. She argues that "consumer culture, riding the wave of U.K. governmental off-loading of social responsibility through de-regulationist policies, has grabbed hold of this terrain, turning it into the most profitable of opportunities." ASBO Teen to Beauty Queen is relevant in this context in that it is one of the growing numbers of reality shows explicitly featuring teenagers (in this case from Manchester—'the ASBO capital in the UK'), attesting Reality TV's rising stakes in taking on the role of public institutions. Unlike Brat Camp [6], it is concerned specifically with the betterment of young teenage girls, by teaching them how to become 'beauty queens'—in other words, teaching them disciplinary practices of femininity (Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer 2006:257) through bodily performance.

As Ladette to Lady [7] puts what is considered 'wayward' young women through the 'old'-school drill of posture, deportment, manners,—'re-educating' them in the art of food, drink and dress—in order to, for a short while, mix with the English upper-classes, ASBO Teens undergo an American style makeover by former U.S. beauty queen Michelle Fryatt. The aim: to compete in the Miss Teen International beauty pageant in the United States. Banet-Weiser and Portwood-Stacer have pointed out that in the original Miss America pageant, the contestants perform the abstract character of liberal personhood—white and middle class—within a particular national imaginary. Importantly, as a televised event, it has dramatically declined in audience ratings over the past few years and, effectively, been replaced in the United States by the post-feminist texts of cosmetic surgery makeover shows such as The Swan and Extreme Makeover (p.258).

The ASBO Teens provide us with a TV interpretation of the British under-class: trapped in their lives with no aspirations—immobile in other words. Drink and drug fueled, mentally unstable, ungovernable, they signify bodies out of control. The program goes through some lengths to confer particular identities on them in order to mark abnormality: shots of the teenagers roaming council estates guarded by CCTV, individual breakdowns, paranoia and screaming fits, which are in most parts 'bleeped out'. Beauty treatment and moralistic paternalism rather than social justice and public responsibility are the suggested 'medicine' in late consumer capitalism.

As bodies are being modified—groomed, tied into shape, bullied into submission and expelled from such programs if noncompliant, it is hard not to perceive Reality TV, as an expression of popular culture, to be working on, rather than through the lower classes. Nevertheless, it would be naïve to suggest that even these products of the culture industry work in a straightforward oppressive manner on 'cultural dupes' on and off screen. As Steph Lawler asserts through Bourdieu and Wacquant, "[p]eople are no fools; they are much less bizarre or deluded than we would spontaneously believe precisely because they have internalized, through a protracted and multisided processes of conditioning, the objective choices they face" (p.121). In this sense: resistance may be alienating and submission may be liberating; "there is no resistance that is not some way complicitous with power" (Bar-On cited in Lawler 122). Interestingly, both programs, ASBO Teen and Ladette to Lady, turn into a form of comedy when the British teens 'take charge' and increasingly mock the (American) beauty system they are being subjected to, and when the ladettes send up the very aristocrats they are groomed to socialize with. However, the fact that Reality TV so easily and knowingly absorbs and reproduces certain forms of resistance and complicity signifies the increasing sophistication of the genre and its sub-genres to blur the boundaries between them, hence fostering (for example, through setting certain body-politic agendas) a sense of resistance that is always already accounted for and therefore complicitous with the project itself.

Reality TV, through its technical and rhetorical forms of governance as well as its emphasis on (audience) participation and incorporation into its texts plays an increasing role in the formation, self-moderation and maintenance of capitalist consumer society. As a cultural product, it arguably works on as well as through the popular classes, reasserting distinction on the basis of constructing a fantasy of social mobility through reeducation and

bodily transformation. We actively look on as bodies of difference turn into bodies of indifference, molded and cut into shape, constituting particular projects of self-expression as part of life in consumer democracy.

The poetics of Reality TV is always already part of the poetics of everyday life. As the old 'agent/victim' binary no longer holds, it is paramount to assess the mechanisms and consequences of the banality, boredom, boob and body-politics of contemporary Reality TV and to firmly place this analysis within its specific historical, political and economic parameters. In this context, postmodern accounts of social change, suggesting an increase in flux and fluidity in social life and identity formation based on consumption and consumerism are somewhat at odds with the "real social, material and economic constraints on the capacity to express our identities through consumption and other means that are structured by relations of age, class, gender and ethnicity" (Phillips and Western 2005:168). As the (female) body has been gaining increasing importance in 'high modernity' as a site of labor and power struggles, the 'body-classification' project articulated through the poetics of Reality TV is illustrative of the fact that we would be ill advised to add 'post-class' to the mantra of post-work, post-fordism and post-feminism.

Endnotes

1. I would like to thank Tara Brabazon and Julie Doyle for their comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

2. Personal interview (December 19, 2000).

3. Endemol; Channel 4, UK.

4. North One Television, Channel Five, UK(November 15-December 20 2006).

5. ITVProductions; ITV1, UK (October 3, 2006 -).

6. Channel 4, UK/ABC (Original run: July 13, 2005-August 24, 2005).

7. RDFMedia; ITV, UK (Original run: June 2, 2005-October 26, 2006).

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.010

Talking About Gender, Race and Class – Bringing Capitalism Back In: An Outline of a Preliminary Argument

John Acker

Introduction

Feminists have been talking about gender, race and class for at least 30 years, but their interconnections—or intersectionality—are still problematic territory in feminist theoretical discourse, at least to me. I have been particularly concerned with three problems -

> **First,** the concept of class has not been adequately reformulated to bring women's unpaid domestic labor into the understanding of class relations and capitalism, although many have argued that this labor is valuable to the economy and should be included in understanding class.
>
> **Second,** how we conceptualize gender, race, and class affects how they can be seen to "intersect." Are gender, race, and class aspects of individual identity, processes involved in intra-group or inter-organizational relations, systems or regimes of inequality? Or all three? If we see these abstractions as systems, how do systems intersect?
>
> **Third,** capitalist relations are the obvious context in which gender, race, and class processes occur, but capitalism is part of a shadowy background, not the foreground in many—not all—discussions.

I deal with these issues by proposing that we reconceptualize "economy" and think about class and capitalism as gendered and racialized.

I then use the resulting perspective on gendered and racialized class to briefly examine the contemporary crisis in care, work/family balance, or, more broadly, a crisis in social reproduction.

The "Economy," Gendered and Racialized Class, and Capitalism.

Economic Activity—can be defined as interdependent processes of provisioning, providing what is socially defined as necessary to sustain life and ensure individual and community survival. (Julie Nelson 1993)

> Includes production, social reproduction, and distribution—paid and unpaid. Allows recognition of self-provisioning and other noncapitalist forms of provisioning. This concept also allows the inclusion of unpaid activities of caring for others, educating, and preparing workers for the next day of work and raising the next generation of workers and citizens. (Elson 2000)[1]

Class—unequal power and control over and access to means of provisioning. Practices that produce, maintain or cope with those inequalities. Class relations are gendered and racialized. Class practices are diverse, emerge in political as well as economic processes. Example: women on welfare who have no control over and minimal access

to the means of provisioning. They put together resources for their families from different sources, such as welfare benefits, paid work, money from friends and family, and odd jobs. Historically changing class power relations are differentiated by gender and race.

Capitalism—the present form of organizing much provisioning activity. Unequal power and control result from this capitalist organization (of course, not the only way to look at capitalism.) We can assess the economy in terms of how well it does in provisioning the population. Rather than looking at GNP or economic growth, the first question might be about adequate provisioning at the bottom or adequate support for care.

Gendered Contradictions of Capitalism

The aims and ways of organizing of capitalist production and human reproduction are different and often contradictory.

- Primary aim of production is profit, not provisioning
- Primary aim of families and households is provisioning, preserving and enhancing life,

Contradictions are anchored in the gendered separation of production and households. Often racialized in U.S. Capitalist production decisions are based on what will sell, not necessarily on what is needed by families and households.

Contradictions are also anchored in commodification of labor (Polanyi 1947). Labor is bought only as needed, at the lowest price possible. When labor is not needed, it is not bought, as with any other commodity. When wages provide the primary means of access to provisioning, lack of demand for this commodity has calamitous consequences for ordinary people who depend on wages. As Polanyi argues, the commodification of labor, along with land and money, are necessary to the functioning of industrial capitalism.

The Result: Non-responsibility of Capitalist Organizations

- Nonresponsibility = refusals or attempts to avoid meeting provisioning needs unless actions enhance private interests, profit, or accumulation of capital. This includes refusals to attend to the conditions of provisioning such as safety and quality of products.

- Legal status of corporations in many states confirms non-responsibility. Primary obligation to stockholders is written into law. With the legal status of individuals, corporations claim privacy rights in regard to information about many of their actions.

Claims to nonresponsibility are endemic, Responses to demands from employees, customers, social movements, communities, governments for:

- Living wages, workplace safety, hours, benefits
- Affirmative Action, pay equity
- Paid, quality day care; paid family leave
- Environmental damage, community health
- Income support and replacement, adequate low-cost housing, health care
- Product quality and safety

Women and households are the fall back resources for provisioning—their unpaid work is devalued, partly because it does not result in money.

Corporations defend themselves, sometimes take positive action, support Corporate Social Responsibility, arguing that there is a business case for responsibility. Corporations defend themselves:

- To secure or retain a labor supply
- To retain or gain customers

- To reduce civil disorder
- To maintain or achieve legitimacy
- To avoid legal challenges to their policies

Question seldom asked: how those doing unpaid caring work will be provisioned. This work is essential to the reproduction of the society, to the family and household, and to employing organizations.

Past solutions, now disappearing:

The male provider—myth or reality?—probably existed only for middle and upper class white families until the New Deal and end of WW II when a "family wage" was achieved through labor union bargaining in some sectors.

The welfare state was always minimal in the United States. Its development was limited by the politics of race and liberal/conservative capitalism (Quadagno 1994). A long war on labor also limited the kind of social democratic developments that supported the welfare state in other countries (e.g. Piven and Cloward 1994).

The Nonresponsibility of U.S. Capitalism and the Care Crisis

Care crises result from the nonresponsibility of capitalist organizations, the underlying relations that produce non-responsibility, and the victories of neo-liberalism that opposes government solutions.

Care crises are gendered and racialized class issues that now are crossing class line. Care problems affect middle class and working class mothers and fathers, both single and partnered, who have jobs. The present impact on middle class families may be the reason that the crisis is visible to white middle class observers now. Observers from other locations might say that a care crisis has always faced poor African American families. Another less advantaged group, poor two parent families and single poor mothers often suffer a more aggravated crisis because they lack the basic income to support their families, often because of racial/ethnic discrimination. Moreover, millions of poor people throughout the world are coping with not only a care crisis, but also a broader crisis in social reproduction. These are related, but not identical problems:

"Care" stands for the mostly unpaid labor of nurturing and caring for children and the ill elderly, usually but not always in the family and in the home. Care giving has a lack of fit with the demands of paid work, organized on the model of a worker with no such obligations.

"Work/family balance" is a solution to the care problem—it has to do with care-giving supports—family leave, good quality day care, time flexibility—that allow women and men to both work and care for their children, themselves and for parents or others who may be ill.

"Social reproduction" is a broader concept that can include replenishing and preparing workers for the next day, creating the next generation of citizens and workers, having available the resources to do these things, including health care, affordable housing, a basic reliable income, affordable education, public safety, and the provision of life necessities such as clean water and food. A crisis in social reproduction exists for some sectors of the U.S. population, as well as for large groups in many other countries.

Restructuring of the national and global economy undermines old solutions to the problem of provisioning.

Jobs for women open up and women go to work, substituting their paid labor for unpaid labor, that is still done, but under greater pressure. Work and other demands increase. Men's wages are flat or falling—"family wage" is gone for most. No alternative supports are developed, overwhelmingly because of capitalist neo-liberal opposition. Result—escalation of the care crisis.

Neoliberalism provides ideological support for nonresponsibility and for undermining old supports. Down-sizing and off-shoring jobs, privatizing and downsizing government supports. Destruction of the social safety-net. Structural readjustment imposed on many countries. The idea that care is a private, individual matter. The imperative that everyone must work for wages.

Welfare State Solutions Remain Strong in Other Wealthy Countries.

Political processes make crass nonresponsibility and destruction of supports for social reproduction very difficult to implement. Nevertheless, strong pressures from corporations and neo-liberal economists push for reducing social benefits in EU countries, in the name of flexibility, competitiveness, and low unemployment.

Possible solutions

- Organize to exert political and social pressure—make care a social, not an individual problem.
- Strengthen the social safety net
- Institute basic income support, such as a citizen's income
- Legislate mandatory and paid family leave, flexible work schedules, government support or employer supported day care.
- Raise political questions about the viability of an economy in which the organizations that control the means of provisioning have no responsibility for the provisioning of the population

Conclusion:

Many solutions to the care crisis or the crisis in social reproduction are possible, but all involve restraining the nonresponsibility of capitalism.

Endnotes

1. This is, of course, an old argument made by socialist feminists beginning in the 1970s.).

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.011

Online Democratic Deliberation in a Time of Information Abundance

Craig Bellamy

The intensified use of the Internet by civil society groups and governments for political purposes has left many questions unexplained—especially in terms of the Internet's effects upon deliberative democratic processes. The Internet was first imagined as a means to revitalize deliberative processes. However, poor design and lack of usability research meant that many ambitions went largely unrealized. With a new wave of Internet technologies, 'deliberative design' has become even more important to stem what many claim is a trend towards political fragmentation and disaggregation. In a time of 'information abundance' mounting political communication online may also undermine collectivist, deliberative democratic processes, distinct from the ambition to renew these processes. There is therefore a pressing need to design Internet technologies that serve deliberative democracy, rather than unwittingly undermine it.

Political Communication and Information Scarcity

The Internet arrived on the global stage during a tumultuous juncture in world history. The Soviet Empire collapsed, ending fifty years of ideological battle between the centralized command economies of the Communist East and the free-market economies of the capitalist West. A world that was sharply divided between the Socialist ideologies of centralized planning—coupled with tight information controls—and the capitalist ideologies of individual agency and individual expression was superceded by a world of increasingly unfettered 'flows'. Primarily driven by the United States, its allies, and the post-World War II Bretton Woods Institutions such as GATT (General Agreement on Tariff and Trade), freedom of expression, trade, and of the market came to dominate international relations. The Internet entered the global arena during this period of great change; it was both defined by this change and defined this change (and it may have developed very differently if it was conceived during another period of history). It is not unusual, therefore, that during the tentative entry into the post Cold War period, many early researchers understood the Internet's political potential as one firmly grounded in 'information scarcity' and in censorial anxieties that derive from the ideological divisions of the 'short Twentieth Century' (Hobsbawn 1994).

Early commentators and cyberenthusiasts were quick to promulgate the democratic potential of the Internet, and claimed that the new technologies, free of censorial 'gate keeping', would enliven political debate, facilitate direct democracy, and empower citizen participation in grassroots, bottom-up political exchange among citizens and between citizen and state (Negroponte 1995; Rheingold 1995; Toffler and Toffler 1995; Dyson 1998). However, the increased ability for all groups and individuals to advance their concerns online also advances risks to broader, collective and deliberative decision making.

Political Communication and Information Abundance

The history of political communication is intimately connected to the history of broader technological

innovation and political actors have always adapted the communication mechanisms at their disposal, whether they be radio, film, television, or newspapers (Bimber 2003). The Internet is no exception and there are many case studies that examine the Internet's political efficacy within a plethora of campaigns (Bergman 2003). However, the bulk of these studies tend to promote a view of technological determinism that over-emphasizes the role of self-publishing for broader, informed, and collective decision-making (Bimber 2003; Oates, Owen and Gibson 2006). Some have argued that the individualized and opinion-centered nature of the Internet and new technologies in general may also lead to disaggregation, information overload, less deliberation and greater levels of apathy among citizens (Shenk 1997; Bimber 1998; Oates and Gibson 2006).

It is the idea of 'information overload', or what Bruce Bimber refers to as 'information abundance', that is rarely addressed in discussions of civil society and online political communication (Bimber 2003). The Internet and other new media have long reached a critical mass so tapered discussions on the empowering nature of self-publishing and the obviation of 'gate keeping' and political censorship seem unrealistic in societies now defined by too much information. As Bimber observes:

> ...when citizens are given greater capacity to select among multiple media sources, they are most likely to make selections to narrower and more compatible viewpoints. That is, citizens do not use a richer and more diverse media environment to better inform themselves about conflicting ideas and positions, but instead select a narrower and more parochial set of sources (Bimber 2003:208, quoting Mutz and Martin, 2001).

Succinctly, Bimber (2003) and Mutz and Martin (2001) assert that when faced with 'information abundance' citizens do not necessarily seek information to deliberate, but seek information to bolster their prior political beliefs. This can result in the formation of 'information islands' of insular pockets of political discourse far removed from broader, deliberative discussions of pluralistic society and its democratic structuring (Carson 2006). These political information 'islands' (or insulated networks) may sustain, racial Diasporas, gender issues, or class factions. They could likewise facilitate powerful epistemic advocacy, concentrations of wealth, religious politics, or other formations of social, political, or 'human capital' (Bourdieu 1998). As Heinz Brandenburg (2006) explains:

> By encapsulating into narrowly defined interest groups and customising the information flow, the user potentially disconnects from the larger society, moving towards either individualisation or intensified small-group association (Brandenburg:218).

Nevertheless, Shenk (1997), Bimber (1998), and Brandenburg's (2006) considerations of the looming threats of 'information abundance', and its complex relationship to deliberative democracy, have been somewhat speculative. This is perhaps because the notions of 'information abundance' and democratic deliberation were largely exterior to the core aim of their research and because at the time of some of these studies 'information abundance', coupled with its recent technical redress, was not as significant as it is now. The Internet currently has over one hundred million sites and is exploited by all political parties as well as thousands of civil society groups of all political persuasions. It is accessed regularly by the majority of the population in all Western developed nations and has become a central component of our political information system . Furthermore, the Internet was never a finished project anyhow and the recent technical developments that flock around the term 'Web2.0', considerably alter how we understand and make use of the Internet especially in terms of how individuals filter and order the plethora of political information online (O'Reilly 2005).

Information Filtering: A Response to Information Abundance

Web 2.0—a popular term that refers to an emergent set of online practices and technologies—is, in part, a response to 'information abundance'. It affords such knowledge organization possibilities as user-centred ordering and filtering of cogenerated information through features such as social classification (called 'tagging' or 'folksonomies') and RSS Feeds (Really Simple Syndication). Web 2.0 also gives rise to what many claim is rapidly becoming a 'real time' web through systems that allow the visualization of the 'subjects' that are being 'discussed' on a good portion of the global Internet in real time (albeit in a somewhat asynchronous 'real time', i.e., like blogging and pod casting). This is highly useful for examining how political communication is ordered and discussed within broader society. Folksonomy—the opposite of taxonomy—is a cornerstone of Web 2.0 and refers to a system of 'bottom-up' user-generated categorization (or tagging) of online digital objects such as articles, blog entries, video, photos, and sound files.

User-generated tags can be aggregated into 'tag clouds', thus making it possible to visualize, albeit in a nascent and rudimentary way, the data aggregating across or within any given network and repository. Folksonomies, such as those provided through the popular new filtering systems Technorati.com and Del.icio.us, allow users to visualize what is being discussed by users on their systems in real time. Cursory periodical glances at Technorati reveal that at least 20% of the 'top tags' are at times allied to political discussions (albeit mostly U.S.-centric). See Figure 1.

Figure 1. A user-generated folksonomy or 'tag cloud' from the social bookmaking site del.icio.us

There is a growing awareness of the significance of 'folksonomy' and user-centred classification, especially within the information sciences. (Yakel 2006) The idea of 'everyday' classification of the ways in which people interact, produce, and distribute (political) information has immense research potential.

Folksonomies or 'social classification' (Hammond et al. 2005) are by no means the only technological response to the dilemmas of ordering information in systems increasingly clogged by information. Wikis such as Socialtext.com, online news sources like Digg.com, Youtube.com, and popular new 'television stations' such as Al Gore's Current.tv, all place user-centred information creation, ordering and retrieval at the center of their respective models. Thus users have the ability to rate, filter and hierarchize information either collectively (as in the case of Digg.com), or individually through membership based networks, as in the case of Youtube.com.

Thus we are entering a period of information abundance with a number of inventive technical responses to that abundance. In a recent forum at the Oxford Internet Institute at the university of Oxford, the Inventor of the World Wide Web, Tim Berners-Lee, claimed that the global email system was on the verge of collapse simply because there are too many emails (Berners-Lee 2006). Systems such as Socialtext.com, a Wiki style system for large enterprises such as universities, have risen in popularity to deal with 'information abundance' and the problem of email overload and ineffectiveness. Hence, there are some parallel lines of technical development and thought here that could benefit from a much more rigorous encounter. First, a number of Internet and political communication theorists recognise the dangers of 'information abundance', especially upon discourses of deliberative democracy (Bimber 2003; Brandenburg 2006; Carson 2006). Second, a series of technical innovations, commonly referred to as Web2.0, partly address the broader problems of information abundance. Thus the question remains: how can new ways of filtering, creating and ordering knowledge be used to better design online deliberation?

What is Effective Deliberation?

To address this question, there is need to first delineate what is 'deliberation'? Deliberation can take a number of forms depending on the political and social context of the stakeholders and their relationships to the subjects being discussed. Deliberation can involve individuals and groups from the full political and social spectrum, so there is a need to be flexible. Some technologies may not be suitable to particular social and political contexts as low

'technical capital' within a certain group may impede online deliberation or some subjects may not be well-rendered online. Deliberation is a form of public engagement; it is the desire to inform and involve citizens in decision making processes within the issues that concern them (Coleman and Goetz 2001). This could be a proposal to extend a free-way though a district or a proposal to build a new school or to open a new fast-food outlet. It could likewise entail a debate on global warming or the considerations of an article's appropriateness for publication in a scientific journal. Methods of engaging individuals are deliberative if they encourage individuals to critique, discuss, synthesize and judge competing positions and options usually within a rule-based and goal oriented forum. Deliberation encourages individuals to make informed decisions rather than simply assert opinions. Drawing on definitions distilled from the work of Coleman and Goetze (2001), Fishkin (1991), and Kavanaugh et al. (2005) the following working definition of deliberation is a useful starting point:

- Access to balanced information—Deliberative processes are primarily concerned with discovering what citizens think about issues once they have become informed about the various options. The information given to citizens must be comprehensive, balanced and accessible.
- An open agenda—Deliberative questions are likely to set out the broad parameters of the anticipated discussion and the agenda must be open to revision and expansion.
- Time to consider issues expansively—Deliberative exercises must be temporally expansive, allowing citizens adequate time to think through an issue and then work out their position on it.
- Freedom from manipulation or coercion—All political exercises are at risk from manipulation, whether in subtle terms such as rigging the questions or in pressuring the participants to arrive at certain conclusions
- A rule-based framework for discussion—Democratic deliberation is not a Libertarian free-for-all. People feel safer and discuss more freely when they are aware of the transparent rules of the debate
- Participation by an inclusive sample of citizens—High quality deliberation can be highly exclusive, but not if it purports to be democratic. Efforts must be made to recruit participants who are representative of those affected by or concerned about the issue being considered.
- Scope for free interaction between participants—Deliberative exercises require citizen to citizen interaction as well as citizen to government. Participant must have access to other participants to discuss and debates the main points.
- Recognition of difference between participants, but rejection of status based prejudice—Deliberation means that expert opinion does not override the deliberative processes of the citizens but become a component of 'balanced information'.
- Goals—What are the specific goals of the deliberation and are they meaningful and consequential and are they being met?

Much online political communication is poorly designed with few of these or any other deliberative ideas embedded within its technical processes. It may lack balanced information and the ability for individuals to seek alternative opinions either through linking to outside sources or through discussions with other participants. Often political communication online is little more than a series of opinions with few clues as to how those opinions were derived upon and where they are leading. Many government organisations simply imagine the Internet as an efficient 'delivery boy' of written policies, rather than as a means to engage citizens in a meaningful way utilising the deliberative potential of the read-write web. In the early days of the Internet, publishing political information online was seen as an end in itself; it was seen as a way to obviate the censorial ambitions of the State and as a cheap and efficient means to distribute political ideas outside of mainstream commercial media or other 'gate keeping' mechanisms. But now, there is just so much political information online that it forms a defining electronic 'noise' that is difficult to navigate and comprehend in a meaningful and purposeful manner. Democratic processes do not just happen; they are cooperatively designed and there is a growing need to design the Internet to support democratic deliberation rather than incessantly support the selfish Libertarian and noisy self-interest of laissez-faire capitalism.

Designing Effective Deliberation

As noted by Heinz Brandenburg (2006), there is an emergent 'Atlantic divide' between the United States and Europe in terms of the application of the Internet for political communication:

> The position of cyber-enthusiastic citizens as well as academics and cyber-literate politicians in the United States appears to be that the Internet can self-manage in the absence of any form of government intervention, censorship and legislation. In contrast, the dominant position amongst scholars and policy makers in mainland Europe as well as in the United Kingdom is that we need constitutional engineering beyond giving mere access to people, namely the proactive creation of constitutive

elements of a virtual public sphere, funded and partially initiated by public institutions (Brandenburg: 215).

In my own home country of Australia, our most well-known initiatives tend to be somewhere between these United States and the European trends; this is perhaps not that unusual given the historic role the two powers have had within Australia. Our initiatives tend to range from attempts to design elements of a 'constitutive public sphere' through sites such as Nationalforum.com.au and Newmatilda.com, to the at times Libertarian immoderation of the global Indymedia.com network, built on software originally designed in Sydney. Australian online political communication is somewhere between the BBC's Action Network (bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork) and the highly successful United States based Moveon.org.

A recent example that utilizes 'ideal' deliberative design coupled with emergent Web2.0 tools is the ActNow.com.au initiative. ActNow is a project for young people and seeks to provide a forum where they can discuss political issues online. It attempts to provide balanced information and forums to discuss, for instance, questions surrounding poverty, multiculturalism, and sustainable energy. Of particular note is that the site utilises 'folksonomies' to highlight and hierarchize the 'hot issues' being discussed by users. The users can comment on stories and then rate them according to a poll-driven 'care factor' that determines which issues appear on the front of the site and in which order. The site does not claim a monumental political efficacy, like some of the original online political initiatives, but simply seeks to provide a space where young people can discuss issues and become more informed on these issues so as to increase their confidence to act within the community. See: Figure 2.

Figure 2. Presents an example of political communication within a civil society group in Australia. www.actnow.com.au is a novel example of how Web2.0 is being utilised by young people within Civil Society within Australia. It utilised a system called a 'care factor' so that the technically savvy participants can deliberate upon, rate and hierarchize broader political concerns.

It is the ability to integrate information in new ways and the ability to engage users as codevelopers that I find extremely exciting about this project (Yankel 2006). It is a form of design that seeks to advance collective knowledge about social issues through a rule-based, goal oriented, deliberative system. However, this is just one isolated example of online deliberation and for deliberation to be truly effective there is need to elicit involvement from more groups. 'Interoperability' or the ability for groups and individuals to engage with one another is one of the central components of 'ideal deliberation' and one of the central principles of Web2.0 (Coleman and Goetze 2001). New tools can be harnessed to compare 'knowledge maps' between groups and broker and invite collaboration that can perhaps address some of the emerging issues of political fragmentation and diminished deliberation online. Systems need to be designed that are open and 'interoperable' and that enable the efficient sharing of knowledge between diverse deliberating groups. The ability for users to form useful relationships around common political interests will better facilitate the processes of deliberation within meaningful, inclusive, and consequential political processes. The potential benefits of these technologies are immense and much that is positive can flow from the application of these tools to worthy political processes.

To conclude, the information revolution brought about by new technologies may also be fostering information

abundance, disaggregation, political fragmentation, and less considered understanding of our political processes and the choices that they provide. As argued, deliberative 'ideas' are seldom well-designed into the structure of online political initiatives, perhaps because there is not enough understanding of what deliberation is online and how it can be better designed. Our economy, culture, and polity are undergoing profound changes due to the impact of new technologies and our relationship to this information and the political messages that it contains is also changing due to its ever increasing abundance and delivery mechanisms. We need to provide new understandings of the relationship between citizens and the political communication processes of the Internet so these processes can be designed better to support stronger deliberative and thus democratic ideals.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.012

Herpes for the Information Age: Plagiarism and the Infection of Universities

Tara Brabazon

It is always disconcerting to see our former employers featured in local newspapers. It is worse when their name is mentioned under the headline, "Unis crack down on student cheats" (Hiatt 2006:2). In the article, Murdoch University reported 157 cases of "cheating" in assignments, and "most students caught cheating were studying social sciences or humanities courses." The Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) Jan Thomas stated that, "Most of our cases occur in first semester with new students … Once they learn it's not the right thing to do, and [they have] sufficient writing and management skills, they don't do it again" (Thomas in Hiatt 2006a:2). As I sat reading this article on an otherwise peaceful Saturday morning, I pondered why no cases of plagiarism, cheating or collusion had emerged in my first year courses—located in the social sciences and humanities—through my eight years at the same University mentioned in the article. It was not good luck. Considered curricula planning, intense contact with students and the annual updating of materials to avoid the resubmission of older papers are proactive and positive strategies. Yet these strategies, that require professional development, time and teacher reflexivity, are not validated methods for educational managers to counter plagiarism. Instead, "mandatory electronic screening of student assignments" is the future of curricula planning (Hiatt 2006a:2).

There is an alternative trajectory to ponder. It is very easy to blame students for plagiarism. It is much more difficult to recognize how staff and academic managers are both implicated in—and facilitating—this behavior. Uploading PowerPoint slides to the internet, i-lectures and the use of textbooks rather than wider reading of scholarly monographs all encourage simple and rehearsed answers to difficult questions. The decline in the reading of scholarly monographs and refereed articles—and the reduction in our expectations and hopes for students—has created a context requiring minimal reading, poor writing and sloppy standards of scholarship. It is too convenient for academic managers to administratively slap students for plagiarism, rather than proactively encourage higher standards in teaching and learning. J.V. Bolkan revealed the importance of this positive, proactive and interventionist agenda.

> Many educators blame the internet for what they perceive as the rise of plagiarism. Although the Internet certainly enables more efficient plagiarism, blaming it for widespread copying is akin to blaming a bank robbery on the presence of cash in the building. It is a factor, of course, but not the root cause of the behavior. Just as with bank robbery, the solutions to plagiarism must be multifaceted. Efforts must be directed at prevention as well as detection and punishment. Banks don't leave piles of cash stacked by the front door. Educators should take care to make assignments that hinder plagiarists. It is also important to remember that it isn't just vaults and security guards stopping bank robberies. The vast majority of people wouldn't rob a bank even if they could (Bolkan 2006:4).

The goal of this article is to validate Bolkan's challenge and present alternate strategies to manage plagiarism in the contemporary university. The aim is not to use the 'stick' of administrative regulations or staunch software programmes, which instills fear, confusion, blame and retribution, but to access the more intricate potentials of curricula development and the expertise of librarians and information managers.

While academics and librarians have 'accepted' the administrative and managerial 'takeover' of universities,

there are ways to 'manage' plagiarism beyond more meetings, agendas, resolutions, checklists, censure and blame. In this piece, a presentation of the ambiguous and conflictual nature of plagiarism is followed by two interventions—through librarian information management and curricula development. I conclude with the complexity and confusion that emerges through the change in educational expectations and literacies. As participation rates at universities have widened, those of us interested in education must make a choice between 'blaming' the internet for plagiarism and establishing a system of retribution to manage it, or recognizing that our current students are facing a range of complex social, economic and technological challenges that require more precise tools to address their concerns (Rhodes 2002).

The treatment of students as clients who consume education and are served by their teachers is transforming how these students/clients consider their assessment. Instead of being examined, they are being supported. Instead of being taught, they are facilitated. Librarians have been critical of the consequences of reducing semesters and compressing learning into segments that render impossible the development of research methods. As Nicole Auer and Ellen Krupar confirm,

> Universities have also fallen prey to the consumer mentality, this time directed at students. With the proliferation of 'Maymesters,' which contrive to give the illusion that you can condense a semester's worth of learning into a short few weeks, universities have given up some of the pretence that learning is the purpose of classes ... With students cut off by time constraints from interlibrary loan, retrieval or articles, or even the time to analyze information, what exact message are the students receiving on the value of any knowledge they may accidentally glean from their frantically paced class (Auer and Krupar 2001:421).

If universities are charging students for courses, course materials, maintenance fees, car parks and library cards, then it is a continuance of this ideology that money can also buy an essay. Consumers (students) are buying a service (education). Nancy Girard confirmed that "students today pay a lot of money to attend college or university so many of them feel that any and all ways they find to excel are acceptable, including plagiarism" (2004:14). By making the primary goal of education to attain a job, there is little time or recognition for meta-learning skills or a discussion of the intrinsic values of scholarship and thinking. Through the use of language like graduate attributes, generic skills, flexibility and team building, the point of transformative and transgressive education is displaced. These speculations about the future of work are creating endless chatter about how students negotiate a post-education future. The goal is to consume facts, not control, interpret and manage information. The academy models good and bad behavior, and students watch how we handle and manage ethical questions (Kuther 2003:159). Before educational administrators judge and condemn plagiarising students, University structures must be assessed and reassessed for their standards, value and quality.

Cut, Paste and Think

Plagiarism is a complex cultural formation. In a binarized, digitized discourse, intellectual theft is framed as definitive, trackable and clear. Shelley Angelil-Carter confirmed three modes of plagiarism: cheating (deliberate fraud), nonattribution (through ignorance of referencing models) and paraphrasing that is simply too close to the original source. (Angelil-Carter 2000) Yet Edward Winter realized the consequences to scholars and scholarship of 'self-plagiarism.'

> This occurs when an author uses his or her work that has been published previously elsewhere. Among other aspects, infringement of copyright enters the frame. Before a high-horse is mounted, consider the challenges faced when describing methods. If a particular technique is used repeatedly in one's work, it soon becomes taxing to describe that technique in a different form of words. Attempts to get round the problem by using the expression, 'The technique has been described in full elsewhere so only a brief outline is presented here' means that a reader has to go to another source with the attendant inconvenience that this brings. Often, reviewers challenge this approach (Winter 2006: 113).

Clearly, the determination of (self) plagiarism and citation is not as precise as the software-evangelist administrators may wish. Similarly, there is the messy and complicated issue of senior academics 'claiming' or being named as an author for other's intellectual work. In my postgraduate career, several supervisors claimed a right to 'co-author' my articles, even though they did not read the work. In response, I published the articles after the doctorate had passed through the examination process. Senior academics are 'claiming' the work of 'their' research assistants

and doctoral candidates as a matter of course. As a media historian who uses archival sources—both analogue and digital—I am reticent to rely on or 'use' other scholars' research without actually reading the materials. This claiming/appropriation of the work of subordinates can be called 'institutional plagiarism.' Roger Logue describes this term as,

> a feature of systems of formal hierarchy in which credit for intellectual work is more a consequence than a cause of unequal power and position ... In other words, it occurs when a superior, because of his or her position, gets the credit for the work of a subordinate ... This includes ghostwriting, when the actual writing is done by someone else; 'honorary authorship,' where a supervisor who has done little or no research is listed as a co-author of an article; or where work done by junior workers is commonly signed by more senior academics ... The practice of putting your name to a piece of work when you have had little or no input is so extensive in academic and research communities that it is often regarded as the norm. Looking at the number of multi-authored articles published in journals, many claim to be written by more than 15 authors (2005:40-41).

This was an important issue that I had to sort out before taking on a large number of postgraduate supervisions. Once clear, I could communicate my position to students. My rule was 'their work is theirs. My work is mine. When we write it together, it is ours.' I also moderate and monitor my role in the writing at all times, to ensure that I am—at least—pulling my scholarly weight. It is not my right to claim their project or research. Yet if students have seen senior scholars who have little contribution in an article adding their name to research, what lessons are being learnt about intellectual integrity?

As these examples suggest, the internet did not invent plagiarism. Instead, it made it easier to accomplish and easier to detect. This 'problem' has also fed the managerial appetite to solve academic challenges by administrative means. Patrick Scanlon has confirmed that,

> The adoption of increasingly popular electronic plagiarism checkers, although probably effective in the near term as deterrents, could actually prevent faculty from addressing the problem before the fact, as a critical matter of students' intellectual and ethical development. Faculty and administrators should seek ways to attend to Internet plagiarism; however, they should do so as educators, rather than as detectives (2006:161).

The tools of teachers are different from the strategies of software designers. Also, the statistics of plagiarism need to be placed in context. McCabe and Trevino's two multicampus surveys found that 30% of students admitted to academic dishonesty in 1963, compared to 26% in 1993 (McCabe and Trevino 1996:29-33). Updating the surveys to 2002, Scanlon and Neumann discovered that only 2.3% of students admitted to frequently buying papers from the paper 'mills.' Six percent admitted to the purchase of the papers 'sometimes' (Scanlon and Neumann 2002:374-385). Yet there are also other sources of information about student behavior and source material to consider. The Joint Information System Committee (JISC) investigated British further education institutions. The respondents to their survey believed that 74% of plagiarism came from textbooks and theses, with 24% derived from the internet (Large 2001: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/uploaded_documents/plagiarism_notes.rtf). Similarly, John Royce discovered no Turnitin matches with usenet discussion groups or lists, online encyclopedias or subscribed databases (Royce 2003:28). These results confirm that there is no internet-caused recent 'epidemic' and similar levels of plagiarism were reported in the analogue age. Yet the plagiarism from textbooks and theses is an unaddressed issue through the software panacea.

Librarians and Fighting (for) the Future.

> As librarians, we know that detection is not the main objective in a campaign against plagiarism (2004:4).
> —Margaret Burke

Librarians have often predicted a problem in information management years before policy makers and teachers. As new platforms and databases have entered the curriculum, librarians are increasingly being required to teach, evaluate and present the strengths and problems of the information scaffold for staff. Nicole Auer and Ellen Krupar realized that

> Librarians are in a unique position to help prevent and detect plagiarism by forming partnerships with faculty to re-examine assignments and instructional sessions and by informing them of Internet paper mills and useful Internet search strategies (Auer and Krupar 2001: 415).

In addressing not only plagiarism but how data moves through space and time, librarians have understood the complexity and political consequences of this debate. Yet besides these wider concerns, they also must handle more immediate needs from academics. As C. Brian Smith reports.

> A professor approaches the reference desk and hands me a recent student paper. 'I think this has been plagiarized,' she says. 'Can you help me prove that the content has not been lifted?' Skimming the text, I note a few unique phrases and type the word combination into Google's search box. I click on the link to the first hit—I'm feeling lucky—and see that the web document matches the student's paper verbatim. This scenario is not unusual. More and more my role as an academic reference librarian involves helping professors track down evidence of digital plagiarism (2003: http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA304092.html).

There are many responses to Smith's story. An obvious one is why the academic did not have the skill, expertise and awareness—within her own subject area—to be aware of particular phrases and input them into Google (McCullough and Holmberg 2005). There are far more complex searches that are often required to track the cuts and pastes and lifts. The idea that such a basic strategy would take a librarian's time demonstrates that the training of academics in information management needs to increase.

While there is a focus on students intentionally 'taking' material, there is no doubt that there is also confusion about referencing styles and modes. Obviously, the notion that students can arrive at a university and be unable to reference is a concern. Yet this remedial work is required in almost all first year papers that are submitted to me at university. Librarians have the expertise and experience to fulfill this role much more effectively than academics. Therefore it is crucial that librarians not only be valued for their work, but be given a proactive space to redefine their role in an information age where footnotes are optional. Auer and Krupar hypothesized about the nature of this function.

> The librarian's role on campus has been somewhat limited in the past. Access to students has been through point-of-use aides, reference interviews, and instructional classes. Librarians must now actively seek out new roles on campus that will create open and regular dialogues with students about information and its ethical use (Auer and Krupar 2001:424).

Through the integration of information literacy into curriculum—via the presentation of the information scaffold through assessment—such a project can be enacted. Pivotally, librarians can prevent plagiarism, rather than punish it.

One of the finest examples of this goal, and the original inspiration for the writing of this paper, was the ILIP (Information Literacies Introductory Program) at the University of Wollongong in Australia. There are many reasons that make this scheme noteworthy. Firstly, it is a compulsory course to be completed by all undergraduates and coursework postgraduates at the University. Further it must be completed by the end of the first enrolled semester. If it is not, then the student's grades are withheld (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/). The aim of ILIP is to overtly teach information literacy which is defined as "the ability to locate, critically analyze, interpret, evaluate, and use information" (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/). There are a series of training modules and an online ILIP test. Each module provides information on a particular topic, such as how to use the library catalogue and how to access various databases. There is also a special topic on plagiarism. These modules are strong and effective use of the online learning environment. As a skill-based programme, it can repeat information continually and use drill-based assessment.

The first module introduces the range of information sources, and how to commence the research process (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_01-starting.html). The difference between journal articles, (http://www.library.uow.edu.au/helptraining/tutorials/resedge/journals.html) newspaper articles, books (http://www.library.uow.edu.au/helptraining/tutorials/resedge/books.html) and the internet is explained. The type of information found—from public opinion to new research—is also discussed, along with the difference between "Fact tools" like dictionaries and encyclopedias, and "Finding tools," like print indexes and databases. The second module applies this preliminary discussion of the types and forms of information for the materials the students will access through university reading lists (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_02-readinglist.html). The site teaches how to reference a book, book chapter, article and website and how these sources appear within the library catalogue. As each source is introduced, an online interactive activity asks the students to identify the title, authors, publishers, date and place of publications. From the second module, the 'how' of referencing is introduced. Significantly, web-based referencing is discussed in the same way as other analogue and print-based information, thereby naturalizing the ideology that digital sources must be referenced identically to all other types of

data. After establishing this information literacy in referencing styles, this module then teaches students how to find items on a reading list, either electronically or in print, and how to access those sources.

Module three logically builds from this preliminary introduction in referencing and searching. Titled "Finding more information," it demonstrates for students how to locate keywords and phrases to deploy in a search, (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/printbook_aust.html) and how to assess relevance and importance. Pivotally, there is also a discussion of how to evaluate the search, so that the student can continue to improve their skills and vocabulary. The stress on keywords is important, as is the desire to discover synonyms (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/identify.html) and use connectors between keywords. (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/connectors.html) Weaker students have a limited vocabulary, but they rarely connect their weaknesses in language with their weakness in research effectiveness. There is also a discussion of choice in library databases. (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_03-findjrnals.html) What makes this module important is that it does not stop research at the 'finding' of information, but demonstrates how to assess, rank and evaluate the value of the found material.

Once the students have gained a sense of the diversity of information, how it is evaluated and referenced, the fourth module on plagiarism is presented (http://uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_04-plagiarism.html). The accidental and deliberate forms of plagiarism—on and offline—are presented through photographs as much as the written word. A clear and rational description of why plagiarism should be avoided by students is conveyed.

> Avoiding plagiarism requires you to master the art of knowing how to reference the wisdom of others and still be able to create your own original work (http://uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_04-plagiarism.html).

There are concrete examples that ask students to locate the plagiarism in featured paragraphs and a quiz to ensure that students precisely determine the definition of plagiarism (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_04-answer2.html). The issue is enmeshed into a palette of study skills, including time management, effective note taking and understanding the conventions of referencing. University guidelines are also discussed, (http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/courserules/plagiarism.html) along with the use of 'Turnitin.'

Plagiarism is not the frightening and overwhelming conclusion to ILIP, being the warning beacon of what happens to those who fail in university. Instead, the final module focuses on the evaluation and use of information (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_05-evalinf.html). Importantly, the section confirms that locating and accessing information is only a first step in developing scholarship. Confirming that "all information is not of equal value," (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/attributes/ilip/module_05-evalinf.html) the importance of evaluation is confirmed, particularly because of the multiple providers of digital data. A four tiered checklist for the assessment of information is constructed: purpose, audience, value and appropriateness. The goal is to ensure that students question and check the cited material for both quality and accuracy. The ability to frame and ask relevant questions in determining the purpose of the information is modeled, and there is a concrete demonstration of how data is shaped and written for specific audiences.

Perhaps the key strength of ILIP is that it places information, searching, plagiarism and evaluation in context. Anita McAnear realized that

> Helping students become information seekers, synthesizers, analyzers, evaluators, innovative thinkers, problem solvers, decision makers, producers of knowledge, communicators, and collaborators is one way to create an environment that minimizes cheating, plagiarism, and copyright violations (2005:4).

The ILIP scheme is important and an effective model for all universities because it is compulsory. There is a skill-based test that students must pass, even through repeated sittings, before grades are released. Such a strategy means that ignorance about plagiarism is not an excuse for student breaches. Also, the modules are extremely well thought out, logically developed and provide numerous examples. Such a process is effective and efficient. Planning for searches creates electronic and intellectual expectations, and a capacity to find the right information beyond the wayward and misleading. It also commences critical thinking and interpretation before slamming into an information glut. This rational and ordered approach to information management is distinct from the random, emotive and conversational mode of searching through Google. The key is not how many hits are returned from a search, but how many are relevant, current and live sites.

While web use for academic research is increasing, the quality of sources varies tremendously. Teachers can build informed curriculum, but we need help. Libraries and librarians are so important because they punctuate the

information landscape, controlling and managing student enthusiasm and confusion. No search engine is an intrinsic purveyor of truth and ILIP's great strength is the smooth movement between on and offline, digital and analogue. Yet Cerise Oberman realized that

> In today's libraries ... the real problems seem to centre around what is almost an ideological commitment to the computer. Today it is not unusual to have students assert, to teacher and librarian alike, that the computer has given them all the information they need. There is something subtle at work here. The nature of the computer has convinced students that all relevant information on any topic can be retrieved solely through this medium (1996:fulltext).

Students are confusing quality and quantity information. The triviality of the material found means that searchers too often become enthused with access to information and do not ask why we needed access to information in the first place. The key skill that most of us need to learn—which is facilitated by the expertise of librarians—is how to manage and balance print and electronic resources. Unfortunately, these challenges emerge in a time when libraries are struggling to maintain their collection. Tim Coates recognized that,

> Only 20 years ago the library was one of the most vibrant of civic facilities. It survived the arrival of cheap paperbacks, radio, television, VCRs and the first generation of human computers. Use was increasing. Even if libraries were slightly dull they were a family and community institution playing an essential role in lifelong learning, social cohesion and pleasurable reading. They lent 600 million books a year and provided information and study facilities that were used widely. But senior managers became enthralled by computers. They anticipated that all information could be organized in an accessible way. Not only was the electronic future technically innovative but it was also attractive to young people. Computers were introduced to libraries and book collections were allowed to fall into neglect. As a consequence, demand dwindled. Libraries found a role instead as free internet cafes (2005:4).

Actually, collection management of print-based sources is even more important in this internet-mediated environment than it was before digitization. Libraries are not internet cafes. They are places to not only find books, but to discover a way of ordering and organizing knowledge. Richard Sayers realized that "our challenge is to convince the techno-faddists and economic rationalists that Google is still not yet one of the seven wonders of the modern world" (2003:410). Google will only be one stop in a long journey through research and scholarship. Significantly, ILIP places Google into a much wider architecture of data and information.

The internet is not a library. Google is not a library catalogue. These are dangerous metaphors. The characteristic of a library—the organization of knowledge into preservable categories—has left few traces on the internet. A catalogue of accessible holdings is not a collection of numbers, but a sequence of ideas. This ordering is not an archaic relic of the analogue age, but holds a social function: to allow users to search and assess information and build larger relationships to broader subjects, theories and ideas. While the web may appear to remove the physicality of information, we are yet to make this leap conceptually. The digital library is determined as much by research training, database instruction, computer support and document delivery as the availability of search engines. Information literacy integrates documents, media, form, content, literacy and learning. The expertise of librarians and teachers must—overtly rather than implicitly—support new modes of reading, writing and communicating, integrating and connecting discovery, searches, navigation and the appropriateness of diverse resources.

The lessons of ILIP are clear for educators and education. Students require time, care, energy and good assessment to improve their digitized academic research. Teachers require professional development in library studies, internet studies and literary theory to create a worthwhile intellectual journey through this new research landscape. Most importantly Universities must value their libraries and librarians. We need to find structural ways to push our students back into libraries to discover the value of wandering up the corridors of journal stacks. Also, with library budgets declining, we need to remember and value the knowledge, professionalism and training of librarians. Librarians do not provide information, but a path through information.

Where the Curriculum Goes, Students Follow

> Solid assessment and good teaching ... can't be over emphasized ... Motivation, of course, is the key. Motivated and engaged learners are much less likely to take shortcuts. If they're only in your classroom to get a grade and move on the potential for plagiarism will be greater (2006:5).
>
> —J.V. Bolkan

The transformation of assessment in the last twenty years, with a decline in closed-book examinations and an increase in coursework-based assessment, means that formal invigilation has declined and plagiarism has increased (Ashworth, Freewood, and Macdonald 2003:258). Yet while such realizations may trigger hand wringing and cliché slappings about 'dumbing down,' actually there are more complex causalities and consequences of the transformations in the student cohort and student learning. Before demonstrating how effective curriculum can counter plagiarism, there needs to be a discussion of the new student culture that we are 'managing' in our universities.

Really, plagiarism is the least of a teacher's worries. A UK study reported that "nearly half the national workforce is virtually innumerate and more than a third is practically illiterate" (Kingston 2006:9). Therefore, hoping that learners will be able to find and evaluate information when they cannot read this information in the first place demonstrates an ignorance of literacy theory and pedagogy. What I am seeing in my classroom is approximately half of each year's cohort placing education, research and scholarship very low on their list of important tasks. Ironically, in the midst of the knowledge economy, students are being less creative, innovative and dynamic. They are writing Fordist essays, mass produced papers with standardized search engines. This is an ironic and disturbing realization. Supposedly, an education geared for an assembly line is inappropriate for these New Times. When Tony Blair stressed the changes to the economy in his 1997 election campaign, he concurrently stressed education (education education) as his three top priorities. The reason was clear: knowledge is not only something to create or share, but exploit. Amid his emphasis, and while fighting his third election in 2005, he battled screaming headlines in The Times: "Schools still cannot teach pupils to read by age of 11" (Halpin 2005:1). Yet, this critique is not the ahistorical disaster it appears. Allan Luke confirmed that literacies operate within socially-situated practices (1998:305-313). As contexts change, so must the definition and pedagogies encircling literacy. If the knowledge economy is to be more than a slogan of the Third Way political agenda, then a negotiation of critical literacies will require primary attention and scholarly priority. Plagiarism is a smokescreen, an invented crisis to mask the pivotal discussion about educational standards at schools and universities, and the transformation of literacies.

A concern for theorists is that the endless discussion of the pervasive nature of plagiarism is damaging and warping the learning culture for students. As Charles McLafferty and Karen Foust confirmed,

> Incidents such as these indicate the presence of a new student ethos in which plagiarism and other forms of cheating are common and even acceptable. As professors, we have confronted situations of blatant plagiarism and have received responses such as the following: 'I have completed these types of assignments for several ... instructors in the same manner and have never been questioned or accused of plagiarism before' (2004:186).

Students love this sort of statement. If one class does not demand reading and scholarship, then it assumed that the academics demanding high standards hold misplaced expectations. Yet McLafferty and Foust confirm that "when students are instructed appropriately and given certain types of assignments, plagiarism is minimized or rendered virtually impossible" (2004:186). They note particular 'red flags' including dead web links and incongruence in the argument.

The 'problem' of information management at university is not caused by Google or the Internet, but it is framed by a loose and unspecified rendering of the 'project' and 'outcomes' of education. John Battelle asked,

> Let's break down Google's mission further. What is 'information' anyway? In the end, it is data that describes something ... The first years of Google's rise have taught us that if something is of value, it needs to be in Google's index. What if the world becomes the index? ... In other words, Google has, in its seven short years, become a canvas upon which we project every application or service we can imagine. Google as phone company? As cable provider? As university (2005:2)?

It is important to be completely honest about the internet—let alone the web—that is being searched by Google and used by students. The web is large, occasionally irrelevant, filled with advertising, outdated ghost sites and is increasingly corporatized. It seems appropriate that Google is ubiquitous at the moment when teachers and librarians are overworked and less available to see students. Plagiarism in such an environment must thrive. David Loertscher confirmed that

> Search engines such as Google are so easy and immediate that many young people, faced with a research assignment, just 'google' their way through the internet rather than struggle through the hoops of a more traditional library environment (2003:14).

Google standardizes searching at the time when there is a great diversity of both information and users. In a fast food, fast data environment, the web transforms into an information drive-through. It encourages a 'type in-

download-cut-paste-submit' educational culture. A 2001 study reported that 71% of American students relied mostly on the internet for major assignments at school. In this same study, 24% relied mostly on the library and only 4% used both the internet and the library (http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Schools_Report.pdf). My aim in the last five years of teaching has been the building an information scaffold and to lift that 4% figure so that students are actively moving between the digital and the analogue, the unrefereed web and scholarly databases. We need to teach—overtly—the meaning and purpose of refereeing. Content and context must be aligned. Further, we must ensure, through curricula choices, that these tools are actually used, rather than taught and ignored.

There is a fine body of literature presenting case studies of remarkable curriculum and effective assignment strategies that not only lessen plagiarism, but increase student motivation. Doug Johnson revealed,

> Educators expend much effort trying to 'catch' plagiarism in student work. Teachers and library media specialists use various Web services and Internet search techniques to detect student work that is lifted from online sources. While such tools are necessary and can be effective, our time as educators would be better spent creating assignments that require original, thoughtful research and, therefore, minimize the likelihood of plagiarism in the first place (2004:549).

Writing fresh and specific assessment tasks is the primary way to make plagiarism not only less likely, but close to impossible. The advantage of not using a textbook is that small, quirky and local articles and extracts can be deployed. Also students have to manage the diverse modality of sources.

I have used two curricula strategies in my first year courses to increase their information literacy and reduce the likelihood of plagiarism. One method is to insist upon an annotated bibliography with very precise modes of sources, determined by media and systems of review (http://idater.lboro.ac.uk/upload/BrabazonPDF.pdf). In this way, the 'problems' of Google and online sources, creating a glut of information of low quality, is solved through teaching students the skills of sorting, sifting and evaluation.

1. Essay Justification and Annotated Bibliography

This assignment prepares students for writing their main essay. All students are free to choose the topic of this paper, but it must sit within the following model.

The form of the question will read –

> *Evaluate the relationship between text. readership and politics in*

Students may fill in the gap with a site of their choice. Here are some options to start you thinking about your own interests.

- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in David Beckham.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in Nike footwear.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in KILL BILL VOL. 2.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in Bob Marley's hair.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in James Bond's dinner suit.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in drum 'n' bass.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in Who Weekly.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in a football.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in a university tutorial.
- Evaluate the relationship between text, readership and politics in Microsoft Windows.

Students are only limited in choice by their own imagination. The key is to ensure that your topic is supported by material in the course reader.

Please note: It is expected that students will use between 10 and 20 sources from the course reader to write the main essay. This level of research and scholarship is nonnegotiable and must be visible in the bibliography of the submitted main essay.

This first assignment prepares you for the writing of this important main assignment. You must do the following.

STAGE ONE. Present your chosen question, justifying your choice and identifying any problems—in terms of material, interpretation or argument—that you foresee. Outline who will be the primary theorists you will use and the major argument of the essay—the point you are trying to prove. This section will be between 400-600 words in length.

STAGE TWO. Students will use between 10 and 20 sources from the Reader for the Main Essay. Therefore this second stage for your first assignment focuses on students finding sources OUTSIDE THE READER. Students are required to locate TEN FURTHER SOURCES and write between 20 and 40 words on each source, explaining their relevance to the project. This explanatory paragraph creates an 'annotated bibliography,' rather than simply 'bibliography.'

The ten sources must be of the following type:

- Two scholarly monographs. (Please note: a monograph is a book. Ensure that the text is produced by a recognized scholarly publisher, such as a University Press.)
- Two print-based refereed articles. (Refereeing is the process whereby a journal sends out an article to scholars in the field to assess if it is of international quality and rigour. Students know that articles are refereed because on the inside cover of the journals an editorial board is listed and the process of review outlined. Examples include the Cultural Studies Review, The International Journal of Cultural Studies, Media International Australia and Cultural Studies.)
- One web-based refereed article. (Students must ensure that the site they use—such as M/C or First Monday—is a refereed online journal.)
- One web-site that is non-refereed (that is an online article from publications such as Online Opinion, a blog or fan club site).
- One magazine or newspaper article.
- One track or album of popular music
- One advertisement (from radio, television, magazines or the online environment)
- One television programme or film.

Remember—after each source is listed—students must then write 20-40 words about the text, including why it was selected for the project.

The aim of this exercise is to teach students how to find information and assess its relevance for a project. Once completed, this material becomes the further reading for the main assignment. At that stage, students simply intertwine these sources with the set course reading. Your research for the main essay is done!

Please do not be worried about this assignment. Tara is happy to help in any way, explaining the nature of information and source material. Do not hesitate: come and see her—or email her—with any queries.

The word length for both parts of this project is a combined maximum of 1000 words.

While there were problems with how I structured this assignment in 2004, it did address the problems that have worried me in the last decade. Expectations about reading and research were revealed, and the 'unspoken assumptions' about university education were presented. Further, for those students without this knowledge about finding research material, I constructed an information scaffold so that they knew what was required, and if they did not, then they must ask.

This process aimed to make students think about the quality of information and how it is structured. It slowed their research process. The second part of this assignment enabled the development of this critical literacy by asking why sources were chosen, and what they offered to the project. Attention was placed on theories of knowledge and how they were built on mechanisms of classifying, organizing and storing information. The broader lesson students learnt was that while there is an abundance of information, what is scarce is the right information in an appropriate time and place. Often forgotten—or never even realized—is the rigorous refereeing process that formulates the production process for books and articles. While some material on the web is refereed, generally the pieces are short and the arguments less developed. The proliferation of blogs, where banal individual details have a potentially wide digital audience, transforms our ability to judge, rank and assess relevance and significance. This assignment attempted to (re)teach and (re)value the capacity to sift, sort and evaluate information.

Through this type of assessment, students approach web searching with thought and consideration. As my course moved from the second semester to the first, and I was managing far more inexperienced and younger students, my curricula strategy also changed. I restricted their reading choices to only those materials that I provided for them. In other words, I blocked any further reading from their assessments. All that was required and assessed was given to them in a printed 'Reader.' This structurally blocked the need for any searching through banal and irrelevant sources, while also ensuring that plagiarism is almost impossible. My goal was not the development of research skills at this stage, but the confirmation of reading level, writing competency and interpretative capacity. The careful selection of rare and up-to-date sources, many published in the two months before the Reader was

printed, meant that it was impossible to 'buy' an essay online, as it would be irrelevant. Also, by basing the content on Australian case studies, American and British paper mills are redundant.

1. Analytical Paper

Due Date: Wednesday of Week Seven (April 12, 2006)
Weighting: 30% of the course
Length: 1500 words

Explore the meaning of Charles Leadbeater's phrase 'Living on thin air.' How does this phrase track the changes to work, leisure and lifestyle?

Evaluative Criteria: (That is, what we are looking for when marking your paper.)

- Accurate use of terminology
  Ensure that the terms deployed in your analytical assessment are accurate, clear and correct.

- Effective writing, referencing and clarity of expression
  Your writing must be evocative and well drafted. Full sentences and paragraphing are required. Do not use bullet points. Also, there must be at least ten references from course material—that is articles from the reader—included in your paper. Referencing style is also assessed.

- Strong and convincing engagement with the primary phrase and a capacity to interpret it through course readings.
  You must demonstrate an engagement with Leadbeater's phrase. Do not restate his argument or paraphrase his book extract. You are exploring it in a creative, critical and interpretative fashion. Situate your argument into the ideas of other writers in the course reader.

- Evidence that the course readings have been understood.
  The level of understanding, comprehension and analysis will be assessed.

2. Policy Submission

Due Date: End of week twelve (May 26, 2006)
Weighting: 40% of the course
Length: 2000-2500 words

You have been given the task of writing a policy submission to the Premier of Western Australia. You must assess the Creative WA document and recommend whether or not Western Australia is an appropriate site for the development of creative industries policies and initiatives. You can either write a general submission, or assume the perspective of a particular interest group or community. Remember: assume a position and argue your case, using the materials in the Reader to provide the evidence to verify your case.

Evaluative Criteria:

- Capacity to evaluate the core document.
- Exhibition of wide-ranging reading from the course, demonstrating correct referencing.
- Effective writing, style, structure and tone.
- Level of interpretation and analysis

The second assignment was based on an unpublished policy document, so the students had no option but to use the course readings to interpret and assess this work. There is no other course in the world that has had access to Creative WA. So while plagiarism is never impossible—someone can always be paid to write the work of others—there is no generic paper that has any relevance to these assignments, with their specified band of required reading.

The key in such an assessment strategy is to enforce that students use this provided material, or else they do not pass the course. Marks are determined through the use of the required readings that I choose with great care. This material is not only incredibly recent, but locally specific and in many cases, incredibly rare. The combination of these references also ensures that students must construct an original interpretation to link these readings together to answer the question. In specifying the minimum number of references that are required, I established clear parameters for their submitted bibliographies. The overt statement of expectations is important to first year

university students. I was staunch in the compliance to this number, and student continually probed my commitment to this scale of citation.

> From: Katherine
> Sent: Wednesday, 12 April 2006 10:43 AM
> To: Tara Brabazon
> Subject: assignment
>
> Hey Tara
>
> I know this is last- minute but unfortunately i'm a last minute girl. I need help with my assignment. I'm getting confused with the topic and I can't seem to find good references, or enough references for the topic. When are your consulting hours? Because I desperately need help.
>
> Love Kate

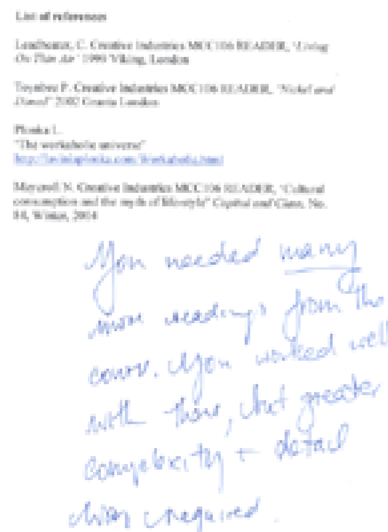
Yes, this email was sent on the day of submission of this paper, only five hours before it was due. Even with a provided list of readings, she still could not find 'good references.' Plagiarism was not my concern with Kate. The issue was time management.

> From: Matt
> Sent: Friday, 24 March 2006 5:11 PM
> To: Tara Brabazon
> Subject: RE: Creative Industries HELP!
>
> Hi Tara,
> Sorry to be painful but this should be my last question. Do we really need to have ten references from the readers?
> It's just that by coincidence (my parents bought me a subscription to Time) I have found a couple of articles, one regarding obesity in America and one about everyday people creating wealth through the internet (with blogs, short films etc). I'd like to use these but I feel that I am getting too wound up on having ten references from the unit material,
>
> Have a good weekend,
>
> Matt
>
> ---
>
> From: Tara Brabazon
> Sent: Saturday, 25 March 2006 7:40 AM
> To: Matt
> Subject: RE: Creative Industries HELP!
>
> Hi Matt -
>
> Hope you are well. Thanks for your message.
>
> Matt—the assignments in creative industries—they have been written to use that reading. We do not want any further reading at all. And remember there are many more articles than 10 in these relevant sections of the course, so students can choose what suits them. But they must choose from the quality material that we have gathered from around the world. That is the relevant stuff. That is what we are testing is being used.
>
> The reason that we want these references is to confirm that students have done the reading and are working at a level where they can interpret that material.
>
> So Time magazine is not at a high enough level for University work. It's interesting and great to read, but we are asking a precise question, using a precise body of knowledge. Remember too, the quotes may be four or five words in length, that's all. But you need to confirm that you can read and use them.
>
> Also—one of the criteria by which we're assessing your work is the use of reading. So you need to position yourself to get the marks from that part of the marking mix, O.K?
>
> Let me know if I can do anything else...
>
> T

It is extraordinary that a student is complaining about the use of ten references in a university-level assignment. I had collected and printed thirty eight separate extracts for students to use in the first six weeks of the course. Asking students to select ten from this list is neither excessive nor inflated. Obviously many more references were required for a distinction grade. But it is remarkable that by placing a (quite low) minimum level of compliance, students still have a difficulty reaching this figure. Fascinatingly, Matt attempted to argue that Time magazine would be an adequate substitute for the carefully selected international scholarship. The key in avoiding plagiarism is to not only make expectations of scholarship overt and clear, but to ensure that these standards are met. For this student to think that Time is equivalent to higher levels of scholarship is part of the scholarly problem that needs to be corrected and addressed.

The necessity for intervention and ensuring that every student is aware of their responsibilities is a way to not only inspire students with overt statements of expectations, but to transform a student culture of mediocrity. Such standards are based on a teacher's expertise, not the student's options to cut and paste. As David Loertscher confirmed, "The clever teacher … designs assignments and projects for which cheating or plagiarism is not an issue and really cannot be done" (2006:40). Indeed, if curriculum can be improved and outcomes clearly specified, then plagiarism and collusion are much more time consuming—and expensive—than actually completing the assignment.

The oddity for me was that students—even when told that a minimum of ten references were required—did not manage this number of citations.


List of references

Leadbeater, C. Creative Industries MCC106 READER, '*Living On Thin Air*' 1999 Viking, London

Toynbee P. Creative Industries MCC106 READER, '*Nickel and Dimed*' 2002 Granta London

Pleska L.
"The workaholic universe"
[illegible]

Maxwell N. Creative Industries MCC106 READER, 'Cultural consumption and the myth of lifestyle' *Capital and Class*, No. 84, Winter, 2004

You needed many more readings from the course. You worked well with these, but greater complexity + detail was required.

The internet does not cause plagiarism and cannot solve it. The internet did not create this low level of student reading and cannot solve it. There is money to be made in scanning systems like Turnitin (http://www.turnitin.com/), IntegriGuard (http://www.integriguard.com/) and EVE2 (http://www.canexus.com/eve/). Yet the difficulty with this software is that it creates a culture that punishes the outcome of plagiarism, rather than understands and contextualizes the cause of it. In many ways, students are only repeating the ideology of the last decade of higher education, where universities and governments have placed faith in technology to solve issues of social inclusion. As Selwyn realized,

> Yet seven years on from the first announcements of New Labour's technology assisted 'renaissance' of adult learning it is beginning to be acknowledged that ICT may not be having the wholly 'transformatory' impact on adult education that many of its proponents would have had us believe. For example, levels of participation in ICT-based education remain relatively modest (2004:270).

Also, such software creates an environment of self-satisfaction and overconfidence from university managers when—obviously—it does not search the entire internet. Some only trawl the World Wide Web. Web pages are also unstable, and past issues of journals may be lost. Even the Google search engine does not index Google Answers (Royce 2003:27). Certainly programmes like Turnitin have advantages. They are able to search in a more methodical

fashion than an academic or librarian. Yet they cannot search for the 'custom written' essays. Anti-plagiarism software does not detect ghost-authored papers. Sites such as EssayRelief.com and Essay-Help.com.au charge approximately US$10 per page to write these assignments. When the tabloid West Australian newspaper, revealed the shock-horror news that "Uni essays bought on internet for $119," the Pro Vice Chancellor of Murdoch University, the same administrator whose headline comment commenced this paper, stated that "Murdoch planned to introduce new plagiarism detection software next year. But Professor Thomas admitted anti-plagiarism software could detect only essays that were already available on line, not a commissioned essay" (Thomas in Hiatt 2006b:7). While demonstrating the flaws in Thomas's policy, The West Australian demeaned university educators by buying a ghost-written paper and then submitting it to "a university tutor," who said that "the essay would probably pass, though it was of a low standard" (Hiatt 2006b:7). The marker was unnamed, and there was no justification for why a tutor was chosen over a lecturer or professor, or why writing of 'low standard' would actually pass.

Cheating, plagiarism and copying the work of others has always been a part of scholarship. The internet has only created a customized, post-Fordist, digitized, trans-national market for these Fordist papers. Matthew Wilson, managing director of Essaywriter.co.uk, stated that the prices for his 'services' vary from £128 for a 2,000 word history essay to £4,674 for a Masters dissertation. He also confirmed than the bulk of his 'business' is derived from overseas students (Wilson in Bowcott and Johnson 2005:9). Therefore, the logical response to his admission would be to monitor the entry level, expectations and assessment standards of international students. In a 'business university' there can be no mention that actually the plagiarism 'problem' is not widespread through the student body, but targeted to a particular population, one that is integral to the financial survival of the institutions. What is rarely discussed is the uneven—at best—and low quality—at worst—standard of these downloadable papers. They are far too general and dated for the specific studies required in the contemporary academy. They should fail in any well configured assessment strategy.

And Once More to Literacy

> The future requires no footnotes (2003:280).
> —Heather-Jane Robertson

Critical literacy is a phrase we hear a lot at universities these days. Indeed, critical literacy and plagiarism have been dueling with mission statements and generic competencies on the metaphoric pop chart of higher education vocabulary for the 2000s. Yet concise definitions of these terms remain elusive and assumed. Mary Macken-Horarik's work is important because she clarifies these terms, arguing critical literacy is not an 'add on' to literacy debates but requires the initial development of more instrumental modes of encoding and decoding. An everyday literacy with spoken language—when we talk to our friends and family—does not automatically mean that we are literate at and in school and university. She argues that we cannot learn to read and then concurrently critique or question what we are reading. Educators must be considered and thoughtful in how we move our students through the stages of literacy. The goal is to transfer and transform student thinking from understanding daily life through to understanding the inequalities and injustices of our daily life. In this process, Mary Macken-Horarik described critical literacy as "dependent on students' prior engagement with mainstream/specialized literacy practices" (1998: 78). She confirms that "it is not fair to invite our students to critique texts before they have learnt to analyze them and still less fair to those who cannot yet even process their meanings" (1998:78). Such a realization places the plagiarism 'crisis' in context. Without students being taught the most basic of information literacies, any hope of critical literacies is a structural impossibility. Plagiarized work fills the student breach between desire and results.

Teachers cannot make students literate. We can only move students from their current words and worlds so that they can align and negotatiate a new context and environment. There is much subterfuge and semiotic smoke for these students to manage. The stick with which university administrators are hitting inexperienced students, and the deployment of technology to track technology, is part of a wider culture of surveillance. For example, George W. Bush wanted to monitor what searchers were looking up on the search engine. The privacy lawyer Thomas Burke, realized that,

> Search engines now play such an important part in our daily lives that many people probably contact Google more often than they do their own mother. Just as most people would be upset if the Government wanted to know how much you called

> your mother and what you talked about, they should be upset about this too (2006:30).

While plagiarism policy focuses on software detection and 'cheating,' this surveillance of information and use must be placed in context. There is a politics to information, and a politics to how it is managed. For example, the FBI is frightened of librarians. The iconography and ideology of benign, bespectacled, quiet and solitary librarians has never been an accurate archetype, but those in power, wishing to survey the reading habits of terrorists and the rest of us, 'requested' that librarians release information about searching and borrowing habits. A confidential email obtained by the Electronic Privacy Information Center from the FBI stated that,

> While radical militant librarians kick us around, true terrorists benefit from [the Office of Intelligence Policy and Review's] failure to let us use the tools given to us ("Frontdesk" 2006:15).

After September 11, the governments of both John Howard and George W. Bush summoned 'back to basics' literacy programmes. Their entire focus was on encoding and decoding print: reading and writing. The most cursory glance at our environment confirms that the world is not filled with signs in English that tell us the truth about our lives. We 'read' facial expressions, architecture, sounds and power structures. The focus on print by these governments means that reading and writing becomes an endpoint rather than the start of another stage or mode of literacy. Higher levels of literacy competence are then locked away from the disempowered as they 'master the basics,' perpetuating the distribution of knowledge and power in society. Discussions of plagiarism snuggly fit into this agenda. The goal is to track ownership of words, rather than explore the broader values being distributed in education.

Too often, we just read. We do not ask why we are reading. We do not ask why our students are not reading. Cultural values are maintained. Elite understandings of literacy are perpetuated. High culture is naturalized as quality culture. The radical change to our campuses, students, regulatory policies and curriculum after September 11, the second Iraq War, the South Asian Tsunami and the bombing of the London Underground are vast. It is tougher to teach, and it is tougher to learn. Neo-Conservative morality tempers the range and mode of our ethical questions. Neo-Liberal market agendas sell our knowledge to the highest corporate bidder. University research is funded by corporations, often impacting on its effectiveness. This is the culture that our students are observing: exhausted academics rarely updating curriculum because of time constraints, rarely holding teaching qualifications, and only being valued for research funding, not research quality. Yet our time—and through the history we are writing around us—demands more.

Plagiarism is like herpes. It can be treated and managed, but never cured. The problem is that I am teaching a cohort of students many of whom are the first generation in their family to attend University, are in part-time work, and do not have either the experience or expectations about the requirements of advanced and internationally-aware scholarship. Crucially the proliferation and popularity of the internet and the World Wide Web in education has confirmed that literacy is not an endpoint, a skill to be achieved, but a process of ongoing development and change. Colin Lankshear has shown how reading and writing remain social practices that require context to grant meaning. He stated that "literacies are inseparable from practices in which they are embedded and the effects of these practices" (1998:44). The ability to decode and interpret—or plagiarize—text on a screen does not always create an understanding of the process through which information becomes knowledge. In creating a "New word order," (1998:44) there is need to facilitate the participation, building and transformation of information platforms to create conditions conducive to learning and teaching. Searching, reading and writing must be placed in context. New 'basics' are forming, via the changes to capitalism and the nation state. The older forms of literacy, based on encoding and decoding, must be grafted and translated for a mixed media environment. Because 'use' of digitized information refers to the movement of text between documents, there is an awkward conflation between finding, reading and interpreting material. This seamless passage/confusion between finding and using information is one explanation of why plagiarism is a major problem in digitized educational settings.

If this article has offered an intervention in plagiarism debates, it is the importance of techno-skepticism. The skill and techniques of well trained teachers and librarians are required in the information age to block students from googling their way through a degree. Students, when made aware of the plurality of sources, searches, words and ideas, again became excited by learning. Teaching and learning is a negotiation of meaning, opening students to opportunities for interaction and reflection. The best of scholarship requires a flexibility of the mind, built on a disciplined mobilization of academic protocols, scholarship and verifiable interpretation. It may be sacrilege

in societies saturated with markets, branding and neo-liberalism, but perhaps education is not meant to be cost-effective. Money has been removed from all levels of the educational sector. Investing in people—teachers, librarians and students—will produce the required response. The most important question to ask at this time is how we will help our students in the postindustrial information age, and ponder the choices and the commitments that actually matter. Our lives are shaped—and actively transformed—by small events and few people. Yet these moments of intervention are revelatory and transcendent.

One more story of teaching concludes this article. In the fifth week of semester, having just finished an 8:30 A.M. lecture and the tutorial that follows it, I was walking back to my office tired, but satisfied at the morning's work and ready to start my 'second job' supervising the honours and postgraduate candidates. Yet as I left the tutorial block, a solitary figure sat like a thrown rag doll on a chair. She was looking down and completely disconnected from her environment. She was enrolled in my course Creative Industries, so I walked over and crouched beside her. She seemed tiny, impossibly young and deeply lost. I asked how she was going. Her reply was disturbing but honest. She expressed how much she was enjoying this course, but how the rest of university life was nothing like she thought it would be. She intended to finish the semester and get a job. I tried to support her as best I could, and said I was happy to help in any way. Two days later, an email arrived in my inbox.

> From:
> Sent: Tuesday, 28 March 2006 2:26 PM
> To: Tara Brabazon
> Subject: argh!
>
> Hey Tboz,
>
> Soz bout the nickname, i thought of it the other day and i can't stop associating you with it. Just thought I'd let you know what I'm upto, seeing as you seemed interested and sad that I wasn't very 'enthused' on Monday. It's gonna be long so prepare.
>
> At the end of last year I got offered a job at this place which is several shops away from my mother's salon, It's called xxxxx Marketing, Design and Print, which was cool cos I was thinking of heading in that direction. However I turned it down as I had it in my head that I had to go to uni. All through school I was always like top of the class and stuff so it was always expected that I would go to uni, get rich and make everyone green with envy.
>
> Come yr 12 I had no idea what to study, but I knew I was good at sciences, so applied for Biomedical science (what the f%&k is that!?), got accepted and deferred. Then came crunch time and so I though media would be interesting. It so is not. So far anyway.
>
> So yeah I'm thinking I may go back to the guy at xxxxxxxx (his name is xxxxxxx, bless him!), and see if either the job is still there, or if theres any specific training I could do for any jobs in the future. I hopefully will do that either tomorrow or on Friday. If a job happens to be available (they will train me and stuff), I might consider doing it, or if luck is on my side, there will be no job now, but in June. That way I could finish this semester.
>
> So, I figured, I could finish the semester, pass, get my points for my units, deffer again and see what happens. Maybe if I can't get a job there, there may be some units that are relevant to that type of thing, like marketing or something. It's just I'm a real hands-on sort of person, and classrooms bore me to tears.
>
> Let me know what you think, I've spoken to some other people that are older and wiser, and they think it sounds like a wise thing to do(finish the semster that is). If you think it's crap and I'm insane, tell me. It would be the first time someone has brought me gback down to planet Earth. My boyfriend calls me a sasquatch (bless his LITTLE heart) and my mum tells me I have a heart of stone (semi-true, maybe). My friends just call me a nut, especially when I get drunk and dance like an asshole! Be brutal!
>
> Scoob XX

This is one of those emails that arrive each semester that makes me question why I teach students. It is always difficult to ascertain in emails such as this if students cannot write with clarity and accuracy, or choose not to. Clearly, she should not be at university. Indeed, why she chose to attend when "classrooms bore me to tears" is a mystery. Yet most of us who have taught first years long enough can predict her future. She is 'bored' by education, but assumes that the workplace will be filled with excitement and challenge. A young woman without qualifications, intellectual discipline or the capacity to write with clarity and skill does not have a bright future in front of her, particularly in

design and marketing.

One week after sending this email, she saw me again to say that she had decided to leave university. The design firm did not offer her employment, but an afternoon a week in unpaid 'training.' When I suggested that she could do this 'training' and finish the semester, she replied that she did not have time. I raised an eyebrow. She corrected herself. 'O.K. I have time, but I just don't want to study.'

No librarian or teacher can 'solve' Scoob's life choices. While we frighten students with talk of plagiarism, the gifts derived from transformative reading, evocative writing and dissenting thinking are undiscussed. Plagiarism is a symptom of a 'crisis of positionality,' a reconfiguration of the role of academics, students, libraries and information in our contemporary universities. Yet, discussions of plagiarism also reveal the relationship between knowledge and society. Muller described this movement as a transitional capitalism.

> The crisis of positionality comes down to this: that there are no more bona fide utopias, no more great solutions, and therefore no more enviable grand-gesture tilts against capitalism, against the system, against domination in general. The gesture of refusal itself can, in and of itself, no longer be considered radical. Such gestures must today be seen for what they are, the repetitive reconceptualizations of capitalism and the system, for what else could they be in the absence of any conceivable alternative (1997:205).

The purpose and point of education is implicated in this crisis of positionality, pulled between cut and pasting and reading, collusion and collaboration, funded 'research' and independent scholarship, plagiarism and politics. With no 'grand gestures' left, our choices are clear: be grateful for plagiarism software or dig in, be better and aim higher.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.013

Cruising on the Left: Notes on Genealogy of 'Left' Communication Research in the United States

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Communication research is typically identified with a mode of knowledge production that is firmly imbedded in the dominant ideology of society and responds to its needs and desires. As such it is an aspect of culture and cultural production that provokes questions about the impact of its knowledge and authority on everyday life.

Thus, (late) capitalism provides the ideological context in which communication research in the United States interacts with commercial or political interests in managing (and controlling) information—from the process of dissemination and the production of audiences to the effects of mass communication—to become an efficient instrument of social engineering. As such it assists with adjusting public communication processes, like news-making, advertising, or political propaganda in pursuit of the masses.

Ideological contrapositions, which imply radical changes for communication in civil society, on the other hand, are ultimately reflected in the engagement of "left" communication research—like in the struggle over democratizing the means of communication. Since a close relationship between theories of communication and society is widely assumed or desired, "left" communication research is presumably absorbed in "left" theories and practices of society.

This essay traces the idea of "left" communication research in the United States, with references to the writings and practices of American authors and critics of mass communication and in the context of historical developments from nineteenth century philosophical and theoretical influences to the rise of the New Left in the 1960s. Not unlike the Old Left, which never achieved holding political power and realizing its political goals—but whose ideas have made a difference in reforming American society—"left" communication research never dominated the research culture in the United States, but its contributions continue to enrich the landscape of communication studies.

The idea of "left" communication research is typically contained in the notion of "critical" communication research. Although potentially different (in terms of ideology), both share an understanding of communication as relations of power, which they address in their critique of the relations of media and society, for instance.

There is a tolerance of inclusion (of left perspectives) among those writing about "critical" communication research, like Leslie T. Good, who sees even a moral imperative at work in "critical" communication research on the demystification of power relations with the goal of creating a climate of interrogation among "critical" researchers (or theorists).[1] While Sue Curry Jansen writes about the implementation of a "media-critical" theory to suggest a broad based critique of media practices,[2] W. J. T. Mitchell's ideas about "dialectical pluralism," with its notion of "pushing divergent theories and practices toward confrontation and dialogue"[3] become the inspiration for the mission of a new journal, Critical Studies in Mass Communication. The work in a Marxist tradition of communication research, one thinks of Herbert Schiller or Dalles Smythe, for instance, remains isolated in its critique of society and reappears later with the rise of a Marxist tradition in a new and perhaps more hospitable environment of Cultural Studies, inspired by the work of Raymond Williams and Stuart Hall, in particular, and legitimized by their intellectual standing.

Mainstream—or traditional—communication research, on the other hand, represents a different understanding of communication, one that is compatible with the ruling ideology. The latter embraces relations of power for the

purpose of creating and maintaining community or democracy by preserving a pluralism of shared responsibilities, or consensus in a Deweyan sense. Under these conditions of existence, communication studies describes representative relations of power among social, economic, and political or cultural institutions in pursuit of a common good. Its research practices are embedded in the positivism of the traditional social sciences and provide empirical evidence, whose decontextualized and ahistorical nature invites a growing critique during the 1980s, in particular.

All the while "left" communication research is marginalized in the disciplinary discourse; it is either considered a foreign product[4]—based on European philosophical or theoretical propositions regarding democracy and society—or a Marxist project, which occupies only a fleeting moment in the American experience, when leftist ideas influenced the cultural and intellectual life of some communities before repression and the McCarthyism of the 1950s destroyed the sense of a collective mission.

Thus, U.S. American intellectuals of the left disperse during a changing political climate of widespread repression,[5] while in England, for instance, individuals on the left, who had abandoned the Communist Party, seemed to have remained together, published journals, and engaged in debates, while Latin American leftists united in the implementation of social projects, while drawing on European social thought.

Thus, there is no strong and continuing tradition of "left" communication research in the United States until the 1960s, when the potential of socialist ideas (and the tradition of the Old Left) are recalled, particularly with the rise of the New Left and the introduction of critical European thought on culture and communication.[6] This development—which encourages a decisively interdisciplinary outlook—is met with a growing curiosity by a new generation of scholars, who are to discover ways of demythifying dominant explanations of reality, including the role of media under capitalism.[7]

All the while, the "critical" tradition of communication studies continues to draw its strength and relevance from a pursuit of communication (and the press), in nineteenth century social thought. which extends into the progressive period of U.S. social history and involves an intellectual tradition that is broader than any particular discipline.

I

The designation of "left" communication research itself recalls the process of naming while setting up dichotomies, like left and right, or "subjective" (or tainted) and "objective" (or value-free). These designations imply not only an ideological bias, but, in fact, confirm the political nature of communication research—or the political purpose of research, in general—within a larger realm of civil society. But they also create an oversimplified understanding, especially of the nature of "critical" communication research, which often ignores the relation to politics, in particular.[8]

Hence, this essay is also about the process of naming as a historical practice; it raises questions about the meaning of names or labels, like "left" or "critical" communication research in the American context. And it traces the course of naming to provide a descriptive definition of the terminology and its implications, not only historically, but also for grounding radical thought and understanding contemporary practices in communication studies under conditions of political change.

Naming is a process of classification to come to terms with the objective world; it creates order according to specific interests or objectives. As much as it defines social and material relations, naming becomes also an articulation of power relations. When naming becomes a form of identification, "left"—in the context of a specific politico-cultural environment—denotes a particular political position, as in the case of "left" communication research. But generalizations abound, especially in the related discipline of sociology, where "Marxist" sociology, for instance, is occasionally equated with Communist sociology.[9]

Besides, to be "left" or "critical" may even become part of an individual's identity as a "leftist" or "critic," which has its own connotations and consequences in the specific historical moment, including the marginalization of individual efforts. Beyond the name, however, resides the actual practice of communication research—or the production of knowledge about communication (and media); a "critical" or "left" stance routinely provokes questions about the consequences of adopting the instrumental knowledge or authority of communication research for controlling social reality and offers alternative visions of existence.

The process of naming is subject to interpretation in the course of history however, and to shifts in meaning. Accordingly, terms like "left" or "critical" communication research have undergone changes during the last century

or so and continue to be subject to modification as public or academic understandings vary or change with time.

Indeed, the term "left," which refers to a range of radical political views, originally is a metaphorical extension of the seating arrangement of the French Estates General (1789), when the Third Estate sat on the king's left, while the nobility occupied his right side. Divisions of opinions (regarding the royal veto) led to opposition by revolutionary deputies (on the left), with conservatives in favor and centrists seeking a compromise. Since then, politics has been perceived as a continuum of attitudes and opinions towards social change and social order (from left to right) with the parties on the left standing for change and those on the right for the status quo. This was some time ago.

Although the vocabulary has remained in use—one still refers to left-or right-wing politics—clear distinctions, however, have faded. Thus, revolutionary thought or action regarding social change may be found on the right (in Nazism or Fascism, for instance), while conservative notions of order and protection of the status quo also characterize left-wing governments or parties (the Soviet Union, or the Communist Party). Additionally, any regime of the left or right has a tendency to move towards the middle, thus creating a left or right wing of its own, like the government of Tony Blair (UK), for instance, representing a modified political continuum that produces its own left of left opposition.

Hence, the term "left" communication research remains ambiguous regarding its relations to Marxism, at least in the United States, where it also falls within the wider use of "critical" communication research.[10] The latter is an inclusive term, whose usage refers to a broad ideological range of efforts to signal opposition to a dominant view of capitalism, democracy and media practices—producing Marxist and non-Marxist versions of a social critique.

As such, the term "critical" is found more frequently in the pertinent literature than "left," since it is also a more ambiguous term, which allows for cover as it blends into a tradition of (literary) criticism, in particular. "Left," in the strictest sense of its normal use, suggests an unambiguous Marxist (research) perspective, whereas "leftist" becomes a derogatory expression used to discredit critique of any kind. In more practical terms, the use of these terms in American communication studies suggests that "left" communication research is always "critical,"while "critical" communication research is not necessarily "left."

Because of fundamental shifts in the ideological landscape of modern politics, it is important to define and understand the rise of "left" research[11] in the context of specific political ideas and/or movements during a specific historical moment of civil society.

II

Thus, the first phase of "left" research is introduced to European, or Western social thought with the nineteenth-century writings of those political economists, in particular, who had grasped the significance of modern communication, and the role of the press, specifically, in the emergence of a bourgeois society. Rapidly advancing European publics, where civil society rather than the state becomes the focal point of developmental issues, are defined in terms of social communication vis-à-vis commerce and politics.

Beginning with Karl Marx's interrogation of press freedom, specifically, and spreading across several generations of political economists and sociologists (from Albert Schäffle to Karl Bücher and later from Ferdinand Tönnies to Max Weber), the German academic scene displays a strong and determined interest in the role of communication and media in society.[12] Their American students, like Albion Small in particular, translate these concerns in their own work and address the significance of the press and the importance of social communication, in general.[13] However, Small and other founders of American sociology never subscribed to radical ideas (like socialism or Marxism) and their reformist ideas faded with the increasing industrialization of culture. C. Wright Mills observes in the 1950s that "sociology has lost its reformist push; its tendencies toward fragmentary problems and scattered causation have been conservatively turned to the use of corporation, army, and state."[14]

By recognizing communication as central to political progress and social change, these thoughts throughout the century help establish the agenda for early twentieth century sociological research; they eventually contribute to contemporary "left" communication research with warnings about the power of the press in making or changing public opinion, about the problem of commercial versus public interests in utilizing the means of communication, and with predictions about increasing public reliance on the media (the press) for shaping and delivering fact and fiction.

In doing so, they also offer the first sustained critique of the press as an instrument of social and political

change (in the hands of plutocrats) and determine the danger of ownership without responsibility. These writings constitute the first historical window on the potential of social research that opens during the early years of the twentieth century with an outlook on a critical agenda for radical positions in political economy and sociology on communication in society.

There is, however, no sustained or systematic presence of Marxist scholarship in U.S. communication studies since the nineteenth century, and there is no "left" influence on mainstream communication research until after World War II, and the 1960s specifically. Without expanding on the earlier writings of liberal scholarship, it should be noted, however, that critical thinking about social communication, and specifically about the institution of journalism as a dominant force in structuring everyday realities, coincides with the onset of social and political change in Europe with the end of World War I. In the United States, a period of repression begins after events in Russia and Germany, in particular, when middle-class nativist intolerance rises with fear mounting that foreign radicals would create a revolutionary atmosphere in the country.[15]

The press, in particular, becomes a politically important and commercially desirable property with its rich potential for defining relations between state and civil society and the attitudes of individuals, while being able to proclaim a defense of democratic principles, including freedom and individual values—or of the American way.

Criticism of these developments culminates in the work of American intellectuals like Upton Sinclair, George Seldes, Harold Ickes, and Oswald Garrison Villard,[16] among others. Yet, except for Sinclair, the critique of journalism as performance never leaves the realm of collective self-criticism to radically challenge the dominant ideology. They are joined by John Dewey [17] and Walter Lippmann,[18] whose own critical views of mass communication in twentieth century society are firmly grounded in a liberal-pluralist perspective. Also, magazines like The Nation, American Mercury, Commonweal, The New Republic, and Atlantic Monthly carry a critique of journalism beginning in the 1920s.

In the 1930s specifically, American writers of the left had begun to attack the brutality of capitalism and embrace the cause of labor, which results in an outpouring of proletarian novels with a built-in critique of the political system. [19] After all, the world was changing, and how could anyone "after a diet of Ibsen, Nietzsche, Bergson, Wells, Shaw, Dostoevsky, and Freud . . . accept bourgeois moralities uncritically?"[20]

Indeed, the theoretical or philosophical grounds of "left" communication research must be sought in the company of a much broader, intellectual quest for social and political reform, if not revolution, that is shared by some writers and social thinkers earlier in the twentieth century. In this politicized literary environment, "critical" communication research, on the other hand, becomes identified historically with cultural criticism before mainstream communication research, following sociology, turns into a narrow, social-scientific pursuit of knowledge about media and communication led by progressive sociologists in the 1940s.

The cumulative work of these authors, and others,[21] is an example in tone and scope of commercial and scholarly examinations of media practices in the years to come, crowned perhaps by the Hutchins Report in 1947, which remains the most extensive and systematic, highly critical and yet ideologically faithful assessment of media practices in the United States to date.[22]

Whatever reform-minded or "left" research existed before World War II, however, disappears with the engagement of "left" intellectuals in the war effort (against Germany and Japan) and psychological warfare research. This turn away from ideologically "left" positions on media and society, or on the nature of democracy—the latter is always at the heart of "left" research—raises its own questions about the attitudes of radical social thinkers or social scientists—like Leo Lowenthal, Herbert Marcuse, or even Paul Lazarsfeld, among others—as they function for some years in an official environment that demands not only political support of the war effort, but compliance with dominant social scientific theories and methodologies.

In fact, the presence of postwar mass communication research reflects an era of certainty that appears with the development of a sophisticated social scientific apparatus, including research methodologies. It is the outcome of an accelerated development in science and technology and complements the political-military success of the United States in world affairs. Its reliance on the reign of facts reveals an irresistible bias towards the production of tangible social and political information. The emergence of public opinion polling with its confidence in methodology and faith in prediction reflects the endless possibilities of an applied science that serves the goals of commercial and political interests. It also legitimizes the ahistorical and decontextualized nature of such practices—which focus on information rather than knowledge—to seek solutions in immediate response rather than delayed explanation. They are reproduced prominently in the journalism and advertising of the day. The wartime detour through government

institutions hardly advanced the cause of "left" research and demonstrates the fragile nature of radical positions at any time in history. Indeed, the wartime episode of research in support of military and government intelligence work not only bolsters the institutional credibility and academic viability of communication research, but provides financial independence through continuing government contracts and confirms the place of journalism and mass communication studies in the university environment. The subsequent Cold War period becomes another testing ground for definitions of "left" communication research vis-à-vis socialist theories and practices of Eastern European, Cuban, or Chinese societies, in particular. But Soviet-style socialism, for instance, is generally met with skepticism or ambiguity in its execution of communication practices.

This takeover of communication research (identified with mass communication or journalism programs) by government interests is similar to the identification of Germany's Zeitungswissenschaft with the research interests (in propaganda) of the Nazi regime, or to the development of cadre schools in East Germany after World War II. In each case, governments reinforce academic credibility, dictate research agendas, and, therefore, influence the intellectual demands on the field, while distracting from the potential of criticism represented by "left" and "critical" communication research.

In the United States, (funded) communication research proceeds to support commercial and political interests in dominating the process of societal communication. Its focus on effects studies within an ideologically predetermined concept of democracy is a direct extension of wartime practices among the social sciences.

III

This is the point in time, when the second phase of "left research," and "left" communication research, in particular, emerges together with the rise of the American New Left during the late 1950s and early 1960s. The New Left, consisting of a variety of political and social movements, crystalizes in opposition to U.S. intervention in Vietnam, with student disaffection regarding a self-serving, corrupt bourgeois society and a loss of confidence in the Old Left (for reasons of effectiveness and ethics). It is an uneasy alliance of radical student groups, peace activists, early feminist organizations, as well as intellectuals with communist, socialist, or anarchist leanings. Their shared interests in a radical critique of "the system"—meaning capitalism—and in a new form of "participatory democracy" constitute a collective agenda of sorts that sustains the attempts of the movement for some time to create the condition for significant changes.

The arrival of left politics, particularly in Europe, but also in Latin America, was accompanied by attempts to retheorize culture (including the role of media and communication) in socialist politics concurrent with re-readings of a number of Marxist writers, among them Georg Lukács and Antonio Gramsci, but also Jürgen Habermas, French structuralists (Louis Althusser), and exponents of British Cultural Studies representatives (Raymond Williams, Stuart Hall), and Critical Theory (Horkheimer, Adorno, Marcuse, Fromm).

The result, however, does not strengthen revolutionary politics in the United States, in the long run, and the process merely exhausts itself with considerations of "the subject" at the expense of collective political goals. Terry Eagleton describes this development as a shift from politicized culture to cultural politics.[23]

However, these philosophical/theoretical debates do produce an ideological framework for "left" research with which to address the social, ecological or political concerns of the New Left. When its distrust of the system is articulated by "left" social research, a broad range of topics emerges, typically focused on the construction and control of the cultural environment. This includes the social and political impact of popular culture, its effect on the working class, and the entrenched media uses by a dominant power structure within a broader discussion—especially in Marxist historiography—which, according to Eric Hobsbawm, focuses on "the broad nature of social and economic formations in general and the transition from feudalism to capitalism in particular."[24]

In the U.S. American context, communication studies becomes aware of its connectedness to a much larger historical-cultural environment and, therefore, to a politically significant socio-political realm. Elsewhere, like in the Latin-American context, however, communication research had always been considered one aspect of a more comprehensive social and political project of the Left that explores the relations between communication as power and culture for social and political undertakings. Hence, the alignment of (mass) communication research and politics forms a combative agenda of democratization. Indeed, Latin America harbors theories and demonstrates practices of "left" communication research in several national settings since the 1970s.[25] Their examples, set internationally

by the McBride Report, the definitional work on cultural imperialism, and various UNESCO initiatives, had little impact on the making of U.S. "left" communication research, however, thus confirming the privileging of Anglo-European ideas and the neglect of theoretical impulses from Latin America.

More recently, a critical tradition of inter-Asian communication research has emerged (with Myungkoo Kang/Seoul and Kuan-Hsing Chen/Taipei) with the publication of Inter-Asian Cultural Studies (1999), which focuses on the "critical inter-asia subjectivity" for the benefit of regional scholarship.[26] Here the notion of "critical" involves Marxist and non-Marxist perspectives on culture and media.

In this global context and in the specific atmosphere of radical history and New Left politics in the United States, "left" communication research emerges to raise questions about access to the means of communication, while focusing on the relationship between participation and democracy. Its rise profits from the lively, praxis-oriented debates of the time in other disciplines and translates the demands for critical or radical critiques of the system into research agendas that begin to question the dominant definitions and uses of media, their relations to political and commercial interests, including their participation in state-sponsored economic and political interventions abroad.

The New Left provides "left" communication research with the tools or visions, from radical or Marxist feminism and the black struggle for civil rights, to fuse issues of gender, race, and class into a socially and politically determined quest for knowledge about the relations of communication and contemporary society. Indeed, the New Left, according to Alvin Gouldner, speaks in "a deliberately utopian voice of Freedom Now, while Functionalism has never centered its interest on freedom or on equality, but has rather invested itself in order and social equilibrium."[27]

Indeed. the discursive shift in the late 1960s produces a new understanding of communication as central to grasping the nature of society, for instance, and reveals alternative perspectives by introducing a number of useful options to rethink the notion of communication as information. Thus, it is no accident that during the latter part of the 1980s refocusing on the "critical" in communication studies becomes more widespread. At the same time, mass communication (or journalism) as a field of study is looking for new ways of understanding its own history and meeting the challenges to its traditional paradigm. In addition, continued accessibility to the cultural discourse in Europe—including a sustained critique of capitalism—also stimulates alternative thinking about communication, which addresses directly concerns of traditional mass communication research related to the role and function of media in society with theoretical contributions containing the potential for a major paradigm shift. For instance, the previous notion of information society undergoes an ideological critique when the idea of communication is reintroduced via British Cultural Studies—or "left" communication research—as a viable, if complex concept of human practice. In fact, the idea of communication is related (again) to human agency and the emancipatory struggle of the individual. Moreover, the discursive shift offers alternative ways of conceptualizing society, the public sphere, and the nature of democratic practice itself. It is based on an understanding of a historically grounded reality of institutions and practices that can be grasped, interrogated, and reconstructed through a dialectical process.

IV

In the American context, a visible split emerged between traditional, empirical research practices that were aligned with state or commercial interests and a new, critical research tradition that began to question and challenge the dominant system of mass communication. The result, however, was an oppositional rather than a "left" stance within a liberal tradition treminiscent of the progressive era and the work of its various social critics. The assessment of different social and political institutions, for instance, never endangered the philosophical foundations of "the system." It served a maintenance function rather than a radical agenda for change in the American system of power relations. Hence, E. P. Thompson talks about American elements of the New Left, who were actually "a revolting bourgeoisie doing its own revolting thing—that is the expressive and irrationalist, self-exalting gestures of style that do not belong to a serious and deeply rooted, rational revolutionary tradition."[28] Indeed, it has been noted elsewhere that "what passed for Marxist thinking could be more accurately placed somewhere between the margins of Progressive thought—Charles Beard, V.L. Parrington and John Dewey—and a rough understanding of Marxian economics" with the result that in times of political change, authors returned "chastened, almost without exception, to the familiarity and warmth of mainstream American thought: on one side to the pragmatism and empiricism of the social sciences; on the other, to the aestheticism of high culture."[29] Also, a number of liberal sociologists, among them: Nathan Glaser, Daniel Moynihan, Lewis Coser, Dennis Wrong, Irving Horwitz, and Howard S.Becker "could

have been regarded as radical, without being systematically challenged on this point,"according to Schwendinger and Schwendinger. [30]

The differences were most clearly manifest in the split between empiricism and critical theory and effectively articulated for communication research by Paul Lazarsfeld. His classic essay on administrative and critical research,[31] acknowledges a place for critical communication research, citing Max Horkheimer's ideas of developing a theory of prevailing social trends and appraising all actual or desired effects based on the need to preserve dignity, freedom, and the cultural values of human beings. Lazarsfeld foresees a combination of administrative and critical research, although primarily for the enrichment of his own interests in administrative research rather than for joining in a challenge of the dominant ideology and its communication research interests. While his acknowledgment of Critical Theory—as he understood it—suggests the relative effectiveness of Horkheimer's and Adorno's ideas and becomes somewhat of a rallying idea for later proponents of "critical" research, it fails in the context of its time to make a significant difference in the approach to communication research in the United States. The article is frequently cited in defense of "critical" communication research, yet rarely questioned for its failure to incorporate critical ideas into the dominant research paradigm. [32]

And yet, even social criticism within the dominant paradigm of mass communication research becomes problematic at the point of publication. For instance, when the issue of "critical" research emerges more substantially in the Journal of Communication (1983) entitled, "Ferment of the Field," the well-intentioned publication never articulated a socialist position beyond a mere acknowledgment of Critical Theory or neo-Marxist perspectives, and utterly failed to engage the field in any significant debate regarding the past, present, or future of "left" communication research. Although some authors refered to alternative methods of inquiry, they remained vague when using terms, like "critical" or "European-style" research, which implies analyses of power and control. Their references, however, did point to the growing interdisciplinary nature of communication research. The editor, George Gerbner, ultimately manages to collapse Marxist positions into an extended notion of "critical scholar" by including all of those who struggle to address the terms of the discourse and the structure of knowledge and power.

The weakness of a "left" communication research tradition is also confirmed by a more general lack of community. Except for the Union of Democratic Communication (1981), a shelter for even radical positions on issues of communication and society, there are no academic or professional groupings of "left" communication scholars.[33] Also, there is no tradition of radical, "left" journals in the field of communication studies, like in other disciplines, if one thinks of Radical History Review (1973), Radical Teacher (1975), The Insurgent Sociologist (1969), or The Review of Radical Political Economics (1961), among others.

In fact, the well-intentioned emergence of Critical Studies in Mass Communication (1984) illustrates the failure to provide a platform for "left" research or debate.[34] Even the successful, graduate student initiative with the Journal of Communication Inquiry (1974) at the University of Iowa does not have a sustained record of "left" research. Both journals may have attracted some "critical" research, yet without a decidedly "left" perspective on issues of communication, media, and society.

The recent publication of Canonic Texts in Media Research offers yet another insight into a mainstream, historical treatment of Critical Theory and British Cultural Studies; the latter become part of an attempt of grounding the field in the philosophical/theoretical writings of various "schools." Their selective rather than comprehensive interpretation (from British, American and Israeli perspectives) yields no acknowledgment of any school of "critical" or "left" communication research, indeed, there is no integration of Critical Theory and British Cultural Studies into the intellectual history of American media research except as intellectual challenges, which neutralizes these writings ideologically and politically. By focusing on their role as "canons," or institutionally grounded texts, the writings become "search engines" for intellectual pursuits, according to Elihu Katz.[35] Hence, "left" media research in the United States remains hidden and even disconnected from the original writings or historical circumstances as it is set adrift in this interpretation of the intellectual history of communication studies.

The developments since the mid-twentieth cenrtury underscore the observation that form and effects of communication have become more important than the politics of communication research among those critically engaged in a study of communication. Indeed, while American sociology invents "good sociology,"[36]—a reminder of Lester Ward's positivistic "pure sociology"—and promotes the detached pursuit of scientific knowledge, mainstream communication research at the time pushes on with its agenda of effects studies—based on liberal-functionalist theories—without any direct confrontation with "critical" research practices. Indeed, there is no Pitirim Sorokin, C. Wright Mills or Norman Birnbaum (among others)[37] in mass communication studies, who will remind

colleagues forcefully of the pitfalls of their conceptualizations of the field of study.

But then, (mass) communication research is neither a discipline, nor does it have a time-honored intellectual tradition or a strong academic standing among other disciplines. In fact, its accomplishments are modest. It is worth remembering during these times of paradigmatic shifts, how little knowledge of (mass) communication has actually been gained by traditional social scientific studies during the last century. Much of what is known today about the role and function of media, for instance—or of the notion of effects, in particular, and the process of mass communication in society, in general—has been understood (and discussed) for centuries by generations of intellectuals, whose creative insights quickly revealed the workings of any (new) cultural phenomenon in their midst—from pre-Socratic rhetorical scholarship to nineteenth century thought about the political economy of the press, for example.[38]

In the meantime, the recent turn to "critical" alternatives represents an opportunity for traditional research practices to benefit creatively from the discourse of Marxism, Critical Theory, or Cultural Studies as "intellectual challenges" and/or methodological alternatives; there is no exploration (or perhaps even understanding) to date of the role of ideology and the relations of epistemology and politics in an alternative, or even radical brand of communication research. In fact, the intellectual history of American (mass) communication research is marked by a resistance to theory and a preference for models and quantitative methods. The former simplify reality—or the process of communication—in order to understand it; the latter tend to decontextualize and isolate historical phenomena (like in survey research or content analysis).

On the other hand, for mainstream communication research to realize the potential contribution of Critical Theory to a critique of contemporary society, it needs to explore the rise of Critical Theory in the political and cultural context of Weimar Germany and its criticism of mass society in the United States.[39] The decisive elements for this analysis are the attempts of critical theorists to replace the preoccupation of traditional philosophy with science and nature by shifting to an emphasis on history and culture, with an acute awareness of the relationship between epistemology and politics.

While Critical Theory—particularly with its cultural pessimism (Adorno and Horkheimer)—had found little resonance in communication research, British Cultural Studies with its focus on popular culture, its contemporariness, as well as its more accessible language, reaches a new generation of communication scholars, who are willing to experiment with a new perspective on communication and culture and to respond to Raymond Williams's call for a participatory culture. It includes the early efforts by Lawrence Grossberg, in particular, to popularize an American version and introduce a Marxist view of the politics of textuality.[40] More recently, the emergence of a Critical Cultural Studies approach in reaction to the previously domesticated version of British Cultural Studies suggests a decisive shift to a more critical position on issues of culture and communication.

V

There is yet another, more domestic version of "left" communication studies, however, that emerged with the work of Herbert Schiller and Dallas Smythe (or Tom Guback) on a political economy of the media. In fact, their contributions constitute a sustained "left" research effort that became the most promising source of a "left" communication studies tradition in the United States.[41]

More specifically, Schiller's work as an interventionist has been the crusade of a humanist, who believes that a heightened consciousness may eventually lead to desperately needed social changes. Smythe offers a political-economic perspective, steeped in historical materialism, that focuses on information control, audience commodities, and a general critique of mass communication research and theory. Both demonstrate through their work the potential for Marxist criticism beyond the 1960s.[42] Their pursuit receives additional support with the availability of a more current, critical political economy of the media in Britain, which reinforces U.S. American efforts.[43]

Both, British Cultural Studies and a political economy of the media offer different, yet suitable examples of new approaches to "critical" communication research; they grow out of New Left concerns and reflect an appropriation of Marxist thought. By contextualizing (mass) communication in the specifics of politics, specifically, "left" communication research is called upon to engage in social, economic, and cultural diagnoses of societal communication. Focusing on the social consequences of cultural processes—including communication—will marginalize the narrowness of traditional effects studies, while a political economy of the media reveals the complicity

of the culture industry and its impact on every day life.

In other words, "left" communication research—by identifying with British Cultural Studies—considers the idea of culture an appropriate site for explaining mass communication. Beyond it, however, lies an abiding interest in a social and political critique of society and the role of economics in a mediated public life.

Individual efforts to maintain a "critical" research agenda on the margins of the field have been reinforced in the past—at least partly—by educational efforts at the universities of Illinois, and Iowa, in particular, where the inclusion of historical and cultural perspectives—and qualitative methods—helped introduce a more systematic approach to alternative, ideologically differentiated perspectives on communication and media.

However, the cadre schools of empirical communication research (e.g., Minnesota, Michigan State, and Wisconsin, in particular) continued to dominate the major research institutions in the United States—with faculty appointments well into the 1990s—and control the research discourse in pertinent journals and professional meetings.

VI

With the impact of Cultural Studies on issues of media and communication and a focus on a political economy of the media, "left" communication research joins in the destabilization of intellectual boundaries. The emerging interdisciplinary perspective—which includes literature, anthropology, ethnography, economics, as well as sociology, psychology, and social philosophy—is a liberation from confinement in a rigid disciplinary tradition. It is also an opportunity for embracing a host of cultural insights into social communication as individual routine and collective practice and for implementing a variety of methodologies. For instance, grounded in historical consciousness, "left" communication research introduces history as method to expose the importance of power and confirm the significance of human agency for communicative practices with the goal of transforming specific social, political, or economic conditions for the purposes of social and political change and emancipation, in general.

The resulting practice of theory and research reflects the workings of a critical consciousness on issues related to the privileged and authoritative knowledge of mass communication research and contributes to a blending of the humanities and social sciences as a major intellectual project of recent years. Contemporary writings about communication and culture explore these extensions and offer evidence of "critical" mass communication research as a blurred genre among signs of a more radical break with tradition. The turn towards the left occurs at a time, when the search for answers to existential issues—hitherto focused on articulating the function of (mass) communication in society in the jargon of the social sciences—had reached an impasse of considerable proportion. The social scientific discourse is trapped among fragmented empirical foundations of age-old pronouncements about the state of social communication and incapable of moving beyond a professional vernacular that has dominated mass communication research for decades. Communication theory must be driven by a strong utopian mentality, to speak with Karl Mannheim—which is oriented towards the realization of a new mode of public communication that reflects a different social order,[44] while "critical" communication research in the United States—as far as it is identified with the dominant economic and political power—tends to operate on traditional, ideological grounds.

This is the historical juncture, where "left" research with its ambiguous existence on the boundary of liberal-pluralist and Marxist theories of society, evolves into what I have called critical communication studies (or research) elsewhere.[45] Based on a theory of society, whose truth content is determined by "the manner in which it succeeds in lending a conceptual voice to social experience," to speak with Oskar Negt, "critical communication theory explores the present as a historical problem."[46] In fact, Negt argues that since late capitalism is "in its very dynamic core potentially Fascism," Critical Theory constitutes a historical specification that must be performed anew with every generation. This includes the instrumentalization of critical communication research as a radical articulation of "left" communication research in the United States.

In other words, what is left of "left" communication research is a critical examination of mass communication—in the Marxist sense of a critique of the social, economic, and political conditions of media. The focus rests on questions of class, gender, and race within relations of power, issues of access and participation, problems of ownership of the means of mass communication, and—in general—the process of democratization as a political agenda.

The future of "left" communication research is bound up in the future of intellectual work in self-defined democratic societies, like the United States. There is a considerable and long-lasting concern among intellectuals

about their own predicament—which is their inability to act on what they know and foresee. What they have foreseen, however, exists as a critical observation about culture and cultural institutions in American society and provides a historical perspective on the role of the media; the observation reaches from the cultural crisis described by Lewis Corey in the 1930s to the workings of the "cultural apparatus" outlined by C. Wright Mills in the 1940s, or the "cultural mass" addressed by Daniel Bell in the 1970s and by more current writers, from Edward Said to Terry Eagelton. A new generation of "left" communication research must revitalize these traditions by addressing issues of class, power, ideology, and the nature of representation, in particular, to help push progressive thought beyond the traditional boundaries of American Pragmatism.

Indeed, "left" communication research has been the métier of politically engaged intellectuals, who respond in their specific sociopolitical roles to concerns about communication and democracy. Ralph Dahrendorf once described these intellectuals as the court jesters of modern society who must doubt the obvious, suggest the relativity of authority, and ask questions that no one else dares asking. The power of intellectuals lies in their freedom with respect to the hierarchy of the social order. They are, after all, qualified to speak on matters of culture and communication and engage society in a critique which utters uncomfortable truths, while breaking rules that govern the traditional insistence on disinterested, neutral, scientific, objective and discipline-bound scholarship. As Howard Zinn suggests, "if there is to be a revolution in the uses of knowledge. . . it will have to begin by challenging the rules which sustain wasting of knowledge."[47]

In an institutional framework of universities, "left "communication studies encourage self-reflection by offering theoretical insights and interpretive research strategies, while promoting the implementation of a democratic vision of communication and media. Such a task can only succeed as a socially conscious practice, however, when "left" communication research exposes the relations of power in the production of knowledge and the dissemination of information. Challenging the instrumental rationality of an administrative or corporate discourse reconfirms its own role as an historical agent of change. This role, however, and the location of "left" communication research, in general, raises new questions about its economics, in particular (e.g., its financial support in conservative institutions of higher learning with their own political agendas_ and about the survival of "left" communication research within universities, in general. Such a survival is also threatened by a culture industry, whose tradition of inviting criticism, draws on "critical" observation for innovation in form and content. Accordingly, it will stand ready to co-opt cultural or political critique and, therefore, seriously compromise the work of "left" communication research.Finally, the short history of "left" communication research must be understood in the much longer historical context of a limited development of socialism in the United States, where it emerges from a failed attempt by the Old Left to offer real political and social alternatives to the working class, and from the failure of the New Left to survive its own agenda for change in America. Whether "left" communication research is seen as a new form of organizing resistance and challenging the dominant interpretation of social communication, or as an accumulation of oppositional expressions forging a new place for communication research as cultural production, still remains unclear.However, this cursory review of "left" communication research contains at least three useful insights from reading the "left." Theory must be connected to the specifics of experience, the practice of theorizing—as intellectual labor—must be translated into a public critique of communication and media in society, and communication research must ultimately serve the larger social and political goals of democratization. The latter insight may help restore a vision of utopia, that has all but disappeared from the lives of individuals, who are no longer convinced of being able to make a difference in the struggle over a meaningful existence. Mannheim once suggested that a "state of mind is utopian when it is incongruous with the state of reality within which it occurs." Focusing on the process of mass communication as a determinant of our social and political reality—with the aid of "left" communication research—will reveal the potential of creating alternative realities that 'tend to burst the bonds of the existing order."[48] It seems that "left" communication research has a choice at the beginning of the twenty-first century, based on its own history and the current economic conditions of universities and academic life in America: either to subsist in the decreasing margins of (mass) communication studies, whose own future rests with the demands of commercial interests, accompanied by a resurgence of traditional ideologies of teaching and research, or to move its critique collectively into the public arena, from professional meetings and the publication of new journals, to an alignment with progressive political initiatives. Whether the democratization of media and communication in the United States is more than a dream, however, is yet to be seen.

Endnotes

{An earlier version of this manuscript was presented at a Euricom Colloquium on "What is Left in Communication Research?" in Piran (Slovenia), September 17-20, 2003}.

1. Good. (1989) introduces three distinctive approaches to power in communication theory through issues of integration and social control, following Lukes (1974)

2. Jansen(2002), 161. "Media-critical" theory—in the critical spirit of the Frankfurt School—is affiliated with "both (a) the importance of sociological analysis of formations and structures of power and knowledge,and (b) the significance of cultural analysis of the complex hegemonic and sometimes counterhegemonic processes. . ."

3. Mitchell,(1982), 613..

4. Albion Small insists that socialism is a foreign "importation having little application to the American scene." Cited Hunt Page (1940), 140. Also see the 1906 essay by Werner Sombart(1976). Also, Samson (1933).

5. David Montgomery recalls that with the 1950s "American intellectual life was being inundated by a structuralist analysis of society and history that depicted as ludicrous any attempts by individuals or groups to change the world" or any analysis that saw change coming from enlightened leaders of society. In Marho, ed.(1983), 175.

6. There were no 'stable circles of Marxist sociologists in the academy that could anchor radical scholarship among left-oriented sociologists" before the 1960s. Instead, the liberal criticism of some sociologists appeared to be "left" in a "highly restricted spectrum of opinions in the academic discipline," according to Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1974), 563.

7. The inherent sentiment of a resurgent left tradition may have been expressed successfully much earlier by William Carlos Williams, who writes in 1925, "imagine stopping money making. Our whole conception of reality would have to be altered." Williams (1925).

8. In particular, Rogers, (1982). For a discussion of the failure to distinguish "critical" communication research see Jennifer Daryl Slack and Martin Allor (1983). For cultural differences between "critical" and mainstream communication research, see Lang (1979).

9. Among others: Lazarsfeld. (1970).

10. See Hardt (1992).

11. The notion of research is used here throughout this paper in the sense of inquiry, that is, as a broad, all-encompassing concept that includes empirical and philosophical (or quantitative and qualitative) methods of investigation.

12. Earlier in the United States, Josiah Warren had developed ideas regarding economic theory and individualist anarchism that predate the work of Marx and Joseph Proudhon, respectively. Warren argues in the 1840s that the solution to social order resides with the uses of mass communication, which he identifies with public influence. The process of communication—in its modern version of media practices—becomes a determinant of the social and political climate in society. Thus, he suggests that the simplification of printing methods, for instance, would help arouse public sentiment for order and against violations of individual rights. See: Warren ([1841]1952), 3-4.

13. For a detailed discussion of these and other authors, see Hardt(2001).

14. C. Wright Mills (1959), 92.

15. For a history of this period, see Murray (1955). Also Higham (1963).

16. Seldes (1937),Sinclair (1919), Villard (1923), Ickes (1939).

17. Dewey (1927).

18. Lippmann (1922).

19. Walter Rideout (1956) provides a full list of proletarian novels. Among the writers were John Dos Passos, Kenneth Burke, Granville Hicks, and Langston Hughes. See also Aaron (1961).

20. See Aaron (1961), 27. His book focuses on a number of radical writers and their contributions to the "left" intellectual tradition.

21. By the late 1960s, Linda Wiener Hausman (1967) identifies 506 articles appraising or criticizing the press.

22. The findings are published in: The Commission on Freedom of the Press (1947).

23. Eagleton (2000), 127.

24. Hobsbawm (1983),38.

25. Jesus Martin Barbero, who is one of the "fathers" of this development, also includes "Luis Ramiro Beltrán in Bolivia, Mattelart in Chile, Pasqualli in Venezuela, Mario Caprún the Uruguayan, Hector Schmuckler in Argentina, Bordenabe from Paraguay, amongst others." He adds, " Publications like 'Lenguajes' and 'Comunicación y Cultura' are practically political projects per se." (1999, May)

26. From the editorial statement, Inter-Asia Cultural Studies (1999).

27. Gouldner (1970), 400.

28. Thompson (1983(),10.

29. Buhle, (1987),164.

30. Schwendinger and Schwendinger (1974), 563.

31. Lazarsfeld (1972).

32. See Gitlin (1978).

33. UDC held its 1993 annual conference at the Latin American film school near Havana, Cuba.

34. Its editors claim that "varied theoretical and methodological perspectives were asserting themselves as "critical studies" within communication". . . but a single definition was "to be both unrealistic and unproductive for the good of the field." Instead, the journal sought to encourage a "dialectic pluralism." Avery and Eason, (1991), 3-4.

35. Edited by Elihu Katz, John Durham Peters, Tamar Liebes, and Avril Orloff (2003).

36. Becker and Horowitz (1972).

37. Sorokin (1956); Mills, (1959); Birnbaum (1971). Also: O'Neill (1972)

38. Recently, Javnost—The Public (X, 2003, 2) published the results of a colloqium on "Communication in pre-20th Century Thought," for instance, which demonstrates the long-standing debates regarding communication, media, and effects in society.

39. Similarly, the historical circumstances of the rise of British Cultural Studies become important sources for understanding the relations of culture, communication, and society.

40. Grossberg (1991).

41. See the work of Tom Guback, but also Vincent Mosco, Robert McChesney, Eileen Meehan, or Janet Wasko, among others.

42. Hardt (1992), 148-49.

43. (1990). The volume contains a number of his important essays.

44. Following Mannheim (1936).

45. Hardt (1998.).

46. Negt (1980).

47. Zinn, (1970), 9.

48. Mannheim (1936),192-93.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007

ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.014

"Upgrading" Market Legitimation: Revisting Habermas's 'Technology as Ideology' in Neoliberal Times

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This paper revisits Habermas's notion of 'technology as ideology' in the context of contemporary political culture. It argues that the methodological and substantive contours of Habermas's framework are still valid today. However, the role that technology plays as ideology has changed dramatically in the context of contemporary capitalism. No longer does it provide a legitimation for the political administration of the economy in the context of the Social Democratic state; instead, it legitimizes a new, neoliberal regime, whereby political intervention in the workings of the market is highly prohibited. This argument is substantiated with an empirical analysis of contemporary discourse on information technology, or the 'digital discourse'. It shows how neoliberal tenets regarding the workings of the market are rearticulated as technological realities, and their ideological undercurrents are neutralized. According to this digital discourse, with information technology the promise of a self-regulating market has been materialized. As the market becomes more rational and frictionless by the force of information technology it also gains and further deserves more autonomy from political intervention. This new (network) 'technology as ideology', therefore, legitimizes key processes entailed in the shift from a Keynesian welfare state to a neoliberal state: the insulation of the market from political intervention and the corollary trends of the marketization of society and the disorganization of the economy.

The last few decades have been marked by a new constellation of power between markets and states, and market and society, with markets becoming increasingly disembedded from society (Polanyi 2001; Harvey 2005). This disembeddedness—part of a broader social transformation from Fordism to post-Fordism—is dominated by two trends: marketization and disorganization:

Marketization entails the increasing dominance and scope of markets in social life: markets have gained more autonomy vis-à-vis the state, becoming more deregulated, and more globalized (Castells 1996; Sassen 1999); the state withdrew not only from intervening in the workings of the market, but also from ownership of "the commanding heights" (Yergin and Stanislaw 1998) of the economy through privatization as well as the funding and operation of many welfare mechanisms that were put in place in order to provide a buffer zone between individuals and the market (Piven and Cloward 1997); more and more spheres of social life are being administered by the free market or modeled after a market-like rationale (Somers and Block 2005); there has been a trend of privatization of risks and responsibility from the state to individuals; there has also been a process of privatization in the world of work, where a class compact has been substituted by individual contracts; the decline of market regulation and downward income redistribution has also led to an increase in class inequality within national boundaries and between nation states (Harvey 2005; Milanovic 2007).

Disorganization (Offe 1985; Lash and Urry 1988)—partially a consequence of the marketization of society—refers to a process whereby markets, the economy, and social life in general have become more liquid (Bauman 2000), more chaotic and complex (Urry 2002); the globalization of financial markets has made capital more mobile, leaving local markets more volatile and unstable as a result (Sassen 1999; Harvey 2005; Sennet 2006); production has become more flexible, constantly adapting to changing markets' demands; production and consumption cycles have been accelerating (Harvey 1989; Rosa 2003; Agger 2004); companies have shifted in their organization from a model of a top-down hierarchized bureaucracy to a horizontal, dehierarchized, and decentralized network (Castells 1996; Sennet 2006); flexible, lean, 'just-in-time' production has made work-life more "mean" (Harriso, 1997), and increasingly precarious, unstable, and unpredictable (Bauman 2001, chap. 2); tenured workers are replaced by part-timers and flexitimers, working on ad-hoc projects, rather than developing a linear career path (Castells 1996; Sennet 2000); and economic risks (as well as spoils) have been individualized (Beck 1992;

Beck 2000; Bauman 2001).

Four causes have been suggested to underlie these dynamics: economic, political, social and technological. Economically, the disembedding of markets from society, and their increased disorganization can be seen as responses to the internal constraints of the Fordist mode of accumulation, and the need of capitalism to be restructured (Harvey 1989; Castells 1996). Politically, these dynamics had been accompanied by a transition from a political ideology of national embedded liberalism (or social democracy, Keynesianism, welfarism,) to that of global neoliberalism (or market fundamentalism) (Aune 2001; Duggen 2003; Harvey 2005; Smith 2005; Somers and Block 2005). Socially, these processes are seen as the result of a new balance of power between capital, labor, and state, with capital gaining a newfound autonomy from labor, and hence with the state diminishing in its legitimacy (Sklair 2002; Ram 2007). Technologically, these dynamics had been facilitated by the emergence of new information and communication technology, allowing space-time compression, acceleration, and the transition to a social dynamics of networks (Harvey 1989; Castells 2002, Sassen 2002; Rosa 2003).

Beginning in the 1990s, and particularly with the popularization of the Internet, a determinist version of the technological thesis gained a significant cachet in the public discourse. So much so that the realities of the new capitalism has come to be explained as a direct result of new information and communication technology (or network technology). Globalization, Google, outsourcing, 'just-in-time' production, the rise of India—these new keywords in the lexicon of the new capitalism, had also become keywords of the Information Revolution. The close affinity between these two lexical sets was readily clarified: a new technology enables a new society. Globalization is carried over the networks of communication; the new economy is essentially all about new business models; Google is the epitome of a new business model and new consumer products centered on the value of information and its transmission over communication networks; outsourcing and 'just-in-time' production are hard to imagine as viable economic practices without information technology; and India owes its rise as a capitalist miracle to customer-service call-centers in Bangalore, and to the surge in the number of software engineers and global high-technology hubs. This outlook reflects a prevailing assumption regarding the relations between technology and society: that the former makes the latter. Such viewpoint was propagated in the public sphere by journalists such as The New York Times' Thomas Friedman, scientist and essayist Nicholas Negroponte, writer George Gilder, prominent digerati, such as Bill Gates and Steve Jobs, and publications such as Wired magazine, which was incidentally inaugurated in the spatial and temporal hotbed of the convergence of network technology and the new capitalism—Silicon Valley in 1993.

In light of this hegemonic viewpoint, this paper wishes to offer an alternative framework, which bypasses the question regarding the primacy of technological, political, or economic factors, and instead points to how these vectors align along a new social totality. It does that by pointing out the legitimation function of technology: technology is not only an instrumental medium by which economic and political transformations (such as that from Fordism to post-Fordism) are enabled, but also a communicative medium through which such transformations are explained and legitimized (Herf 1984; Heffernan 2000; Sturken and Thomas 2004).

Technology as Ideology

The legitimatory function of technology in modernity has been most elaborately theorized (and critiqued) by the Frankfurt School as part of its more general critique of instrumental reason. According to this view, with modernity technology has become central not only as a tool of the capitalist economy and the bureaucratic state; in addition, the discourse on technology fills a central ideological role in legitimizing this prevailing order. The ideology of technology is that social, economic, military, moral problems—in short political questions—have a technical and technological solution. Progress is equated with technological advance, and the rationality and universality of technology substitutes for the divisive and 'ideological' process of politics (Fromm 1968; Horkheimer and Adorno 1976; Feenbert 1991; Marcuse 1991).

In his essay Technology and science as "ideology", Habermas (1970) lays out a history of market legitimation, whereby a legitimation based on the principles of neocalssical political economy, that is, on the internal workings of the market, is replaced by another, external legitimation, with the emergence of the Keynesian welfare state. From this point onward political practice is measured and legitimized in terms of the technical problems at hand, rather than in substantive terms. The role of politics is reduced to finding the technical means to achieve goals (such

as economic growth) that are in themselves understood to lie outside the realm of politics (Habermas 1970:100-3). Technology is ideological, then, to the extent that political issues are treated as technical issues: tensions and contradictions are overcome by delimiting the scope of the political, and as a result the instrumental rationality of technical language colonizes the sphere of politics.

Habermas' conceptual framework, like any system of thought, is also historically contingent. Habermas writes at a time when the Keynesian welfare state is still very much engaged in the administration of the capitalist economy. Under these conditions, intervention in the economy is in fact the source of political legitimation. As I have outlined above, in the three-and-a-half decades since the publication of Habermas's essay key components in his framework, pertaining to the relations between states and markets, and technology—have gone through radical changes. Most significant to our discussion is the shift from the Keynesian-welfare state to the neoliberal state, and the explosion of information technology.

I understand Habermas's framework of technology-as-ideology to consist of two arguments: a general argument that pertains to the depoliticizing ramifications of a technologistic consciousness; and a historically-specific argument that pertains to the legitimation of capitalism under Fordism. The purpose of this paper is to offer both a revival of the general argument and a revision of the historically-specific argument, now that capitalist societies have been rendered post-Fordist. Simply put, it wishes to ask "What is the ideology of technology today?" With the new constellation of power between states and markets, and the emergence of a new technological paradigm, what does the discourse on technology legitimizes today and how does it do it?

The paper contends that with the shift to post-Fordism and the neoliberal state, and concurrent with the processes of marketization and disorganization of the new capitalism, there has also been transformations in the legitimation discourse of technology. The discourse on network technology, or the digital discourse, offers a framework where the tenets of neoliberalims are given what Robins and Webster (1999) call a 'technologistic' translation. That is, they are articulated as inevitable and benevolent realities that stem from a technological form, rather than a political and ideological project. These neoliberal tenets are hence depoliticized in the digital discourse. This is a case of 'technology as ideology' in the Habemasian sense par excellence. Only now it works as a discourse which legitimizes the neoliberal condition and the insulation of the market from external intervention, while in the past technology legitimized the exact opposite: the role of the state in managing the capitalist market and providing a protective shield to individuals from the market. Therefore, the digital discourse has become an important interpretive framework through which neoliberalism is neutralized and legitimized.

Let me illustrate the articulation of neoliberal tenets in the digital discourse through an analysis of two key issues in both the digital discourse and neoliberal theory: "spontaneous order" and "chaos". These two axial concepts largely correspond and account for the processes of marketization and disorganization. As case studies, I use New Rules for the New Economy: 10 Radical Strategies for a Connected World (1998), a book by Kevin Kelly, former editor of Wired magazine, and the writings of Frierdrich Hayek, the most notable neoliberal theoretician.

Spontaneous Order and Market Rationality

'Spontaneous order' is arguably the single most important theoretical concept in neoliberal theory (Sally 1998; Petsoulas 2001). Neoliberalism argues that, perhaps contrary to our intuition, order is not necessarily a result of a conscious, planned design, but can spring spontaneously. The epitome of all spontaneous social orders is the free market. There is no directing hand designing the market, but order nevertheless comes about through the interaction of independent units. Each of these units follows its own selfish and narrow rationale, and adheres to its own interests. But in the aggregate, this multiplicity of selfish and disparate actions results in an overall order, which is socially rational and benevolent. Spontaneous order, and more specifically markets, is superior to any human-planned order. It is universally rational and beneficial; an a-political mechanism. It is also a self-regulating mechanism. In fact, attempts to regulate or plan parts of the market are likely to interfere with its self-regulating, spontaneous mechanisms and cause more damage than help. It is therefore strongly advised that markets be insulated from the interference of planned and centralized orders, such as states or trade-unions.

The central arguments of neoliberal theory regarding markets as spontaneous order are paralleled almost one-to-one in the digital discourse treatment of networks. And Hayek's advocacy of the superior rationality of a free market is very much akin to Kelly's advocacy for the superior rationality of the network. Both the genius of the market and

the revolutionary character of digital networks are anchored in the characteristics of 'spontaneous order'. Both in Kelly's notion of networks, and Hayek's notion of markets, rationality emerges out of irrationality. Rationality is both unintended and unforeseen; it is impossible to predict, much less design and direct. At the heart of both networks and markets, then, is not a conscious effort to design order according to plan, but simply the unforeseen outcome of the coordination of multiple and disparate actors.

In the digital discourse the central components of neoliberalism are digitized. Markets, and more generally social networks, are understood in terms of information and communication networks: dispersed and autonomous nodes, each of which is simple and short-sighted ('dumb chips'), but as they communicate with each other, they are able to bring about rational results in a decentralized manner. The similarities between the digital discourse and neoliberal theory show how the former not only reiterates the latter, but "upgrades" it (to use a digital metaphor) so that the neoliberal worldview seems to be naturally flowing from the 'objective' reality of information technology.

Let's take the case of the status of individual nodes vis-à-vis the network. In the digital discourse individual nodes are perceived to be inherently inferior in rationality and smartness, compared with the network. It is only through the decentralized, self-regulated interaction of these 'dumb nodes' within a network that rationality can emerge. In the digital discourse, then, spontaneous order is inextricably linked with the inferior position of nodes vis-à-vis the network. In other words, the claim regarding a new rationality of technological and social networks is predicated on the relatively inferior rationality of individual nodes. For example, Kevin Kelly notes that "dumb chips"—simple processors designed to perform very limited computational tasks—are becoming much more popular than the more sophisticated computer chips (Kelly 1998:10-11). In contrast to computer chips, which are stand-alone, self-sufficient units (such as the Central Processing Units within PCs), dump chips only make sense within a network. Each of these chips is "dumb", but as we "connect these billion nodes, one by one" (Kelly 1998:12), these small, not so intelligent machines become something else; they gain, according to Kelly, the qualities of "smartness" (Kelly 1998:14) and rationality (Kelly 1998: 16).

What is significant for Kelly about such a network is that its high level of rationality is brought about not by any single super-computer, which governs the network like an omniscient eye in the sky, or a Big Brother. Instead, this rationality is self-regulated; it is brought about by the mere interlinking of dumb chips, or nodes into a web. Intelligence, knowledge, and economic rationality, according to Kelly, reside not in any individual node but only in the network, and come about only through the new technological ability of nodes to come together in a collective rational action, that is, to "swarm". Order and rationality, then, are brought about by the interlinking of simple, irrational nodes. This type of order, he says, emerges in any system which employs network architecture—biological, technological, economic, cultural, and social. And so Kelly is able to extrapolate from the technological level to other realms; for example, intelligence and rationality: "when connected into a swarm, small thoughts become smart" (Kelly 1998:12). The interconnection of many small, simple-minded parts results in a qualitative leap—so that "small" becomes not simply big but "smart".

It is important to make the inference of what Kelly is suggesting, especially as it pertains to the status of the individual, be it a node in a technological network, or an individual in society. If consciousness (as well as smartness and rationality) is the result of the cooperation of dumb neurons (as well as dumb chips, or nodes), the corollary is that reflexivity, or the ability to apply rationality to rationality, resides only in the network, not in any single node. None of these small nodes can comprehend the complexity of the network's rationality. Kelly sums up this lesson by maintaining: "no one is as smart as everyone" (Kelly 1998:13). This inability of any one node to comprehend the complexity of the web, and the lack of agency capable of reflexivity is fundamental also to explaining actors in markets, and the futile attempt of any agency (particularly governments) to comprehend markets, let alone control them.

But how does this rationality come about? According to Kelly, the rationality of networks is governed by two rules: "Dumb parts, properly connected into a swarm, yield smart results" (Kelly 1998:13); and "The surest way to smartness is through massive dumbness" (Kelly 1998:14). Put together, these rules suggest that the network is the best mechanism to produce rationality. Moreover, it suggests that superior rationality is solely the product of networks. Smartness and rationality is achieved not by improving on the performance of individual nodes, but simply by connecting them to each other. Sophistication and progress is created by very limited, short-sighted, and unreflexive agents. Rationality, in conclusion, involves two elements: dumb nodes, and the mechanism which connects them and self-regulates their action. The internet, and other network technology, serves not simply as the quintessential metaphor for this, but indeed as the material basis for the execution of such rationality. And so with

information technology, this rationality is finally materialized, figuratively and actually.

The various names used to describe this new form of network architecture and network rationality are very telling. "Distributed power" [1], "smart mobs" [2], "spontaneous order" [3], "hidden order" [4], all play on a similar linguistic device: an oxymoron. These duos tie together the irrational (fuzzy, undirected) with the rational (instrumental, purposive, focused). In all of them a 'bad' thing is rendered 'good' by the power of network technology, and more generally the architecture of the network. Power's coerciveness and oppressiveness is curbed by being distributed—democratically, in a way which flattens and diminishes the very force of 'power'; the threatening mob—a bundle of thoughtless individuals homogenized and manipulated by a 'mass society'—becomes smart and thoughtful; and order, that which we were led to believe requires centralization and control lest it devolves into entropy, is achieved spontaneously. This teasing use of oxymorons defies our intuitive notions of rationality. With network technology, these idioms suggest, we are entering a new level of rationality, which is superior to the old one both in process (which is rendered more democratic and collaborative) and in result (which becomes more instrumental and efficient). And this type of superior rationality, as suggested by the duos, is inextricably tied to a new architecture of organization; rationality and network go hand in hand. These duos also do something else. They help imagine a notion of a society comprised of individuals, a notion of social dynamics that are reducible to the unrestrained actions of free individuals. And they suggest that the coordination of these individuals into a rational society comes about without any central, overt mechanism, but one which is "hidden" and "spontaneous". Network technology provides technological space for this leap from the irrational to the rational to take place.

Like the digital discourse, neoliberal theory is also concerned with explaining how market rationality emerges from what might be seen as haphazard, disorganized, individualistic, ungoverned, and conflictual actions. In neoliberal theory, spontaneous order is the means by which individual 'micromotives' lead to 'macrobehavior' (Sally 1998:1), and "private vices" become "public benefits" in Mandeville's words (Petsoulas 2001, chap. 3). According to Hayek, spontaneous order does the trick by providing the best tool for the allocation of knowledge; it is the best solution for individuals' epistemic limitation: "The competitive market is by a long shot the best available device to coordinate existing (fragmented, dispersed and tacit) knowledge ... in order to cater for material wants" (Sally 1998:19). In a famous passage from The Wealth of Nations, Adam Smith too grapples with the quantum leap from unreflexive, 'dumb' micromotives to a rational, beneficent macrobehavior. "...every individual necessarily labours to render the annual revenue of the society as great as he can. He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it". His actions are directed towards increasing "his own security", and "his own gain", but he is "led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention" (Smith 1994:485).

That the nodes comprising the network—be it computer chips, workers in a company, companies in the economy, or individuals in the marketplace—are dumb, unreflexive, and short-sighted relative to the network is not an empirical statement, nor is it meant to be derogatory. Rather, it is a cornerstone of both the digital and neoliberal worldviews. In the digital discourse, it is premised on a techno-scientific discovery of the operation of nodes in information networks. In neoliberalism, it is premised on the limited capacity of individuals: individuals can never have all the necessary market knowledge at their fingertips, since they are "partially and perpetually ignorant" about markets (Sally 1998:19). The crucial difference between the digital discourse and the neoliberal theory, then, is the depth in which their respective arguments are laid: while in neoliberal thought these are anchored in abstract constructs such as 'the market', or 'constitutional ignorance', in the digital discourse these arguments are welded into the 'materiality' of information technology, such as 'dumb chips' and network architecture.

Both in the digital discourse and neoliberal theory the constitution of the individual as the central and sole unit of social operation is paramount. Both put premium on the independence and liberty of each node in the network (or each individual in the market). But there is also an interesting evolution in the analysis of the interrelation between individual liberty and spontaneous order from classical liberalism, through neoliberalism, and finally to digitalism. In the classical liberalism of Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, and David Hume individual liberty in the marketplace is seen as a natural, unconditional right, a 'natural liberty'; it is assumed to be a virtue on its own merit (Ashford and Davies 1991:170-3; Greenwald 1994). This is a moralistic legitimation for a free market.

Neoliberal theory withers away with this moral component. It turns the argument on its head and sees individual liberty as a prerequisite for the successful operation of the market. For the spontaneous order that is the market to occur, individual liberty must prevail. For Hayek, the argument for liberalism is based on a social theory rather than moral premises. As Hayek puts it, liberalism "derives from the discovery of a self-generating or spontaneous order

in social affairs..." (Hayek 1967: 162, cited in Kley 1994:1, [italics mine]). This is a scientific legitimation for a free market.

The digital discourse builds on the scientific argumentation of neoliberalism, but it also transforms the argument for individual liberty into a technologistic legitimation. Whereas individuals are reconceived as nodes within a technological network, and whereas these nodes must be atomized, flexible, and adaptable to network fluctuations, individuals must be free in order for spontaneous order to occur. Hence, the argument for the liberty of individuals in the context of free markets is asserted thrice: first, on moral grounds, then as a scientific discovery, and finally, as a technological reality.

Chaos and Adaptability

Let me now move to another parallel between the digital discourse and neoliberal theory concerning chaos. The notion of chaos is central to neoliberal understanding of markets. Here, again, we should note the transformation from the neoclassical to neoliberal, and finally digital discourse, in accounting for the realities of markets (that is, as ideologies of markets). A crucial distinction between Adam Smith's notion of the Invisible Hand and Hayek's notion of Spontaneous Order is their teleology. For Smith, the Invisible Hand brings harmony and homeostasis; markets incline towards equilibrium. For Hayek, the natural state of the economy is disharmony. Markets are "always in disequilibrium" (Ashford and Davies 1991:170-3) and in "flux" (Sally 1998:20), fostering "restless individuals" to engage in a perpetual "discovery procedure" (Ashford and Davies 1991:170-3).

In the digital discourse as well the network economy is inherently chaotic. According to Kelly, the "link[ing of] the distributed bottom" (Kelly 1998:14) in the economic sphere makes the network economy a system so complex that it yields nonlinear, unexpected, incalculable results. With the advent of information networks the economy becomes both less predictable and more volatile and chaotic. The new economic rationality, mechanically emerging from the nature of technological networks, is presented in the digital discourse as a mirror image of the instrumental rationality which was the backbone of the modern economy. Industrial economic rationality, most succinctly grasped by Weber at the beginning of the 20th century, entails calculability, control, and predictability. The new digital rationality shows precisely the counter symptoms: unpredictability and incalculability. Kelly explains the fluctuating, unstable, turbulent new economy as inherent to the nature of networks, by using insights from biological systems:

> As networks have permeated our world, the economy has come to resemble an ecology of organisms, interlinked and coevolving, constantly in flux, deeply tangled, ever expending at its edges. As we know from recent ecological studies, no balance exists in nature; rather, as evolution proceeds, there is perpetual disruption as new species displace old, as natural biomes shift in their markup, and as organisms and environments transform each other (Kelly 1998:108 [italics mine]).

Kelly maintains that with the emergence of technologically-enabled networks as the central axis of social activity, the economy has come to resemble nature: both are evolving progressively, and are in perpetual imbalance. In fact, Kelly ties together those two notions—chaos and progress—to account for the new economy. Using an evolutionary framework, Kelly proposes that economic progress comes about through constant flux and disruption. These are not byproducts, or side-effects of economic rationality and growth, but the motor thereof. "Harmony in nature", Kelly asserts, "is fleeting" (Kelly 1998:108), and so it is in the new network economy: "Companies come and go quickly, careers are patchworks of vocations, industries are indefinite groupings of fluctuating firms" (Kelly 1998:108). Kelly's critique is directed not at the new reality but at the outdated language used to describe and explain it. To treat careers and businesses as stable, according to Kelly's view, reflects an imposition of an anachronistic framework (linearity, stability, predictability, harmony) of a bygone industrial era on the new digital reality. The new economy is a network economy, and "Networks are immensely turbulent and uncertain" (Kelly 1998:111). Chaos, then, is not a disruption of an otherwise stable network; rather, it is its core characteristic. It becomes the sine qua non of the economic environment, to which economic actors need to adapt.

In the same vein Kelly addresses the increasingly chaotic and unstable working arrangements that characterize the network economy. For Kelly, the meaning of a trend whereby full-time, long-term careers within organizations are substituted by an increasingly unstable and chaotic employment environment (grasped by Castells' notion of 'flexitimers' [Castells 1996] and Senett's 'corrosion of character' [Senett 1998]) is interpreted through the notions of flexibility and adaptability. He illustrates this trend with the example of the entertainment industry, where these

arrangements have been commonplace for years. Part-timers, subcontractors, outsourced workers, freelancers, Kelly says—all "convene as one financial organization for the duration of the movie project, and then when the movie is done, the company disperses" (Kelly 1998:111). 'And the workers?' one might ask. According to Kelly "after the [movie] gets slotted to video, everybody just vanishes" (1998:111). In what sounds like a utopia of employers in the flexible economy, once workers do what needs to be done for the 'ad-hoc' project—they just vanish. Flexibility, in this case, entails workers as atomized, individualized nodes, who are required to adapt to the dictates of a network economy.

This economic instability and uncertainty, he says, is here to stay. In contrast to "change", "Flux" is not a road to stability but a permanent reality. It is a constant state of "destruction and genesis. Flux topples the incumbent and creates a platform for more innovation and birth. This dynamic state might be thought of as 'compounded rebirth'. And its genesis hovers on the edge of chaos" (Kelly 1998:109). But flux is not simply a new reality to be accustomed to, an inconvenient 'bad' we must now adapt to alongside the 'goods'; instead, it is something to be cheerful about. Flux should not be tempered with or mitigated. If anything, it should be encouraged. Thus, for example, instead of lamenting the loss of job security in the new economy, Kelly suggests we simply revoke our perception of what jobs are, "rather than considering jobs as a fixed sum to be protected and augmented [...] the state should focus on encouraging economic churning—on continually recreating the state's economy" (Kelly 1998:109). Taking its cue from nature again, Kelly reports what ecologists, familiar with the notion of constant flux, have learned: "The sustained vitality of a complex network requires that the net keeps provoking itself out of balance" (Kelly 1998:110). Rather than attempting to work towards harmony and balance, we should encourage and provoke conditions of flux and chaos in the economy. The network economy, he says, thrives on its own destruction, leading him to assert that the goal of networks is "to sustain a perpetual disequilibrium" (Kelly 1998:110) rather than fight it. He wraps up this point with the Stalinist-sounding slogan: "constant innovation is perpetual disruption" (Kelly 1998:110).

The digital discourse quite meticulously constructs a technologistic argument that explains why a network economy is inherently chaotic and in flux, and demands flexibility on the part of nodes. But even if one accepts this contention another question remains to be answered: Why should we accept and even encourage such flux if it leads to a constant state of uncertainty, and even "hovers on the edge of chaos" (Kelly 1998:109)? Why, in other words, shouldn't we want to control and mitigate it?

The answer, according to Kelly, is that this chaos is at the heart of the most important factor of economic growth in contemporary society: technological innovation. Chaos is both a breeding ground for technological innovation and the product of the acceleration of this process. It is a precondition for technological innovation; "Innovation", says Kelly, "is the productive and desirable moment between ordinary and insignificant change on the one hand, and a change too radical to be implemented on the other hand"; it is located on the borderline between "the rigid death of planned order and the degeneration of chaos" (Kelly 1998:113). To foster technological innovation, the motor of economic growth in the network society, we need to willingly occupy the space at the edge of planning and order, we need to embrace the network. As Kelly puts it, "The ideal environment for cultivating the unknown is to nurture the supreme agility and nimbleness of networks" (Kelly 1998). In order to foster innovation we need to have an environment favorable of change with as little paralyzing rules as possible. Rather than wanting to mitigate flux and chaos, we need to accept that "the price of progressive change in maximum doses is a dangerous (and thrilling) ride to the edge of disruption" (Kelly 1998: 114). Hence, technological innovation, the new dynamo of economic and indeed human progress, makes the network economy inherently chaotic. Chaos and progress are intricately tied.

As in Freud's joke of the borrowed kettle, Kelly too suggests flux, chaos, and churning, along with their corollary social effects of instability and unpredictability, should not be opposed or mitigated for three reasons: it cannot be done (flux in the network economy is inevitable; a transfer of a natural phenomenon into the social realm through information technology), it is better not to do it (flux is benevolent, yielding good results for everyone); and it is dangerous to do it (will result in knocking the system out of its self-regulated imbalance and creating devastating consequences). For these three, not necessarily compatible reasons, economic flux should be (respectively) dully accepted, enthusiastically celebrated and encouraged, and not tempered with.

Kelly expects (in the dual sense of 'prediction' and 'prescription') the network economy to be much more turbulent than what the industrial economy has been. But the stability and predictability of the latter was not simply (at least not only) the product of the different nature of these economies, as implied by Kelly, but precisely a product of the political and social barriers put forth by governments on markets. Stability, the curbing of flux and chaos, was exactly what governments tried to achieve through the construction of social democracies. The welfare state, the

New Deal, Keynesian policies, Corporatism, embedded liberalism—all were varied attempts to reduce the instability associated with laissez faire economics, and provide at least minimal protection to individuals against unpredictable markets. It is exactly in this context that Kelly makes a revealing statement regarding the underlying political project entailed in the construction of new economy, saying: "In a poetic sense, the prime goal of the new economy is to undo—company by company, industry by industry—the industrial economy" (Kelly 1998:112). With flux and chaos being naturalized and technologized in the digital discourse, and hence accepted and encouraged, it is exactly the (poetic) undoing of the political constraints put on markets and the layer of social arrangements, constructed throughout the 20th century in order to insulate individuals from an unforgiving, unpredictable, and irrational (in the broader sense of substantive rationality) market that Kelly is calling for and legitimizes.

Both the digital discourse and neoliberal theory expect spontaneous order to be in perpetual flux. And both recommend the same recipes to cope with that: for the individual—adaptation through flexibility; for states—acceptance through laissez faire policies. Both worldviews therefore share an avid advocacy for the insulation of markets from democratic political processes. As we have seen above, in the digital discourse it is information networks which render the operation of markets more rational. Or more precisely: the rationality predicated on the spontaneous order that emerges from the decentralized coordination of disparate nodes is finally materialized and reaches its full potential with the digitization of these procedures. This rationality is technological (i.e. universal and a-political). Not necessarily for the same underlying reasons, neoliberal theory too makes a case for the insulation of markets from political interference.

The insulation of markets from politics in neoliberal theory is premised on two arguments: that planned order is inferior to spontaneous order, and that political intervention hurts the mechanism of self-regulation. Hence, according to neoliberal theory, spontaneous order, specifically the market, is inherently a-political in two distinct meaning of the term. First, given the complexity of variables and knowledge entailed in the construction of markets, it cannot be subjected to political processes; its complexity is so immense as to make the realm of politics ill suited to handle it. And second, markets are a-political since it is assumed that their spontaneous emergence renders them cleansed of particularistic interests. They are seen as neutral tool which perform a disinterested function.

This is the crux of neoliberal conservatism. Rationality is already embedded in social institutions (of the 'spontaneous order' type). Institutions and morals, such as private property, private law, money, competition, are "the result of human action, but not the execution of any human design"; they are "unintended by-products ... of human action" (Sally 1998:22). If we try to introduce planned order we soon find out that compared to the merits of competitive markets,

> Central planning, and ... government intervention, are much inferior in allocating goods and services. Governments lack access to and control of requisite information in order to plan or guide markets, and what little information they marshal is coordinated in a centralised and cumbersome, not to say ham-fisted, manner (Sally 1998:19-20).

Hayek, therefore, advises us that "as individuals we should bow to forces and obey principles which we cannot hope fully to understand, yet on which the advance and even the preservation of civilization depend" (Hayek 1979, cited in Petsoulas, 2001:4). The social is not and should not be a product of conscious and purposeful construction. Society and culture do change, but by an evolutionary process, not by conscious, rational, and deliberate attempts. "We cannot redesign", Hayek says, "but only further evolve what we do not fully comprehend" (Hayek, 1982, cited in Petsoulas, 2001: 4-5). Hence, all that humans can do is act in the most immediate, bottom-up, unreflexive, untheoretical fashion as atomized nodes in the network. The resemblance of these neoliberal tenets to the digitalistic representation of the economy is again uncanny. The digital discourse too centers on the chaotic nature of network economy, and the delimitation of 'political' action mostly to adaptation and flexibility on the part of individuals, and laissez faire policies on the part of society as a whole.

To sum up, according to Kevin Kelly, the interweaving of network technology with the market transforms markets in two fundamental ways. At all levels, from organizations, through industries, to the global economy, markets have become decentralized, dehierarchized, and flexible. The reconstitution of markets in accordance with the architecture of networks has rendered them more conducive to spontaneous order. Market order no longer has to be planned a-priori by conscious decision, and implemented top-down; instead it is shown to increasingly emerge bottom-up, from the spontaneous actions of dumb nodes. In turn, spontaneous order does away with the need for most forms of regulation and planning. Moreover, while network markets require less planning, intervention, and governing coordination, they nevertheless yield more rational results. Spontaneous order, then, is predicated on, and

in turn furthers, a new balance of power between individuals and society: a network market empowers individuals at the expense of social regulation through the state.

But the top-down management—of the private company or the national economy—does not only become unnecessary, it also becomes virtually unfeasible because network markets are also more chaotic. This is the second fundamental transformation entailed by the rise of the network market. Market rationality does not simply increase quantitatively, but changes qualitatively, featuring more flux, unpredictability, acceleration, and perpetual change and instability. This new economic reality requires individual actors, or nodes in the network, to react to the ever-changing market environment with flexibility and adaptability.

Network Technology as Ideology

The rhetorical affinity of neoliberalism as a market ideology with contemporary discourse on technology has been well documented before (see, for example: Barbrook and Cameron 1996; Best and Kellner 2000; Borsook 2000; Frank 2000; Aune 2001; Dean 2002; Gere 2002; Mosco 2004; Wajcman, 2004; Harvey 2005; Turner 2006). In One Nation Under God, Thomas Frank (2000) identifies the discourse on information technology as one of the key factors in popularizing market ideology. Books, such as Walter Wriston's The Twilight of Sovereignty, and George Gilder's Microcosm made the argument that information technology made the restrained form of capitalism (i.e., Social Democracy) obsolete, and a return to 19th century-style laissez faire inevitable (Frank 2000:54-5). Information technology came to be "The most powerful symbolic weapon in the arsenal of market populism" (Frank 2000:57). Frank concludes: "... since the moment the Internet was noticed by the mainstream media in 1995, it has filled a single and exclusive position in political economy: a sort of cosmic affirmation of the principles of market populism" (2000:79). As another author puts it, the discourse on information technology played a decisive role in Selling the Free Market (Aune 2001, chap. 7). during the 1980s and 1990s. Moreover, Frank points out the transposition of market enthusiasm into a technological language. No longer was this enthusiasm bluntly 'ideological' but it became technical, "...now the ideology seemed to emerge as a natural consequence of the technology being discussed rather than from the random floating anger of betrayed patriots" (Frank 2000:79-80).

In the same vein, Barbrook and Cameron (1996) christen the conflation of information technology and market ideology the "Californians Ideology". In this techno-political vision, they say, the convergence of information and communication technologies is seen as leading to "the apotheosis of the market—an electronic exchange within which everybody can become a free trader" (Barbrook and Cameron 1996 [emphases in original]). According to this vision, network technology embodies an ideal of the free market (Robins and Webster 1999:67). The Californian ideology presents not only a new vision for society, but a new vision of what society is. Rather than seeing society in terms of structures and institutions it sees information society as a network of free-floating individuals, who meet in the market place in order to trade and exchange ideas. According to the Californian Ideology, information technologies inherently "empower the individual, enhance personal freedom and radically reduce the power of the nation-state" (Barbrook and Cameron 1996). The fact that these outcomes are inherent to the technology makes any intervention of regulatory bodies (most notability, governments) an anachronism, which is doomed to fail.

What these analyses share in common is a perception of the digital discourse as an ideology in the Marxist sense: an ideational construction that conceals material reality. Such approach is also articulated in the work of Best and Kellner (2000) who criticize Kelly's analysis of contemporary society for ignoring the realities of capitalism that still prevail. They limit their discussion largely to refuting Kelly's arguments about the network economy by upholding the centrality of capitalism in shaping contemporary society. The ideological thrust of Kelly's discourse, according to Best and Kellner, is anchored in the biological framework he is using in order to provide a social analysis. Kelly, they contend, collapses the dividing lines between biology and society, and transplant the new model of complexity theory from the natural world to the social world. They reject this unproblematic extrapolation of complexity theory from nature to society, and see this blurring between nature, technology, and society as mystifying and depoliticizing the restructuring of capitalism along neoliberal lines by resorting to a language of inevitability.

Such analysis, then, presents the digital discourse as a concealment of the new realities of capitalism. The thrust of the analysis offered in this paper is different inasmuch it situates the digital discourse on the network market in its historical context and interprets it within the analytical framework of legitimation discourse. According to this analysis it is not so much that the vector of capitalism is externalized from the digital discourse; instead, the realities

of the new capitalism are very much internalized within the discourse, but they are masked and given technological clothing. Put differently, the digital discourse both articulates and legitimizes the transformations of capitalism.

Somers and Block (2005) use the term "ideational embeddedness" to account for the relations between an ideology of market fundamentalism and policies that have direct economic and social effects; market practices are embedded within a broader set of ideas and ideologies, which, they say after Bourdieu, have the power to create what they purport to describe (Somers and Block 2005). In the same vein, I see the digital discourse as providing the ideational embeddedness for the new realities of capitalism, and its new spirit.

The Inversion of the Habermasian Framework

The welfare state of the post-World War II period, up until the 1970s, took the role of mitigating market failures and contradictions, as well as the possibly harmful personal effects of the market by intervening and managing the economy. This, in turn, insulated the market from any substantial political critique: social order was legitimized by a discourse which rendered economic problems technical, rather than substantial or political. The 'political' discussion that followed was therefore limited to technical questions. Now, in a historical turn of events the ideology of technology in contemporary times no longer serves as a legitimation for political power to technically manage the capitalist economy. Instead, technology now serves as a legitimation for political power to take a step back from the capitalist economy. With the rise of neoliberalism as the economic dogma of contemporary society, and as the state withdraws from the economy, market legitimation has now returned to what Habermas identifies as the old model of market legitimation: classical political economy, based on the internal workings of the market; but with a technologistic twist.

In this respect the digital discourse is crucial. It offers a renewed confidence in the market as a superior medium of economic and social life, based on its improvements by technological means. The reason for the state to recede, and for the market to dominate, this legitimation goes, is due to the materialization and perfection of the workings of the market by technological means. With the digital discourse market legitimation rests entirely on technology. Contemporary ideology of technology legitimizes not the intervention of the state in the economy but instead its withdrawal; not the external managing of the market, but the need of politics to let the market regulate itself. The goals have changed, but the depoliticizing ramifications of 'technology as ideology' that Habermas was concerned about still persist.

The weaving of the neoliberal notions of "spontaneous order" and "chaos" into information and communication technology, their complete integration into the medium where the 'social' now takes place, reasserts what for the good part of the 20th century has been rigorously criticized: the superiority of the market—frictionless, unhindered, and most importantly insulated from any political intervention—as a medium for social relations. In this respect, the digitalistic discourse has the same ideological thrust as the economistic discourse of neoliberalism, as succinctly identified by Duggen (2003):

> The most successful ruse of neoliberal dominance ... is the definition of economic policy as primarily a matter of neutral, technical expertise. This expertise is then presented as separate from politics and culture, and not properly subject to specifically politically accountability or cultural critique (Duggen 2003:xiv).

In the past, capitalism was more susceptible to critique. Such critique (most notably, that of Marx) was aimed at the political economy that underlies market legitimation, from neoclassical economics to neoliberal theory. Now, however, through recourse to a technologistic framework, the digital discourse offers the rhetorical means by which, at one and the same time, neoliberal tenets are upheld and its critique bypassed. As Habermas points out, the technologistic worldview might seem "less ideological" than previous ideologies, "For it does not have the opaque force of a delusion that only transfigures the implementation of interests" (Habermas 1970:111). But ideologies are not delusions. The strength of ideologies comes not from them being a veil on reality but a particular uncovering thereof. Vis-à-vis neoliberal theory, in the context of a technologically-saturated society, where more and more of social life is weaved into information technology, the digital discourse, as an ideology of technology, is all the more 'truer', making itself all the more ready for affirmation by technological reality; a 'self-evident truth', as Habermas would have it.

Habermas therefore concludes that the technologistic consciousness is also more ideological than previous ideologies inasmuch as it is more transparent and pervasive. Because this ideology is integrated to such extent in the operation of system, because it is materialized in praxis, it is that much more resistant to critique. It is no longer, as ideologies before it, "based in the same way on the causality of dissociated symbols and unconscious motives, which generates both false consciousness and the power of reflection to which the critique of ideology is indebted. It is less vulnerable to reflection, because it is no longer only ideology" (Habermas 1970:111). It is in light of this insight that this paper has tried to make the ideology of technology a little more vulnerable to reflection.

Kelly's discourse on the network market represents a fundamental shift in the political culture of contemporary capitalist societies, from social democracy to neoliberalism, or from embedded markets to market fundamentalism (Somers and Block 2005). It is part of the new spirit and discourse of capitalism that sees contemporary society as an overcoming (or transcendence) of the pitfall (or contradictions) of Fordist society (see Boltanski and Chiapello 2005). More specifically, in the digital discourse the network market is seen as a higher evolutionary stage compared with its industrial-age counterpart, and as a transcendence of the shortcomings of embedded capitalism.

The comparison of the digital discourse to the neoliberal discourse sought to go beyond the overt ideological affinity of these two discourses (pro-market, anti-government), and explore the rationalizations and theorizations which underlie these assertions. What we have seen is that the digital discourse not simply reiterates neoliberal tenets, but translates many of the neoliberal tropes into a digitalistic language, rendering the deeper theoretical claims of neoliberalism digital. In that sense, the distinctions between the two discourses are no less revealing than the similarities. This is perhaps epitomized in the notions of 'markets' and 'networks', as they are used in the digital and neoliberal theory, respectively. The market is an abstract construct, a scientific discovery, a 'social fact', in Durkheim's terminology. Networks (as they are construed by the digital discourse), on the other hand stem from, and are anchored in a material reality: the web of information and communication technology spanning virtually all geographical and social space. In that manner, a-priori intellectual assumptions put forth by neoliberal theory are rectified by posteriori technological evidence in the digital discourse.

The significance of the digital discourse lies not in its overt embrace of free market ideology (as Barbrook and Cameron [1996], for example, point out); but—to use a somewhat harsh rhetoric—precisely in its rejection of ideology tout court. The digital discourse strives to be precisely what a free market ideology, like neoliberalism, might have a hard time to be—not an ideology at all. Unlike neoliberalism, it is based not on intellectual ideas, cognitive constructs, and abstract metaphors and models, and it has no overt political trajectory. Instead, it builds its foundations on the seemingly technical, materialist, and instrumental reading of technology. And it is this 'technological hermeneutics' which gives it a gloss of an impartial, a-political rendering of reality.

As an analytical framework to explain and legitimize the realities of free market the digital discourse therefore seems superior to neoliberal theory, because it anchors much of the neoliberal arguments in material tools. If rationality is a product of the disparate and selfish wants of individuals; if it emerges spontaneously, and is self-regulated; if it requires a mechanism of communication—then the market, once being digitized, once being incorporated into cyberspace, promises to be the most sophisticated market in the history of humanity. In that sense, the digital discourse not simply reiterates but also supersedes the neoliberal arguments regarding the operation of markets, by embodying it within network technology. In the digital discourse, economic rationality is redefined as emanating solely from the operation of networks, and so it is inextricably bounded with network technology.

It is therefore no surprise that neoliberals are enthusiastic about network technology no less than technological enthusiasts seem excited about neoliberal ideas (Gere 2002:140-1; Harvey 2005:3-4, 157-9). In neoliberal theory the market is seen metaphorically as a 'machine' for the coordination of the interests and actions of free individuals in a rational benevolent fashion. In the digital discourse, and with the introduction of network technology, this machine is no longer merely a metaphor; it is a reality, assumed to reaffirm and fortify neoliberal claims. And so, Thomas Friedman—who perhaps more than anyone in the public sphere epitomizes the synergy of network technology and neoliberalism—can write "...The Internet offers the closest thing to a perfectly competitive market in the world today..." (Friedman 2000:81). And Milton Friedman, the most prominent figure in neoliberal thinking in America recently made similar assertions, noting that "The internet ... moves us closer to 'perfect information' on markets ... The internet is the most effective instrument we have for globalization" (Friedman 2006). By percolating through a technologistic framework, the postulates of neoliberalism are added a gloss of reality, by which they are vindicated and affirmed not only intellectually, but technologically as well.

Acknowledgments

For useful comments on earlier versions of this paper I would like to thank Ben Agger, Paolo Carpignano, Yoav Mehozay, and an anonymous reader. Special thanks to Uri Ram and Efrat Eizenberg.

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Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.015

Europe Without Europeans

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In the 1990s, the European Union aimed to achieve two ambitious goals: to end the wars for Yugoslav succession and to lead the nations of former communist countries in Eastern Europe toward economic and social prosperity. Both of these goals remain elusive. The Dayton Accord, brokered by the United States in 1995, merely "froze" the state of war on the territory of former Yugoslavia without remedying its causes and without removing the conditions that facilitated it. Moreover, it was not a European, but an American military force that effectively intervened in Bosnia and then later in Kosovo. Indeed, only with a slight exaggeration do I say that Sarajevo would still be under siege today if the Yugoslav wars had remained the exclusive responsibility of the EU.

As for the second goal, the economic and social prosperity for post-communist countries, it is undeniable that the "velvet revolutions" of 1989 ushered in a period of renewed hope. Yet, the EU failed to respond with its version of the Marshall Plan, offering substantial and comprehensive assistance to these nations. The subsequent integration of many of these countries into the EU presents a grave political, cultural, and economic challenge. To put it bluntly: the mission of the EU to bring prosperity and stability into Eastern Europe and the Balkans is an expensive and contradictory enterprise. It is sure to keep the EU nations at odds for at least several generations to come. We are thus left with the dawning realization that Europeans may have tragically failed in the very objectives that they strove to realize on their own, that is, without outside (read: American) help.

From this angle, it seems all the more clear that the various channels connecting Europe and America reflect a real, mutual, often suspicion-filled, yet inescapable dependence. Suffice is to point out the trade networks between the EU and the United States, the density of which is only surpassed by the commercial traffic within EU, that is, among the EU members themselves. Despite the messianic self-righteousness of the American government under the president George W. Bush and the ill-justified occupation of Iraq in the spring of 2003, the community of European nations cannot simply retreat into their historical bunker of cultural specificities and try to define itself against America. The attempt to build a European political identity on anti-American foundations is, I fear, just as likely to fail as the past attempt of German Romantics to define their nation on an exclusively anti-French basis.

In addition, America has been much more systematic in providing support to Eastern European anti-communist dissidents and the fresh buds of civil society that sprouted there. From a historical vantage point, this is hardly a surprise. In the wake of World War II, Western Europe was a de facto American military protectorate. It is ironic that without the threat of war and without the American deterrence capabilities, Europeans would certainly not have been able to afford the massive investment, over half a century, into their political search for "universal peace". It was only under the protective umbrella of NATO with America at its helm, that Western Europe could begin the post-war project of reconciliation and integration.

During these years, Europe took ample advantage of the American aid intended to rebuild the destroyed continent. America provided European nations with the initial incentive to summon adequate political will to overcome the violent conflicts that had divided them for centuries. This endeavor required the strategic construction of common life-world structures that were meant to render war between European nations not only materially impractical, but also morally unacceptable and politically unfathomable. Despite progress in this direction, however, Europe failed to entirely eliminate obstacles on the complex map of historical hostilities, across which any idea of a community of European nations must navigate.

To conceive of Europe's imaginary totality is to draw identifiable boundaries. But the absence of a strict natural

border on the eastern flank of the continent has, instead, conditioned the need for a symbolic geography. Distinct areas were and continue to be defined by mutual opposition. In other words, Europe has traditionally defined itself negatively, its self-perception arising from what it is not, rather than from what it is.

Accordingly, Europe's outer boundaries shifted with political circumstances and contingent features of different social-historical periods. At various times, this boundary has been determined by the Oder and Neisse rivers, by the ridges of the Carpathian Mountains, the Ural Mountains, the summits of the Alps and the Pyrenees, the Atlas mountains, the coasts of the Black and Caspian Seas, the Iron curtain, and, most recently, by the Schengen limes. Throughout the ongoing changes in the meaning that Europe has attributed to the imagined or real enemy, temporary alliances of interest and pragmatic coalitions of power were formed.

The smallest common denominator in a communal integration was fear. In the collective mind of the nations claiming membership in Europe, the West and the East have acquired polarized values. In modern times, it was Eastern Europe and the Balkans with the attendant communist ideology that assumed this negative role. In the Middle Ages, European rhetoric has persistently perceived Islamic culture as the "other" in its ongoing process of defining borders between the domestic and foreign, between us and them. After New York & Washington's 9/11, Madrid's 3/11 and London's 7/7, it is the image of Islam as "the other", as the anti-Christian, anti-Western and anti-modern threat, that was revived in a European public discourse.

The noble ambition that wants to see "free and united Europe" has since World War II inspired significant part of the national elites across the continent. These elites realized that they must limit the potential sources of fear, while at the same time striving to integrate diverse ethnic, cultural and social traditions into common structures. This ambition continues to drive many European leaders.

But where does Europe end? And who, really, is European? Will the citizens of post-communist countries, new members of the EU since May 2004 and January 2007, receive not only the political rights of European citizenship, but also the societal respect worthy of an association of equals? How long will it take to cast off the legacy of the traditionally divided continent?

And divided it was. Fifty years of cold war, sometimes called the third world war, profoundly affected the European mental landscape. Berlin Wall, erected between democratic capitalist West and totalitarian communist East was both, a fitting symbol and an instrument of a great divide. Its implications were that of a Manichean battle of ideas, of good versus evil. For this, a clear demarcation must exist between the two as it is a necessary precondition for the life of an ideological stereotype. Yet, the divide was a shifting one, an ongoing result of a negotiation about the meaning of good and evil between the two ideological camps: it was not an air-tight separation. As the West and the East attempted to outwit each other, cracks and fissures developed allowing people to create an imaginary Other out of scraps, bits and pieces of stories and images that oozed through the Wall. The process of mutual exchange was guided by the politics of suspicion, leading into a cul-de-sac of stereotypisation.

How long will then West Europeans need to overcome the deep-rooted feelings of suspicion (or at best apathy) that they feel toward the "barbaric" states and peoples of the East, this European terra incognita? How long will East Europeans behave like poor little relatives trying to impress? I wish I knew.

Sure, for some commentators the very idea of a "free and united Europe" provokes a condescending smile, but if history can possibly be of any use, than we could do worse than assimilate a lesson that it is equally laughable to contemplate a divided and, at the same time, successful Europe. A united Europe, of course, would be utterly unique. To the extent that the European Union does have many features of the state, it is a state of nations and not a nation of states, like the United States of America.

The EU is thus inventing a self-suitable political form as it goes along. The dream of a united Europe, however, is ancient. It was pursued by the Roman Empire, Charlemagne and Napoleon, but also by Hitler (and this is only a partial list). After World War II, the European idea was adopted by the institutions that were conceived to prevent future armed conflict on the continent. Regardless of the vantage point, one is left with the same conclusion: the European idea is indelibly scarred by wars, aggression and violent conflict.

In order for European citizens to gain a reflexive awareness of our shared history, the shaping of the politics of European identity is of paramount importance. Yet sober reflection calls for humility. The face of "Europeaness" is invisible. Distinctly European elements of one's identity are today not easy to pinpoint. Moreover, in order to have a vision for a progressive realization of European identity, the common goals of European integration would have to be defined if they are to serve as guidelines.

In view of the bickering inside the EU and the bitter disputes over the European constitution, alas, it is

impossible to deduce with any certainty what are in fact the common goals of European integration. Does the goal lie in a particular vision of "Fortress Europe" which should close its doors after a reluctant welcome was extended in 2007 to "Balkan rhythm & blues", Romania and Bulgaria? Or is the goal projected in Europe as the embodiment of universal ideas: the rule of law, the liberal democratic system, constitutional respect for human rights? A union that can and must expand, perhaps to Turkey and the southern coasts of the Mediterranean, if not to the countries lying east of Polish borders?

In an unstable environment of post-Cold War, the European Union appears to be perceived, at least among the elites and middle classes in the continent's eastern part, as the ultimate purpose of national life. This large segment of the public pins their hopes for quick improvement of living conditions on decidedly West European standards, but one fact won't disappear: despite the collapse of communism, Western Europe remains by and large a "family onto itself".

From this vantage point, four aspects in the genesis of contemporary Europe come to the fore. First, there is the economistic ideology that emerged from etatist political culture, based as it is on the belief that it is possible in a relatively short time to change individual behavior and values by changing market conditions. The second aspect lies in the fact that Europe defines itself negatively, as indicated above. The third aspect is the shared mental framework that might eventually nurture the commonality of European nations. At present, this frame is still weak, abstract and optional.

The "European joke" is a case in point. Consider: there are virtually no jokes about Europeans, in contrast to the cornucopia of jokes about individual nations. As stereotype-affirming as jokes tend to be, they do reveal the preoccupations of ordinary people in their everyday lives. A European is featured as neither the protagonist nor the butt of jokes for the simple reason that "Europeanism", the nascent identity in which to ground such a subject, is hardly present in public spheres of individual nation-states.

This brings us to the fourth key aspect of the current European order: its democratic deficit. United Europe remains the project of social elites rather than that of broader national constituencies. Due to the inescapable fact that the European Union is being established from the top down, it has yet to take full root among ordinary people. The European anthem, the flag, and the Euro banknotes are isolated bricks in the mental structure of the European identity; they need ligatures to hold them together.

In this light, we need to consider possibilities for constructing a common template for an inclusive European identity that will have a wide public appeal. But joint projects as the "Cultural Capital of Europe" program, which fosters mutual understanding between European nations; the Erasmus, Socrates, and Tempus scholarships, which are designed to encourage the sharing of scientific research; international human rights workshops; and support for efforts to build a democratic mentality in the public at large—all these and many other welcome forms of European cooperation will hang in a limbo of limited engagement if they are not anchored in a common narrative.

What, exactly, do I mean by this? I don't know exactly, but a good approximation of what I have in mind is really an imaginative framework of general identification, a kind of material for "common dreams" that may give all the citizens of Europe a certain minimum of existential meaning and emotional density, through which we may be able to recognize, foster, and nurture a commitment to something that transcends us as individuals with particular identities. I realize, of course, that such a construction is idealistic, hinged as it is on a search for balance between ethnic and cultural traditions on the one hand, and loyalty to a supranational, overarching political habitus on the other.

"Europeanism" would have to meet several demanding standards. It would have to include cross-generational continuity, perpetuated by a common cultural amalgamation of distinct ethnic traditions and reinforced by shared memory and the expectation of a common future. In other words, "Europeanism" would need to provide a symbolic order wherein a centripetal force might be able to counteract—though by no means abolish—the centrifugal forces of primary identification that one feels as a Pole, German, Catalan, Croatian, Scot, or Italian. The emotional charge in these building blocks of "Europeanism" in statu nascendi is, of course, undeniable. The various kinds of totalitarian nationalist abuse, which in both nineteenth- and twentieth-century Europe have often afflicted the mobilizing power of collective emotional ties will not, it appears, disqualify them from the equation.

In fact, the dominant political currents in Europe's "age of extremes" offer copious evidence that primary national identifications based on the shared self-perception of the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic heritage have almost always won the competition for popular allegiance, leaving other kinds of identifications, based on social class or profession or political persuasion, as distant "second best" options.

"Europeanism," then, is little more, if at all, than an "invented tradition" which contains a fragile hope that its far-reaching, inclusive, utopian agenda might appeal to a majority of the citizens and peoples of Europe. So far, alas, precious few efforts have been made to facilitate a construction of such a common narrative. Among the numerous national, ethnic, and cultural traditions on the continent, "Europeanism" does not figure very high on anyone's list of identities. Moreover, it would not be too excessive to claim that the systemic and institutional integration of the European continent increasingly diverges from cultural integration.

With understandable regret I must state the obvious: the European Union has not yet succeeded in building a satisfactory series of images, values, and ideals that would transcend our immediate existence with all its difficulties and joys. "Europeanism"—as a constellation of aspirations, images, attitudes, convictions, and concepts that could serve as a source of individual inspiration and grant meaning to collective behavior—such "Europeanism" has not yet appeared on the horizon.

Nevertheless, I am convinced that it needs to be jointly contemplated and envisioned; otherwise, we all will find ourselves, rich West Europeans no less than poor East Europeans, in an undesirable situation. We will share institutions and agencies overseeing free-flowing financial and labor transactions, but our respective cultural spheres will remain condemned to an existence of reciprocal tolerance at best, that is to say, mutually encouraged passivity and a lack of active interest in regard to each other's immediate experience. Without a broad social consensus on the legitimate and, thus, publicly recognized presence of a common narrative in which Europeans can recognize themselves precisely as Europeans—and not exclusively as Poles, Germans, Lithuanians or Croatians—any attempt to construct such a narrative has to resort to abstract postulates.

Therefore, it is hardly surprising that the development of a "common mental framework," in which the rich experience of European cultural diversity could be symbolically integrated and remodeled, faces greater difficulties in both form and substance than the development of a "common market." John Stuart Mill, in Considerations on Representative Government, expressed this need in a classic formulation: "Among a people without fellow feelings, especially if they read and speak different languages, the united public opinion necessary to the working of representative government cannot exist."

Supranational identifications presuppose the need to recognize multiple loyalties. Inasmuch as the diversity of cultures has traditionally been a key element of Europe's greatness, this very diversity should be reinforced and celebrated. The forging of a new European identity as a complex, hybrid invented tradition calls for the recognition of the ineluctably multiple identities from which "Europeanism" might be designed. There is, of course, an element of wishful thinking here: multilayered identities should allow for the simultaneous celebration of local, national, and continental elements. Basic allegiances need not be exclusivist allegiances: it should not be impossible to be at the same time Catalan, Spanish and European.

Alas, the current negotiation on the shape and character of "Europeanism" is to a large degree guided by a profound distrust of particular and national identifications. Such distrust may be understandable, but it is epistemologically unacceptable in a globalizing world in which "Europeanism" is itself but a particular identity. That is why it is impossible to fashion any common ground of shared European identity if one is forced to eschew fecund local and particular markers.

If one shies away from the troublesome dialectics of particular and general, the only sustained answer will necessarily remain abstract and, ultimately, noncommittal. If one willfully avoids engaging the relevance of the cultural habits and values of the various nationalities of Europe, one's "Europeanism" will end up looking hollow, simulated, and insubstantial. Neither the authority of the European Commission nor the civic and ethnically blind character of Europe's supranational bodies possesses the ability to inspire citizens; these institutions are too hollow for any social mobilization and too immaterial to spark spontaneous affection, as John Keane has eloquently stated.

The enlarged EU, which lives on formal procedures, negotiation, and consensual compromise in the search of the common good, faces the most profound challenge: it must invent a new political design. Regardless of whether the future holds prospects for a confederate Europe or for a federation, a European democratic political culture must first be put in place and developed within member states themselves. This is especially true in the post-communist countries where democracy barely entered its early adolescence, where compromised files of the communist secret police still hold grip on public habits and ways of seeing the world are conditioned by decades of radical exclusivist regimes. There's little else to do but to remind ourselves of the simple fact: the democratic life in individual member-states is the main precondition for fostering the democratic habits on a trans-national European level.

Alas, the kind of cultural tissue that would incorporate trust, consent, and solidarity in a common European life

remains a long way off. From the vantage point of Eastern European experience, it is difficult to not see a Medusa of "traditional West" rearing its compromised head in a political pragmatism of some of the most prominent contemporary intellectuals. The idea of a pragmatically justified KernEuropa (core Europe) that would lead the European Union with relative independence from the anguished and, no doubt, cumbersome process of decision-making by consensus in an enlarged EU, this family of flexible membership, currently at 27, this idea gives a dangerous credence to perhaps inevitable, but emphatically nondemocratic concept. It is best summed up as "Europe of two speeds", intimating politics of first and second class citizens. I am afraid that this trend only reinforces the historical discrimination of the traditional West against the peoples, languages, cultural traditions, and countries of the "Wild East", les petit pays de merde, as French diplomats are wont on saying.

The fact that, while Europe fidgeted, America finally, albeit belatedly, intervened in 1990s with military force in Bosnia and Kosovo complicates my personal dilemma all the more. My dilemma grows, in part, from the realization that many rejections of the American strategic dominion in Europe are permeated with an anti-American sentiment. It is this popular sentiment that has, after the end of the Cold War, replaced the structural source of fear that the Soviet Empire once represented. I would be blind, though, if I didn't recognize something else, too. The escalation of America's global military presence began with the legitimate and internationally legal attack on Afghanistan. I supported the move on the grounds of immediate causal link between the terrorist attack on 9/11 and the Taliban-sponsored boot-camps. America then upped the ante and occupied Sadam Hussein's Iraq. I opposed it on the grounds of lesser evil theory. America went into Iraq without broad international consensus. This was a huge backward step for transatlantic and international relations. Conceived on the grounds of straight-face lies, the war drove a wedge in the Western alliance. In fact, the "coalition of the willing" must properly be called a "coalition of the deceived", as the supporting nation-states were twisted into believing in the existence of Iraqi weapons of mass destruction.

The legacy of American ties to Europe, however, cannot be regarded in the contemporary context alone. A free and united Western Europe was, for Americans, the best form of security and peace after 1945. Lest be forgotten, Europe, over the course of the twentieth century, produced two World Wars, was the key geographical and political stage of the third, the Cold War, and then failed to decisively intervene in the wars in its backyard, i.e. former Yugoslavia. Each of these conflicts prompted in turn an American engagement on the European continent.

After the Cold War, America gradually ceased being seen as the exclusive guardian of the old continent. Instead, it became a mirror that Europe uses to correct and improve its self-image. At the same time, American strategic interest in European affairs has declined and America has begun to shift its focus to the former Soviet Central Asia and the Arab peninsula. Later, America would be naively appalled when faced with the fact that most of the European countries refused to join the United States in its Iraqi adventure. The American Secretary of Defense's notorious division of countries into "the Old Europe" and the "new Europe" according to the attitude toward the American occupation of Iraq, had a twofold character. On the one hand, it reveals a policy of "divide and conquer" that ultimately benefits America. On the other, it has functioned as a sobering statement that may one day work to Europe's benefit.

The division clearly illustrated at least the following: first, the governments of post-communist countries who have been practically given an ultimatum as to the adoption of acquis communautaire, without the chance to actively participate in a debate in all but the very last stages of enlargement process, now demand the right to have a voice in the common European house. Second, these governments and their publics have not forgotten the Cold War. It was during this period that a culture of mutual trust and solidarity between the Western and Eastern Europe lived a miserable existence, to put it euphemistically.

In order for Europe to achieve solid legitimacy as a pluralistic "open society", it must therefore significantly enhance the culture of trust. The culture of trust presupposes a democratic frame defined by solidarity. As with many other underlying social concepts, however, Western and Eastern Europe differ in their concept of the basic social bond.

In the modern Western world, the understanding of solidarity is pragmatic while in the East, the understanding of solidarity has been a moral one. Typical of the former is a concerted effort to join forces of all involved in order to attain a common goal which in turn reflects the common values and interests of participants. In the East, the prevailing belief is that solidarity is rooted in the imperative of unselfish assistance the stronger offers to the weaker, even if the only reward is a feeling of moral satisfaction.

There is no doubt that institutionalized solidarity played a key role in contributing to the modernization of Greece, Ireland, Spain and Portugal following their entry into the common European structures. Solidarity, alas, was

since forced to yield to the demands of greater individual freedom and economic profits that have grown apace with global capitalism. The rebellion of the middle class against the continuation of guarantees for the social safety nets has been in Western Europe politically channeled into restrictions on the national budgets. The result? Solidarity, once the central pillar of social order, is now seen as a luxury which individual nations can, but are not obliged to, afford. It is no longer a crucial value. Instead, it has been pushed off to the sidelines.

Those who reject the necessity of solidarity's handshake and prefer to swear by the hidden hand of the market, however, must remain blind to what shape would this hand assume should it be visible: a fist with a pointed middle finger. Until it becomes a template of common belonging for people across European lands, without two-class discrimination, until then "free and united Europe" will remain what it is today: a noble dream.

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.016

Urbanized Life

John Zerzan

"It is odd, after seventy centuries of city life, that we continue to be uneasy about it and uncertain as to what is wrong."
—Paul Shepard, Nature and Madness

About twenty years ago I left the San Francisco Bay area to move back to my native Oregon. A paramount factor was how very little radical activity could be seen among so many people. I should also add that there wasn't much going on anywhere at that point, compared to the '60s movements and to what has since developed in some places beginning in the late '90s.

But there's something about cities that militates against resistance, at least against explicitly anarchist resistance. (I'm not talking here about such important areas as urban movements for racial justice, for example.) Whatever happened to the city as a site of utopian contestation? What about the Situationists' dreams for cities of the future? They advocated the practice of dérive (drift), aimlessly encountering and savoring the surprises that an urban landscape could provide. Guy Debord described what happened to Paris in the '70s, its uglification and tragic decline.

How much character exists in American cities? They are progressively cheapened, standardized zones, like the rest of manufactured life. Of course, there are still some districts that are relatively more interesting or more affordable than others...one step ahead of an accelerating rate of gentrification. By and large, enclaves of livability are doomed, along with those other cultural remnants, bohemia and the avant-garde.

Cultural activities are often cited as an important reason to live an urban life. Yet the city voraciously devours time and energy, according to Sahlins' law: the more culture is available, the more work is being performed. Thus, the search for quality is being steadfastly defeated, especially in cities.

Marshall Sahlins' anthropological perspective can also be usefully applied to contemporary anti-authoritarian politics. His dictum helps explain why big cities are not the chief loci of resistance or autonomy. Marx was wrong in seeing "enormous cities" as sites of growing opposition, places where workers would feel "that strength more" (1848).

In the 1960s in the United States, college towns like Berkeley, Ann Arbor, Madison, and Kent were at the forefront of the radical movement—not the big cities. Take a look at the situation today, with respect to fresh ideas. The cutting edge periodicals of the new movement originate in towns like Eugene, Oregon (Green Anarchy); Greensburg, Pennsylvania (Species Traitor); and Columbia, Missouri (Anarchy). Anarchist zines published in, say, Detroit (Fifth Estate) and Baltimore (Social Anarchism) are unoriginal and nonradical. I'm sure there are exceptions, but in general not much is happening in the cities.

Undeniably, authentic struggles (and inspired outbursts, like Black Bloc actions) take place in cities. Yet the urban milieu appears to be entrapped by failed and superficial perspectives. The post-left horizon, insistent on more deeply radical insights and aims, is feeble or invisible in the city.

What is the city? What are its defining institutions? Some are interested in such questions; others consider them unimportant. People who are still defined by the left tend not to look deeply at their own circumstances; they actively defend urban existence.

This is the age of the megalopolis, the era of a world system dictated by its world-cities. The cancerous reach of the outspread cities masters everything that is nonurban. This expansionism embodies the soullessness of the Machine in its unconditional mastery of the land, its severance from nature. The city-spirit is a symptom of civilization's malignancy, and deserves our full attention as an obstacle within our milieu.

Globalization is urbanization, with half the planet's population already in the cities, and over 75 percent to be city dwellers by 2050. The mega-cities already incarnate a universal, sterile sameness, reminiscent of airports, supersized hotels, and cruise ships: Destination Nowhere. The urban civilization that encompasses the globe advertises its deadly traits for all to see.

The word civilization derives from Latin roots meaning "culture of cities." As with civilization, in the city every basic urban feature has been present from the beginning. As Lewis Mumford wrote (1961), "By the time the city comes plainly into view it is already old."

As with civilization, division of labor is among the city's most fundamental institutions. Melinda Zeder (1991) describes the dynamic: "With increased specialization activities also become more hierarchical.... Thus, the urban landscape becomes a direct reflection of the degree of specialization and hierarchy in society—a mirror of state complexity." Anarchists of the left, who have no desire to question or abolish division of labor, speak of "abolishing the state" while remaining ignorant of one of its cardinal wellsprings. The state arises from productive specialization, the need to coordinate both specialization and production, and the power of some people over others demanded by these arrangements.

Priests and leaders quickly take control of a central political administration, with a monopoly of force that is the constant warrant against the autonomy of its subjects/citizens. Similarly what was once a reciprocal, person-to-person exchange of nonessentials becomes stratified, politically directed trade in permanent, central places: cities. And because they are artificially created places that can't exist without trade, the new forms of exchange must be guaranteed. Hence armies, and war. Fortified cities are as old as cities themselves.

Urbanization has many other civilizational attributes, negatively related to the physical environment, gender relations, and personal health, for example. Their reproduction depends, in the last analysis, on the refusal to identify, indict, and combat them at their source.

In a recent interview, Michael Hardt and Tony Negri (authors of Empire, 2000) offer their excuses for this refusal: " We and our world are thoroughly artificial, or, rather, there is no longer a way to differentiate between what is artificial and what is natural. Abandoning the notion of nature means, once again, refusing any possible pretence of purity and accepting our corrupted and contaminated state."

Here leftists and postmodernists (among others) join hands to celebrate their collaboration with the dominant order. They accept the subjugation and even the extinction of nature just as it would never occur to them to question urban life, the very offspring of those destructive forces. The city was and remains a defeat that must be undone.

Fast Capitalism
Volume 2 • Issue 2 • 2007
ISSN 1930-014X
doi:10.32855/fcapital.200701.017

The Senator and the Philosopher: What Liberalism Might Have Been

Charles Lemert

It happens that my daughter goes to school with the grandson of The Senator. For years some of us, perhaps many so far as I know, have referred to Senator Edward Kennedy as, simply, The Senator. This goes back, at least, to the dark days of the Reagan years when he, virtually alone, stood up for social legislation that, literally, saved the lives of millions of children and families. Without the work of Senator Kennedy what remains of the social legislation of the 1930s, reinforced by the War on Poverty provisions of the 1960s, would be gutted even more than they have been.

How The Senator has been able to do all the good he has done will be a subject for practical political science for years to come. He is said to be the hardest worker in the United States Senate. He is fabled for his ability to form alliances, even friendships, across ideological differences. He has endured terrible and unwarranted personal attacks that go far beyond whatever may have been deserved. He has overcome terrible family tragedies. But none of these accounts stands on its own, and together they would be insufficient without the one quality I witnessed at a school event this spring.

The school where my daughter, Annie, and Teddy, the Senator's grandson, have been classmates since kindergarten holds an annual May Day celebration. When it rains, as it did this year, the entire school, plus parents and grandparents, must pack themselves into a not large, always stuffy gym. I came late, hoping to miss what I could without missing my daughter's May Pole dance. When I found the family corner for the third graders, I had to squeeze past the kids, including mine, on the floor, and between parents and others, many eager to take photos. There, in the front row, was The Senator, who remained for the entire event, even joining in the Virginia reel at the end. I live a few blocks from the school. Yet I was late. The Senator who works and lives in at least three places, none near the school, was there on time and stayed to the end, dancing though hobbled by the frailties of his age.

What makes The Senator what he has become is that he shows up and stays till the thing is done. He, in a word, is one of the rare political liberals who do the hard work of dancing to old tunes for love of the relation even when the bones ache.

In the attendance register for organizing meetings of the First International only two persons were at every meeting—Marx and Engels. If, as Weber famously said, politics is the strong and slow boring of hard boards, the hardest boards of all are the ones on which one must sit or stand listening, waiting for the right time to make the proposal. As Weber added, this requires a definite passion like unto the passion The Senator feels for his family as for his political work.

Liberalism, for the most part, is a slovenly mess. The term itself, having been Clinton-ized into a hodge-podge of third ways, stands for very little of what it once, for a while, meant to be. Even with the social retreat in Europe, Western Europe's commitment to actual social fairness embarrasses America. From, roughly, FDR's first term through JFK's few years and LBJ, social liberalism provided needy Americans what honest social programs there are. For just shy of half a century, The Senator has held firm to social principles that honestly put children, the poor, the elderly, the discriminated, the infirm, working people first and foremost. All the while, so-called liberals and lefties have too often argued over theory and rejected the old-fashioned ways that ought to have been at the heart of social liberalism.

I was at the Library of Congress reading the letters of Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971) when Richard Rorty died

on June 8, 2007. Niebuhr was in practice a thinker who thought first of how to promote social and racial justice. Richard Rorty was not of course a politician. But he was a philosopher whose work was an attempt to rescue American liberalism from its foolish ways. Niebuhr was famously a preacher and a theologian who, nonetheless, thought and worked as a political realist. Abstractions and utopias were, to him meaningless without concrete historical work. Rorty and Niebuhr were hardly birds of a feather. Yet the death of the one brought to mind the life of the other which in turn made me think of The Senator.

Rorty and Kennedy were born within a year of each other (1931 and 1932). I have no idea whether they knew each other. Certainly The Senator lives in another realm from the one that sheltered Rorty. And, to be sure, Niebuhr's Christian realism was a horse of a different color from the epistemological realism Rorty criticized. Still, the three—Niebuhr, Kennedy, and Rorty—are about as different from one another as liberals could possibly be. Yet, there is a common ground that demands our attention.

Liberalism has failed in America because, with notable and occasional exceptions, it has been at best a mindless utopia. This no doubt because in America the lesser manners of British liberalism triumphed, philosophically. Social forces were, then and there, at best a figure of speech—most famously an invisible hand. Where classical and neo-classical liberalism were mere individualisms, in America mere individualism has seldom been more than a rhetorical cover for indifference to social justice. Only in that one period from FDR through LBJ were social values seriously institutionalized in America and this only because very clever politicians seized the day of true and potentially debilitating social and economic crises to provide some general form to the social responsibility of the state to care for those most in need. Had it not been for the Depression and the War mobilization, the seal of exclusion of Blacks in particular but also of the seriously poor in America might not have been broken in real terms.

Liberalism in those days negotiated the break from conservative individualisms and states rights on the prospect of corporate necessity. Racial hatred and poverty, so long as they were in the dark, so to speak, could be tolerated so long as, in Walter Russell Mead's phrase, the liberal's market position was not threatened. When cruelty of the system came to light the realities threatened America's dominant economic position and made social legislation a necessity. One of the lessons Niebuhr learned in the 1920s in Detroit was that America's first full-fledged industrialist, Henry Ford, offered unusually (for the day) high wages to his employees because it was good for business; the first fact of Fordism was, however, that the workers were paid in virtual script. They could be let go with neither right of appeal nor protection—all in the name of progress.

A crafty realist is required to get around the stranglehold of market freedoms and a utopia of individual rights. Franklin Roosevelt was just this, as was his wife, who in turn was a political ally of Reinhold Niebuhr. Where, exactly, The Senator got his social philosophy is hard to say—though it is likely that, behind the crass corporate greed of the father, the Kennedy boys were taught the kernel of Roosevelt's social realism. They were, as he is today, the remnant of the American liberalism that could have been but never was and likely never will be—save in the interstices of American time.

Rorty belongs in this loosely framed picture because, though a philosopher and academic, and not a particularly good social theorist at that, he was of a similar temperament. His greatest book, Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature (1979), was of course and importantly a serious philosophical attack on foundationalism—on, that is, the idea that philosophy had access to the high-minded truth precisely because it arrogated to itself the wisdom of the theory of truth. Rorty admired Kant, in part because Kant founded the theory of knowledge in moral reason. Rorty's great book was, avowedly, an attempt to complete the incomplete efforts of Wittgenstein, Heidegger, and Dewey to overcome the limitations of epistemological arrogance in the form of foundational essentialisms of all kinds.

This is heady stuff when compared to the WPA and WIC, among other of the real political contributions to America's thin welfare history. Still, Rorty's liberalism, if that is the word, was like unto the real political things because it meant to take seriously, as he put it after Oakeshott, the conversation of Man.

As influential as Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature has been, Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity (1989) is my personal favorite. As may already be evident, I am far from an expert on pragmatism or Rorty's philosophy—which incompetence has not kept me from reading him more according to taste than to professional discipline. Thus, to me, the wonder of Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity is the book's audacity. What self-respecting philosopher, much less liberal, would dare to juxtapose these three concepts, much less make of them a book that stands up well as a complete argument—at least as complete an argument as can be had when epistemological foundationalism is abandoned. Here, in terms decidedly beyond Oakeshott's polite conversational philosophy, Rorty came closest to finishing up what Wittgenstein and Heidegger, if not Dewey, had started.

Philosophy is what philosophy does. It is the work of seeking the truth that cannot be definitively found nor objectively certified; hence, the irony that the truth that cannot be certified is the truth that can be practiced. Hence, if not Dewey exactly, pragmatism completes the idea. An ironist, Rorty said, accepts the limitations of her own vocabulary, including her inability to dissolve differences with others. To the weak of heart this sounded like relativism. But Rorty firmly rejected this criticism by arguing, in effect, that irony in the sense of accepting the limitations on one's ability to know the truth is, precisely, the necessary element in true social solidarity. A people can be a people only if they are willing to tell and listen to the stories of others and there to find what, however tentative, common story can be found. This, I should confess, is not my political cup of tea. But the audacity of it all inspires respect.

Political work is boring because the boring of hard boards takes forever. The key to this work is, again, listening to others which, in point of fact, can only take place when parties to the talk are willing to accept the limits of their own point of view. Quite in contrast to the dialogic theory of democracy that Habermas and many others have toyed with, politics, like philosophy, is not about final outcomes or ultimate truths. They are about achieving what social hope there can be. Social justice is what social fairness can be had; and none will ever be had without a consensus that there is no pure or final consensus. Social things work when people compromise. Social justice emerges when people give away a portion of what they would claim for themselves. Human nature, being what it is, does not exactly encourage either compromise or sacrifice.

The Senator, like the rest of us, has not done all things perfectly well. Rorty, like the philosopher he aimed to be, was not able to achieve all that he had set out to do. Yet, one supposes, neither could have done what the one is still doing and the other did had he not been an ironist—had he not, that is, come to admit that the final solution is that there are no final solutions, only the best that can be had. Both, in my view, show up liberalism for what it was—a utopia of ideals covering the selfishness of individuals. Both the Senator and the Philosopher are the representatives (if Rorty were to forgive the expression) of the common failures and limitations that move a people to care for one another.

ISSN 1930-014X