

On This Site

2022-09-01

"ie. how I'm organizing the organizing."

Ok. This should probably be the first page, chronologically. For right now, that's the idea.

So, what's goin on here? What is this?

Well, this is my site. Potentially you're reading it in a pdf, in which case it would be my book. Best viewed online, though, if you can: <https://www.airandsteel.xyz/> (<https://www.airandsteel.xyz/>).

For the pdf, you can go [here](#)

https://github.com/aaronsteel/AirAndSteel/blob/main/airandsteel_static_site.pdf

Why?

This started as an attempt to organize my thoughts and my resources in a central hub. As I progress, it takes shape with influence from the writers I talk about. Other modern writers who are attempting the same sort of thing exist in the team at [RedSails](https://redsails.org/) (<https://redsails.org/>) ([@RedSailsOrg](https://twitter.com/RedSailsOrg) (<https://twitter.com/RedSailsOrg>), [@RodericDay](https://twitter.com/RodericDay) (<https://twitter.com/RodericDay>), [@NiaFrome](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome) (<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome>)) and [Unity-Struggle-Unity](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/) (<https://unity-struggle-unity.org/>) ([@USUMLPRESS](https://twitter.com/USUMLPRESS) (<https://twitter.com/USUMLPRESS>), [@primarycatdad](https://twitter.com/primarycatdad) (<https://twitter.com/primarycatdad>)).

As I refine my purpose, my thoughts, and my writings (ie. this site/book), I'm taking good note from all the authors I speak on. The [contributor's guide](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/submissions/contributors-guide-the-red-clarion/) (<https://unity-struggle-unity.org/submissions/contributors-guide-the-red-clarion/>) for the [Red Clarion](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/clarion/) (<https://unity-struggle-unity.org/clarion/>) has helped shape my focus, and I'm sure it'll continue to shape over time.

I am also trying to use this space as a compilation of the resources I know of. I'm going to compile resource guides for [access](/posts/on-access/) (</posts/on-access/>), for [NY resources](/posts/on-ny-resources/) (</posts/on-ny-resources/>), and for other resource lists as I find them.

Site Layout (ie. Dating System)

I'm not using dates as hard and fast times when things are being written or published. That's not the most effective usage.

These are all dated about Sept-Nov 2022 for right now. The months are just organizational chapters, right now, and they're all placed within the correct era (relatively). The ideas on the site are labelled and organized in the most relevant way possible (and I'll continue iterating and organizing as more content gets added). I'll go through how I'm using these months now:

September

This is sorta the pre-appendix.

This site organization page falls here, the table of contents and index fall here. My [resource access \(/posts/on-access\)](/posts/on-access) guide and helpful tool-tips will probably fall here as well. It'll also hold all my other resource guides, as I compile helpful lists of resources. Stuff that's useful background knowledge, but that you don't need to focus on too hard yet. Come back when it's useful. To get right to the reading, start with October.

October

That's actually right now! This is where we start. The big stuff. Probably the most important month. My goal in writing this site (ie. [On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing)), my [values] (</posts/on-values>), my thoughts on [uniting \(/posts/on-uniting\)](/posts/on-uniting), and intro to my [philosophical influences \(/posts/on-philosophy\)](/posts/on-philosophy).

I think it'll also have some important overarching thoughts I have. Thoughts [on technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology), thoughts [on media \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media), thoughts [on learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning). Thoughts [on food \(/posts/on-food\)](/posts/on-food), [on hobbies \(/posts/on-hobbies\)](/posts/on-hobbies), [on charity and how to do good \(/posts/on-charity-and-charitability\)](/posts/on-charity-and-how-to-do-good), [on religion \(/posts/on-religion\)](/posts/on-religion).

This month paints the picture of who I am right now, what I'm aiming to do with my life. But there will be many, many

November

Right now, November is individual articles, mostly of lists. Some sorted geographically, some by time period, some by topic. These will get linked from my overarching thoughts in October, but you should be able to start at any topic or area of interest and figure things out. I'll try to backlink to relevant parts in October as well as possible, so that we can refresh the big picture. We never wanna miss the forest for the trees.

Some to start are my readings organized by geographic location. The hometown (good ol' [North America \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america)), the [rest of America \(/posts/on-latin-america\)](/posts/on-latin-america), [Asia \(/posts/on-asia\)](/posts/on-asia), [Europe \(/posts/on-europe\)](/posts/on-europe), [Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa), [The Middle East \(/posts/on-the-middle-east\)](/posts/on-the-middle-east).

I may separate some of the thoughts on media/technology from October. I'll leave big-picture thoughts and quotes in October, but compile the larger reading lists and resources in November. [On Media \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media) -> Media List, [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology) -> technology-specific reading list, etc. (TODO, as always)

December

December is the place for deep dives on individual leaders and topics. Breaking down from broader thoughts on an overall history to individual thoughts, perspectives, and learnings. Looking at things like how specific individuals lived their lives, how specific people have made progress in specific areas. We'll focus in from Cuba -> Che, from Russia -> Lenin, Feminism -> Porn, North America -> Abolition, etc. I'll still try to interlink the relevant pages as I add them. Gotta get more efficient systems for that. That's a TODO.

January

We may see that after the original few preface months, I may use actual dates to start dating in a stricter chronological fashion. That may allow for better visibility and transparency, clearer output to the reader. But January's far away, so I have no idea what articles put in that bucket may contain. Time will tell.

TODO: outline for philosophy/october, some form of table of contents that's slightly better than this (but also not the super cool automated one on the next page)

TODO: figure out how to make this the homepage maybe

index tags: Site Info, Dates, Organization, Site Map, RedSails, @RedSailsOrg, Unity-Struggle-Unity, Red Clarion, @USUMLP, Roderic Day, @RodericDay, Nia Frome, @NiaFrome, J. Katsfoter, @primarycatdad, Purpose

On Site Contents (By Article)

2022-09-02

"aka the Table of Contents"

Here's the table of contents, sorted by date. It's autogenerated with a script.

TODO: set up the ability to also run it automatically, on commit or build.

September 2022

[On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01 - "ie. how I'm organizing the organizing."

[On Site Contents \(By Article\) \(/posts/on-site-contents-by-article\)](/posts/on-site-contents-by-article) - 2022-09-02 - "aka the Table of Contents"

[On Site Contents \(By Topic\) \(/posts/on-site-contents-by-topic\)](/posts/on-site-contents-by-topic) - 2022-09-03 - "aka the Index"

[On Access \(/posts/on-access\)](/posts/on-access) - 2022-09-04 - "aka getting stuff"

[On New York Resources \(/posts/on-ny-resources\)](/posts/on-ny-resources) - 2022-09-05 - "aka stuff for those in local Lenapehoking"

October 2022

["Air and Steel" \(/posts/air-and-steel\)](/posts/air-and-steel) - 2022-10-07 - "Why the name?"

[On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing) - 2022-10-08 - "ie. I'm an engineer and I'm serious about it."

[On Charity and Charitability \(ie. what you can do\) \(/posts/on-charity-and-charitability\)](/posts/on-charity-and-charitability) - 2022-10-09 - "desc"

[On Philosophy \(/posts/on-philosophy\)](/posts/on-philosophy) – 2022-10-09 – "Philosophy 0"

[On Values \(/posts/on-values\)](/posts/on-values) – 2022-10-09 – "My highest placed value is seriousness in organizing. I believe they're one and the same. You should act with a purpose."

[On Food \(/posts/on-food\)](/posts/on-food) – 2022-10-10 – "Keep well stocked and ensure others are getting enough."

[On Siddhartha \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha) – 2022-10-10 – "Philosophy I: Understanding the River"

[On Meditations \(/posts/on-meditations\)](/posts/on-meditations) – 2022-10-11 – "Philosophy II: Understanding Aurelius (ie. Stoicism)"

[On Communists \(/posts/on-communists\)](/posts/on-communists) – 2022-10-12 – "Philosophy III: On getting fucking teargassed."

[On Learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning) – 2022-10-14 – "My lifelong passion, I guess, if I had to pick *one* lifelong passion in some arbitrary hypothetical."

[On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology) – 2022-10-14 – "Hint: it's a weapon"

[On Uniting \(/posts/on-uniting\)](/posts/on-uniting) – 2022-10-15 – "Work together, let's do this."

[On Wikipedia \(/posts/on-wikipedia\)](/posts/on-wikipedia) – 2022-10-16 – "or: using resources for what they are, getting the best out of everything we've got"

[On Astrology and Religion \(/posts/on-astrology-and-religion\)](/posts/on-astrology-and-religion) – 2022-10-18 – "False Prophets, Kindness, Jesus, Muhammad, Brahma, Intifada, etc."

[On Hobbies \(/posts/on-hobbies\)](/posts/on-hobbies) – 2022-10-18 – "I like doin stuff, you should try it"

[On Media \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media) – 2022-10-19 – "I'm gonna pull this out whenever someone asks me what I'm watching"

November 2022

[On North American Communists \(and similar\) \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america) – 2022-11-01 – "The Hometown. Learnings from my people, all of em."

[On Latin America and the rest of the Americas \(/posts/on-latin-america\)](/posts/on-latin-america) – 2022-11-02 – "As well as all the hard working people, communist and not, fighting for the emancipation of the Latino and indigenous peoples."

[On Asia \(/posts/on-asia\)](/posts/on-asia) – 2022-11-03 – "We may as well address Mao now, since everyone keeps talking about rent these days (and I'd like to maybe own a house someday)."

[On Europe \(/posts/on-europe\)](/posts/on-europe) – 2022-11-04 – "Marx; Lenin; Stalin. If you've been putting it off, you should get to reading em. They're smart folks and they understood how the world works. Listen to what they have to say, and learn from their experiences."

[On Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa) – 2022-11-05 – "Oh man you're gonna see the circle in a second, you're gonna love this"

[On Black Liberation \(/posts/on-black-liberation\)](/posts/on-black-liberation) – 2022-11-06 – "This is the tie-in page between North America and Africa"

[On the Middle East \(/posts/on-the-middle-east\)](/posts/on-the-middle-east) – 2022-11-07 – "Mostly concerning the Apartheid state in Palestine rn."

[On Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism\)](/posts/on-feminism) – 2022-11-08 – "Women's Liberation, Gender Studies, LGBTQ+ Politics and Media, etc."

[On Modern \(Non-Fiction\) Literature \(/posts/on-modern-literature\)](/posts/on-modern-literature) – 2022-11-20 – "There are a bunch of books around. Let's look at a few authors that have materialist perspectives, if not communist ones."

[On Fiction \(/posts/on-fiction\)](/posts/on-fiction) – 2022-11-21 – "Books, articles, short stories, novellas, zines, and other forms of words."

[On Music \(/posts/on-music\)](/posts/on-music) – 2022-11-22 – "Tunes."

[On Audiovisual Media \(/posts/on-audiovisual-media\)](/posts/on-audiovisual-media) – 2022-11-23 – "Movies, shows, videos in the news and on the web."

December 2022

[On Che Guevara \(/posts/on-che\)](/posts/on-che) – 2022-12-01 – "If you tremble with indignation at every injustice then you are a comrade of mine. ~Che Guevara' ~Aaron Steel"

[On Michael Parenti \(/posts/on-parenti\)](/posts/on-parenti) – 2022-12-02 – "Mikey P from New Yawk"

[On Covid \(/posts/on-covid\)](/posts/on-covid) – 2022-12-03 – "The (Ongoing) Pandemic."

[On Einstein \(/posts/on-einstein\)](/posts/on-einstein) – 2022-12-04 – "Another notable communist."

[On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05 – "Abolition reading list."

[On Marx \(/posts/on-marx\)](/posts/on-marx) – 2022-12-06 – "and Marxism, and communism, etc."

[On Engels \(/posts/on-engels\)](/posts/on-engels) – 2022-12-07 – "(the second head of Marxism)"

[On Lenin \(/posts/on-lenin\)](/posts/on-lenin) – 2022-12-08 – "Ah, now we get to this 'Marxism-Leninism' stuff."

[On Stalin \(/posts/on-stalin\)](/posts/on-stalin) – 2022-12-09 – "(The synthesizer of aforementioned 'Marxism-Leninism')"

[On Mao \(/posts/on-mao\)](/posts/on-mao) – 2022-12-10 – "...if you got a buncha Marxism-Leninism stewin in a pot, sprinklin in a bit of Mao Zedong Thought can never hurt. adds some full-bodied perspective."

[On Sankara \(/posts/on-sankara\)](/posts/on-sankara) – 2022-12-11 – "Why Sankara next? I like him. I like his discipline and ideals, I like his concrete actions, I like what he stands for to this day. I like his symbolic heart and the material change he affected, and I like how he focused on improving things for those who didn't have the vantage. He's a Robin Hood type, he's a hero in my eyes. I also like that he's a fellow guitar head, that's cool too, plus he was always fitted with the military suit and beret, I mean I could list here all day"

[On Voting \(/posts/on-voting\)](/posts/on-voting) – 2022-12-12 – "Literally just so we don't waste time"

[On Hồ Chí Minh \(/posts/on-ho\)](/posts/on-ho) – 2022-12-13 – "Uncle Ho, "

[On Pornography \(/posts/on-pornography\)](/posts/on-pornography) – 2022-12-14 – "full disclosure: I'm anti"

[On Cops \(/posts/on-cops\)](/posts/on-cops) – 2022-12-15 – "another anti, I'm afraid"

[On George Jackson \(/posts/on-jackson\)](/posts/on-jackson) – 2022-12-16 – "fitting one to come after the cops"

[On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole) – 2022-12-17 – "aka Red, aka Red Army Duck, aka Junkyard Duck, aka a comrade in the Washington area who's been very helpful towards my education."

[On Kids Books \(/posts/on-kids-books\)](/posts/on-kids-books) – 2022-12-18 – "books are cool; kids are cool; what books should we be giving to kids to learn from?"

[On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) – 2022-12-19 – "and Roderic Day, and Nia Frome"

[On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) – 2022-12-20 – "and LASD Gangs, and @tankiepilld aka @whatsantifa aka coffeenpedagogy"

[On Red Prints Publishing \(/posts/on-red-prints-publishing\)](/posts/on-red-prints-publishing) – 2022-12-21 – "and Marxist-Leninist Reading Hub, and Mount Tai Press, and Comrade Duck aka @DengistDuck"

[On Unity-Struggle-Unity \(/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity\)](/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity) – 2022-12-22 – "and The Red Clarion, and @primarycatdad"

[On The Fall of Twitter \(/posts/on-the-fall-of-twitter\)](/posts/on-the-fall-of-twitter) – 2022-12-23 – "aka all my bookmarks"

[On Trans Rights \(/posts/on-trans-rights\)](/posts/on-trans-rights) – 2022-12-24 – "== Human Rights"

[On Indigenous Resources \(/posts/on-indigenous-resources\)](/posts/on-indigenous-resources) – 2022-12-25 – "Books and Threads"

[On RedSails Twitter and MediaLists \(/posts/on-redsails-twitter\)](/posts/on-redsails-twitter) – 2022-12-26 – "Lots of stuff Nia and Roderic posted"

[On Prole Academy \(/posts/on-prole-academy\)](/posts/on-prole-academy) – 2022-12-27 – "Briefings and Book Reviews for working people in a hurry"

[On Eugene Debs \(/posts/on-debs\)](/posts/on-debs) – 2022-12-28 – "and US Socialism in early 20th century, and the IWW"

[On Homelessness and Homeless Resources \(/posts/on-homelessness-and-resources\)](/posts/on-homelessness-and-resources) – 2022-12-29 – "This is an important topic and I want to convey the seriousness with which I care about it, but also I'm moving really fast to get stuff done. I'll come back later"

index tags: Site Info, Table of Contents, Organization, Site Map# On Site Contents (By Topic)

2022-09-03

"aka the Index"

Here's the index, sorted by topic alphabetically. It's autogenerated with a script.

TODO: set up the ability to also run it automatically, on commit or build.

: [On Cops \(/posts/on-cops\)](/posts/on-cops) – 2022-12-15, [On George Jackson \(/posts/on-jackson\)](/posts/on-jackson) – 2022-12-16

@

@DavidKaib: [On Cops \(/posts/on-cops\)](/posts/on-cops) - 2022-12-15

@DengistDuck: [On Red Prints Publishing \(/posts/on-red-prints-publishing\)](/posts/on-red-prints-publishing) - 2022-12-21

@IronProle: [On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole) - 2022-12-17

@ItinerantMedic: [On Pornography \(/posts/on-pornography\)](/posts/on-pornography) - 2022-12-14

@MLReadingHub: [On Red Prints Publishing \(/posts/on-red-prints-publishing\)](/posts/on-red-prints-publishing) - 2022-12-21

@Mindylsser
: [On Kids Books \(/posts/on-kids-books\)](/posts/on-kids-books) - 2022-12-18

@MountTaiPress: [On Red Prints Publishing \(/posts/on-red-prints-publishing\)](/posts/on-red-prints-publishing) - 2022-12-21

@NiaFrome: [On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01, [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails)
- 2022-12-19

@Qban_Linx
: [On Pornography \(/posts/on-pornography\)](/posts/on-pornography) - 2022-12-14

@RedPrintsPub: [On Red Prints Publishing \(/posts/on-red-prints-publishing\)](/posts/on-red-prints-publishing) - 2022-12-21

@RedSails: [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) - 2022-12-19

@RedSailsOrg: [On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01

@RodericDay: [On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01, [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) - 2022-12-19

@TANKIEPILLED: [On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) - 2022-12-20

@TANKIEPILLED
: [On Communists \(/posts/on-communists\)](/posts/on-communists) - 2022-10-12

@USUMLPress: [On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01, [On Unity-Struggle-Unity \(/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity\)](/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity) - 2022-12-22

@allpowerbooks: [On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) - 2022-12-20

@historyoarmani2: [On Latin America and the rest of the Americas \(/posts/on-latin-america\)](/posts/on-latin-america) - 2022-11-02

@historyoarmani2
: [On Europe \(/posts/on-europe\)](/posts/on-europe) - 2022-11-04

@primarycatdad: [On This Site \(/posts/on-this-site\)](/posts/on-this-site) - 2022-09-01

@primarycatdad
: [On Unity-Struggle-Unity \(/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity\)](/posts/on-unity-struggle-unity) - 2022-12-22

@proustmalone: [On Michael Parenti \(/posts/on-parenti\)](/posts/on-parenti) - 2022-12-02

A

A Tradition of Violence: The History of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department: [On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) – 2022-12-20

A United Front Against Debt: [On Sankara \(/posts/on-sankara\)](/posts/on-sankara) – 2022-12-11

ACAB: [On Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism\)](/posts/on-feminism) – 2022-11-08, [On Modern \(Non-Fiction\) Literature \(/posts/on-modern-literature\)](/posts/on-modern-literature) – 2022-11-20, [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05, [On Cops \(/posts/on-cops\)](/posts/on-cops) – 2022-12-15, [On George Jackson \(/posts/on-jackson\)](/posts/on-jackson) – 2022-12-16, [On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole) – 2022-12-17

AES: [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) – 2022-12-19

ARAK: [On Asia \(/posts/on-asia\)](/posts/on-asia) – 2022-11-03, [On Mao \(/posts/on-mao\)](/posts/on-mao) – 2022-12-10, [On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole) – 2022-12-17

ARXIV: [On Access \(/posts/on-access\)](/posts/on-access) – 2022-09-04

Aaron Steel: ["Air and Steel" \(/posts/air-and-steel\)](/posts/air-and-steel) – 2022-10-07

Abolition: [On North American Communists \(and similar\) \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america) – 2022-11-01, [On Black Liberation \(/posts/on-black-liberation\)](/posts/on-black-liberation) – 2022-11-06, [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05

Abolition For The People: [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05

Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation: [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05

Abuse: [On Modern \(Non-Fiction\) Literature \(/posts/on-modern-literature\)](/posts/on-modern-literature) – 2022-11-20

Accountability: [On Values \(/posts/on-values\)](/posts/on-values) – 2022-10-09

Africa: [On Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa) – 2022-11-05, [On Black Liberation \(/posts/on-black-liberation\)](/posts/on-black-liberation) – 2022-11-06, [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05, [On Sankara \(/posts/on-sankara\)](/posts/on-sankara) – 2022-12-11

Aimé Césaire: [On Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa) – 2022-11-05

Air and Steel: ["Air and Steel" \(/posts/air-and-steel\)](/posts/air-and-steel) – 2022-10-07

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez: [On Voting \(/posts/on-voting\)](/posts/on-voting) – 2022-12-12

All Power Books: [On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) – 2022-12-20

America: [On North American Communists \(and similar\) \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america) – 2022-11-01, [On Latin America and the rest of the Americas \(/posts/on-latin-america\)](/posts/on-latin-america) – 2022-11-02, [On Black Liberation \(/posts/on-black-liberation\)](/posts/on-black-liberation) – 2022-11-06, [On Michael Parenti \(/posts/on-parenti\)](/posts/on-parenti) – 2022-12-02, [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05, [On Voting \(/posts/on-voting\)](/posts/on-voting) – 2022-12-12, [On Cops \(/posts/on-cops\)](/posts/on-cops) – 2022-12-15, [On George Jackson \(/posts/on-jackson\)](/posts/on-jackson) – 2022-12-16, [On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole) – 2022-12-17, [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) – 2022-12-19, [On All Power Books \(/posts/on-all-power-books\)](/posts/on-all-power-books) – 2022-12-20

America on Fire: The Untold History of Police Violence and Black Rebellion Since the 1960s: [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05

Anakbayan
: [On Asia \(/posts/on-asia\)](/posts/on-asia) – 2022-11-03

Anarchism: [On Stalin \(/posts/on-stalin\)](/posts/on-stalin) – 2022-12-09

Anarchism or Socialism?: [On Stalin \(/posts/on-stalin\)](/posts/on-stalin) – 2022-12-09

Angela Y. Davis: [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition) – 2022-12-05

Anti-Imperialism: [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) – 2022-12-19

Anticommunism & Wonderland: [On Red Sails \(/posts/on-red-sails\)](/posts/on-red-sails) – 2022-12-19

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- books
 - libgen
 - sci-hub
- academic
 - arxiv
- theory
 - marxists.org
- printed media
 - RedPrintsPub
- news
 - GrayZone

TODO: explanations

TODO: links

TODO: relate with thoughts [On Food \(/posts/on-food\)](/posts/on-food)

TODO: relate with thoughts [On Learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning)

TODO: relate with thoughts [On Media \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media)

TODO: relate with thoughts [On Uniting \(/posts/on-uniting\)](/posts/on-uniting) – sci-hub founder, other cool tech

projects that materially help people – link those. personal echo examples maybe, life alert, hackathons, etc.

TODO: relate with thoughts [On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing/)

index tags: Resources, RedSails, RedPrintsPub, LibGen, Sci-Hub, ARXIV, Marxists.org, GrayZone

On New York Resources

2022-09-05

"aka stuff for those in local Lenapehoking"

Ok, this list doesn't really exist yet. It will one day :4)

TODO: add all the resources. organize by category, interlink with other pages

TODO: homeless/hungry

TODO: women's resources, abuse resources, kids resources

TODO: link learning resources

TODO: volunteering resources

TODO: art, etc. in the city. places to see, things to do,

TODO: link subway stories, other experiences ?

index tags: Resource List, New York, Health(care)

"Air and Steel"

2022-10-07

"Why the name?"

You're tense, I'm calm. You apply excessive force; I control that force through fluid motion. That means relaxing the whole body so it can react instantly without resistance — no, without thought. Do you see now? It means becoming like clear water.

-- Spike Spiegel, Cowboy Bebop – see [this \(https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/\)](https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/)

Communism is not love. Communism is a hammer which we use to crush the enemy.

-- Mao Zedong, China

The fluidity of air, the power of steel. We'll need more quickness than water and more strength than mallets. Time's they are a-changing and, as always, we've gotta adapt to the modern era.

Float like a butterfly, sting like a bee sorta vibe, you get the picture?

And of course, with inspiration from my namesake, [Joey Steel \(https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/\)](https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/).

Whatever happens, happens.

~Aaron Steel [~AS], engineer. [email \(mailto:entropicemailaddress@protonmail.com\)](mailto:entropicemailaddress@protonmail.com)

index tags: Air and Steel, Aaron Steel, Name, Spike Spiegel, Mao Zedong, Joseph Stalin

On Organizing

2022-10-08

"ie. I'm an engineer and I'm serious about it."

What are [scientists, engineers, organizers] after?

Perfectly directed effort, optimal placement in the current given scenario. To understand the problem and relevant environment; to exert control over enough relevant elements in order to achieve the desired outcome.

What does this require?

Organization.

- Scientific research and experimentation to determine the nature of a given scenario (ie. science).
- Problem solving, building, and further experimentation (ie. engineering).
- Discipline in work, learning, improving; focus on proper efforts and bridge-building; clarity in mind and in work; a virtuous seriousness, in all efforts and endeavors (ie. organization).

What is organization?

Organization is seriousness.

It is building. It is maintenance. It is crafting the environment towards desired ends. It is iteration.

It is clarity and thoughtfulness – in understanding, in planning, in communications.

It is analysis towards a full understanding of the forces at play, the problems at hand. It is learning.

It is understanding your role on an ongoing basis; constantly striving towards the optimal trajectory, always course correcting.

It is playing to your strengths while improving your weaknesses.

It is calculated action with perfected timing.

It is knowing who to look towards in a given situation; building strong safety nets; finding worthwhile leaders and role-models.

It is clarity in purpose. It is revolutionary optimism, the optimism of the will despite the pessimism of the intellect.

It is knowing that the only way is forward. It is knowing the only thing to do is buckle down and get to work. It is iteration after iteration after iteration, until you win or until you can't.

What is antithetical to organization?

Sloppiness, flippancy, a lack of direction, doomerism, dogmatism, wasting time, carelessness, listlessness, slowness.

It is giving up. It is throwing away the world we seek to gain.

It is the unseriousness – the lack of discipline – that allows for the destruction and decay of everything that matters.

You say you'd like to get organized? You say you care about the future? Then let's get serious.

Do the reading; do the work; take care of yourself (and your people) in order to fight again tomorrow.

They'll find me drowned or they'll find me thrashing. Head down, working hard – until reality disallows it.

~AS

PS. This is also the purpose of this site. Organization for me (helping organize my thoughts and compile my resources) and organization for you (figuring out your role, helping guide you towards the most effective ways that you can help yourself and your communities).

index tags: Purpose, Organization, Seriousness, Engineering, Science

On Charity and Charitability (ie. what you can do)

2022-10-09

"desc"

Rather than looking for a charity to donate to, I've found it useful to rather be charitable in all the situations where it is useful to do so.

[Subway story, food to lady]

[Tipping really well for meaningful purchases]

-- Guitar story

-- art commission story

Being nice

[kid dropping jacket story]

saying happy birthday to a guy on the street when he said it was his birthday in an eavesdropped conversation, helping a foreign women struggling to figure out which side of the subway she needed to get on the train.

Generating goodwill is a powerful thing. We should be gaining the masses to our side.

From each according to ability – you should be giving a lot if you have the ability to do so.

index tags: Charity, Charitability, New York, Subway, Food

On Philosophy

2022–10–09

"Philosophy 0"

My philosophical influences are spiritual, stoic, and materialist.

[Understanding life from the river \(ie. Siddhartha\) \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha)

[Stoicism \(ie. Aurelius\) \(/posts/on-meditations\)](/posts/on-meditations)

[Materialism \(ie. communists all working to the same conclusions across the globe\) \(/posts/on-communists\)](/posts/on-communists)

By going through those three and understanding them along the way, you'll have worked through my pathway of learning. But, full disclosure, each of those topics goes... deep. They all take time, learning anything requires some dedication.

index tags: Philosophy, Siddhartha, Herman Hesse, Meditations, Stoicism, Marcus Aurelius, Communists, Reading List, Dialectics, Marxism, Marxism–Leninism, Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong

On Values

2022-10-09

"My highest placed value is seriousness in organizing. I believe they're one and the same. You should act with a purpose."

My highest placed value is seriousness in organizing. I believe they're one and the same. You should act with a purpose. (See related thoughts in [On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing/\)](/posts/on-organizing/))

I work hard to foster respect for myself. I'm personally driven by feeling good about myself and by feeling well-liked by other people I respect. I try to show all others the respect they deserve as well; I think that hard work, good interactions, and positive reinforcement can lead to healthy collaboration and great win-win outcomes.

As an engineer (ie. an applied scientist) I place a heavy emphasis on iteration. Start small and work towards big. Make a hypothesis, run some tests, and figure out learnings. Repeat that ad infinitum.

I try to remember Growth, Cleanliness, Freshness, Decay. These are all healthy things to keep in mind. I strive for freshness and cleanliness, and I'm always looking to grow. Decay is an extent form of life. For more of my philosophy in this vein, you can look towards [Siddhartha \(/posts/on-siddhartha/\)](/posts/on-siddhartha/).

There are periods of nothingness, and that's helpful to remember as well. Take the phases as they come, work hard to course correct as often as possible (and trust yourself to do so!). "There are decades when nothing happens and weeks where decades happen," someone once said that.

A focus on [learning \(/posts/on-learning/\)](/posts/on-learning/). A lot, as much as possible. From everywhere you can.

Meet people where they are. Listen. There's useful perspective to be gained from *everything* – that's what makes life beautiful. Notice things, see the beauty.

A good understanding and acceptance of change. Quantitative leads to qualitative my friends, we'll get to that at some point.

Healthy disagreement, honest communication, and internal resolution. There are many forms of power organization, all of which have pros and cons. Find where there are weak points and figure out solutions.

TODO: lady who talked about organizing (ask ---- maybe?). also demcent, also party cells, also just workers' councils in general. explanations, compare/contrasts with current US system of power,

Figure out ways to foster transparency and accountability.

Figure out if the big picture things you're doing are good; also figure out if the small picture things you're doing are good.

In both NY and Shenzhen, the cities thrive where people are able to skirt through gray-areas in regulation in order to forge positive change. Via centralization and rich human presence, these places are full of people who understand how to make their cities better and work towards that

effort. Try to figure out where outdated rules can be replaced with better ones, and then figure out how to force those changes to be made. Bend the rules when it helps do good; break them too, if you must.

TODO: Koreatown zoning, signs, rich streets

TODO: link Shenzhen doc

index tags: Values, Koreatown, Shenzhen, New York, China, Growth, Cleanliness, Freshness, Decay, Seriousness, Transparency, Accountability, Organizing, Learning, Engineering

On Food

2022-10-10

"Keep well stocked and ensure others are getting enough."

I stay well-stocked on food and necessities, to the best of my ability. I keep healthy food around, easily accessible. It helps me build good habits.

It's easier to eat a healthy afternoon snack if there's an apple right in front of you. It's easy to stay happy on the go if you've got a protein bar, a bag of cheez-its, and a banana in your backpack.

And I've found where I am, currently, my backpack has to be resupplied often. Very often, I'm able to give food to people on the [subway \(/posts/on-charity-and-charitability\)](#) or on the street. A bag of clementines is \$2.50 and there are way too many to eat alone, I hand em out if ever someone looks like they could use em. There's something romantic about the smell of peeling an orange, I try to share the moment of peace.

My purpose is simple in most of these posts. I want you to cultivate positive environments for yourself, make it easy for yourself to succeed. And if you're doing well, help others do the same – many are struggling. A spare clementine can be the difference.

index tags: Food, New York, Health(care)

On Siddhartha

2022-10-10

"Philosophy I: Understanding the River"

I know my current understanding. I know where I am now. It's easy for me to forget that not everybody has seen everything I have and read everything I have and just in general thought enough of the same thoughts as me to know what the heck I'm talking about.

That's why it's easy to stay quiet. I'm not much of a talker, ask anyone. But here, well, here I can lay it all out for ya. Piece by piece, give you the deets on how the system operates. How my brain processes, how it thinks, how it adapts. Maybe if you see how it started and you see where it's gotten, you'll be able to figure out where it's going next.

And so we're starting with the first life-changing book I read. Thanks to my good friend for introducing me: [Siddhartha \(https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2500\)](https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/2500), by [Herman Hesse \(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Hesse\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hermann_Hesse)

The story follows the path taken by Siddhartha, during the Gautama Buddha era. I recommend reading it, it's short and I find great meaning in it (obviously). No apologies for spoiling it, it's been out since 1922 and you've been warned!

I saw parallels in my own life to that of Siddhartha's. He was a successful and obedient child growing up but unsure of what was supposed to come after. He knew he had to become separated from his past, but he didn't know where to go. He attempted spirituality and religion, to varying success. He tasted the riches of professional success and he experienced all the feelings of love and family that come with partnership, children. I may not have been the golden child to the same degree, and I haven't quite achieved riches or love (or kids) to the same level, but I've experienced all those feelings in my own rite. I know what it feels like to have enough to spend, I know what it feels like to pursue a partner. I understand that meaning has to be carved out along with those things, that they alone aren't enough for fulfilment (in themselves).

Basically, your perspective is everything. You'll hear bad things on the news, and you won't know how to feel about it. We'll get to that more in [Philosophy II \(/posts/on-meditations\)](#).

Siddhartha eventually understands life, next to a river, with the help of an old ferryman's perspective.

out of all secrets of the river, he today only saw one, this one touched his soul. He saw: this water ran and ran, incessantly it ran, and was nevertheless always there, was always at all times the same and yet new in every moment! Great be he who would grasp this, understand this! He understood and grasped it not, only felt some idea of it stirring, a distant memory, divine voices.

Eventually, he tries to explain this wisdom to his friend Govinda.

This here,” he said playing with it, “is a stone, and will, after a certain time, perhaps turn into soil, and will turn from soil into a plant or animal or human being. In the past, I would have said: This stone is just a stone, it is worthless, it belongs to the world of the Maya; but because it might be able to become also a human being and a spirit in the cycle of transformations, therefore I also grant it importance. Thus, I would perhaps have thought in the past. But today I think: this stone is a stone, it is also animal, it is also god, it is also Buddha, I do not venerate and love it because it could turn into this or that, but rather because it is already and always everything—and it is this very fact, that it is a stone, that it appears to me now and today as a stone, this is why I love it and see worth and purpose in each of its veins and cavities, in the yellow, in the gray, in the hardness, in the sound it makes when I knock at it, in the dryness or wetness of its surface. There are stones which feel like oil or soap, and others like leaves, others like sand, and every one is special and prays the Om in its own way, each one is Brahman, but simultaneously and just as much it is a stone, is oily or juicy, and this is the very fact which I like and regard as wonderful and worthy of worship.—But let me speak no more of this. The words are not good for the secret meaning, everything always becomes a bit different, as soon as it is put into words, gets distorted a bit, a bit silly—yes, and this is also very good, and I like it a lot, I also very much agree with this, that this what is one man’s treasure and wisdom always sounds like foolishness to another person.

There's always more to be said for this book, it really helped me forge my perspective over the last few years. It was an important start to my journey, a push in the necessary direction.

My takeaway for you is this: if you find an opportunity to bask in the sun, sit under a big tree, or gaze into a running body of water – I encourage you to do it, if only for a few moments – to help understand life, just a little bit better. Take a walk, feel the cool ocean breeze; the crisp mountain air; the grassy smell of wherever you may call home. Take it in, breathe the nature around you. Feel where you are in the universe.

As a child, I saw life in math. In numbers and shapes, in musical chords. I saw life in colorful little folded pieces of paper, in musical instruments carefully crafted (through years of iteration). I saw life in the people all around me, in the animals and plants that were all around – big and small – if you looked around carefully. In statistics, in probability, in the shuffling decks of cards that (probabilistically) landed in a brand new order every day ([52! possible orderings \(!!!\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuffling#Randomization) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shuffling#Randomization>)). I saw life in the sand and in the snow and in the trees, in the breeze and the cacti and the scorpions that scared me. I saw it in the flowers, and I often stop to smell them still. I saw life in all my [hobbies \(/posts/on-hobbies\)](#), in every nook and cranny I could observe wherever life takes me.

Remember to notice the little things. Like my hero [Aang](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar:_The_Last_Airbender) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Avatar:_The_Last_Airbender), try to keep a view of everyone's perspective. Remain cool-headed under immense pressure. Always choose nonviolence, but make sure nobody's being bullied. Maintain balance in all wakes of life, and help others achieve the same. Be a master of all the elements (ie. know nature, and know the tools you can use within nature – first to survive, then to help others).

Another reading I like in this vein is the short story [The Egg](http://www.galactanet.com/oneoff/theegg_mod.html) (http://www.galactanet.com/oneoff/theegg_mod.html) by Paul Weir ([wiki](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Egg_(Weir_short_story))) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The Egg \(Weir short story\)\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Egg_(Weir_short_story)))).

I read that one super young and I still like the message it provided me with.

index tags: Philosophy, Siddhartha, Herman Hesse, The Egg, Paul Weir, Religion, Avatar the Last Airbender

On Meditations

2022-10-11

"Philosophy II: Understanding Aurelius (ie. Stoicism)"

You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.

Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Be one.

If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.

The best revenge is to be unlike him who performed the injury.

The soul becomes dyed with the colour of its thoughts.

Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to, with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present.

Our life is what our thoughts make it.

The first rule is to keep an untroubled spirit. The second is to look things in the face and know them for what they are.

How much time he gains who does not look to see what his neighbour says or does or thinks, but only at what he does himself, to make it just and holy.

- Marcus Aurelius

These are all from Meditations. I could keep pasting, I could paste the whole thing. You can pick up the book at any point and read a few lines, and they occasionally contain very useful wisdom.

The principles of stoicism entail 1) understanding your sphere of control. Remembering that you can't control most things in this life, but that you really can control you. Remembering that the changes of the world are all composed of individual people. And, using that, 2) to live virtuously. Be the positive change you wish to see in the world, that's all stoicism is saying.

These tie in to my thoughts on mental health. Most conditions are natural human reactions to their environments and stimuli. ADHD is so prevalent now because everyone's getting very used to shortform media (twitter, tiktok). Depression is on the rise because, Jesus, shit is bad. Anxiety is here because jobs are thin and wages are low and I'm not gonna buy a house soon (even though I'm doing better than like 95/100 people I see on the street). PTSD exists for all the folks who have dealt with traumatic, stressful, difficult situations. If you're mentally unwell because things are tough, yeah, that's your brain trying to handle everything. What can you do to survive, what can you do to end the suffering that you see in the news and on the streets?

Hard to know! I'm trying to figure it out, I'm writing a lil website about it.

Stoicism (ie. Aurelius, but many others as well. I learned a lot from the [subreddit \(https://old.reddit.com/r/Stoicism/\)](https://old.reddit.com/r/Stoicism/) – though I try to avoid reddit nowadays, I still find the wikis/sidebars very helpful for resources) gave me the tools to deal with my past (ie. trauma), depression, and anxiety.

Stoicism posits that I can only control myself in the current moment, and it posits that you should try your best (do right by yourself, and then do right by everyone else). Don't sweat the small stuff, don't worry about the past, and don't worry too much about the future – just enough to set good goals. Focus on the present, focus on doing the best you can. That's it!

It isn't easy, but it gets easier with time and [good practice \(/posts/on-organizing\)](#).

(TODO: add gramscifancam tweet)

Don't get depressed at news that's out of your control (turn it off if it's too much), don't get stressed about what happened in the past. Everyone makes mistakes, has those days, etc, etc. Take time to process trauma and let the past go, so that you can move forward to the best of your ability.

Don't get anxious about the future – like Aurelius said:

Never let the future disturb you. You will meet it, if you have to, with the same weapons of reason which today arm you against the present.

You'll keep trying your best. That's all you can do! Keep at it, we'll get there. [Together, maybe? \(/posts/on-uniting\)](#)

PS. I also loved Gladiator, growing up. Still do, I think, but it's been a while since the last rewatch. Legendary soundtrack. In the words of Maximus Decimus Meridius, student of Marcus Aurelius, *"Fratres! Three weeks from now, I will be harvesting my crops. Imagine where you will be, and it will be so. Hold the line! Stay with me! If you find yourself alone, riding in the green fields with the sun on your face, do not be troubled. For you are in Elysium, and you're already dead! Brothers, what we do in life... echoes in eternity."*

index tags: Philosophy, Stoicism, Meditations, Marcus Aurelius, Gladiator, Future, Present, Past, Virtue, Good, Depression, Anxiety, Mental Health

On Communists

2022-10-12

"Philosophy III: On getting fucking teargassed."

okay I realize now that this is going to become the resource textdump page. because after I started reading communists, well, I haven't stopped. If not communists, then materialists – scientists, engineers, analysts of their crafts. Sure, maybe not everyone I link is a 'communist' technically. Definitely not the ones who are very rich and doing bad things around the globe (ie. bourgeoisie). But they have important perspectives to understand (ie. read what they're saying), and here I'll share some of the ones that have shaped my understanding of the world today.

also worth noting, I still love [art \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media). I enjoy [engineering \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing) and I enjoy all sorts of fun [activities \(/posts/on-hobbies\)](/posts/on-hobbies). I still read fiction, I love books of all sorts. I love music and movies and the visual arts, I tried to make that clear in [Philosophy I \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha). But for serious reading, for where I'm focused, it's all the materialists of their various fields and fashions.

And actually, I'm going to break all of these sections down. Kinda geographically, kinda chronologically, kinda based on difficulty to read. I'm trying to keep things as organized as possible, for all our sake's.

Alright, the picture so far. So I know [river is life \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha), blah blah blah. Also I'm tryna be [stoic \(/posts/on-meditations\)](/posts/on-meditations) about this whole affair we call life. Maybe both of those thoughts aren't full formed yet, but those were the current most prominent influences.

Then we get to 2020. It's a pandemic (ongoing, wear a mask – N95 or better). The George Floyd protests are ongoing, and I live right on the border of [CHAZ \(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capitol_Hill_Occupied_Protest\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capitol_Hill_Occupied_Protest), a block away from the police

station. There was teargas coming in the windows, insane videos were being posted on twitter and reddit of footage from a block away.

I geared up, got protected, saw if I could help in any way possible. I handed out umbrellas I bought cheap, I kept em for the next day when they were left laying around. I held one myself while holding a protective line. Those experienced were (mostly) tired of the capsaicin burn that comes from pepper spray, the coconut oil getting on every surface of my apartment while I tried to heal the redness out; those who were new to the protests didn't seem particularly keen on finding out those intimacies firsthand.

I had batteries, helped keep the megaphones going. Spoke a bit, all voices were hoarse, but I try not to take up too much space – I just went with the usual chants, tried to keep energy and morale up.

I let people in to use the restroom or wash up. I was lucky, with an apartment so close, I tried to help those who needed protection. Especially when the chemical weapons came out.

The teargas. Man the fucking teargas. "*There goes Aaron again, talking about the time he got teargassed*" they say. Yeah! I'm not over all the fucking teargas. *WHY*, let's think for a minute, keep up with me, just for a second, *WHY DO THE COPS HAVE SO MUCH FUCKING TEARGAS AND WHY ARE THEY DEPLOYING IT ON CIVILIANS? WHY ARE THEY PEPPER SPRAYING LITTLE CHILDREN? BLINDING PEOPLE WITH RUBBER BULLETS THAT ARE MEANT TO BE SHOT AT FEET?* Unstopped, unchecked, much too often. Funded to the sky.

And people are starting to see the problem more clearly than ever before. The kids are, the ones on twitter and tiktok. They're making attempts to make change when they can.

TODO: link k-pop stan submission thing

TODO: link big cop violence cop thread

TODO: link reporters getting arrested

TODO: link LASD Gangs, s/o Tankiepilled

TODO: twitter shoutout. Aren LeBrun, Roderic Day, IronProle

Okay, where were we, teargas. Yes. At the time, I was working and experiencing protest, power in the street, firsthand. I was experiencing the state repression against that protest at the same exact time. I was like Marx observing the Paris Commune, I was coming to the same natural understanding of history that he had. I was seeing [the river \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha) and I was [finding my place \(/posts/on-meditations\)](/posts/on-meditations).

The first book that really kicked off this journey, during this era of aforementioned teargassing, on recommendation from another good friend, was [Confessions of an Economic Hit Man](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confessions_of_an_Economic_Hit_Man) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confessions_of_an_Economic_Hit_Man) by John Perkins. That book got me thinking about my own role within society, about the parallels I could draw between my life and his explanations of history.

TODO Here: probably outline modern resources that helped the most.

RedSails, Aren LeBrun, useful twitter accounts, TANKIEPILLED, etc.

Link to efforts that they're doing and how they relate to other articles here.

Then, explain that we're starting with the US because that's what I know. That's what I've seen the most of, that's where I've been.

Discuss [access \(/posts/on-access\)](/posts/on-access).

This is a compilation of reading recommendations, organized by topic. I've read all these (sometimes only partially, for works I trust)

If you want to learn:

[Reading (ie. Books and Articles)]

the best, imo:

On Dialectics (many, but esp [NiaFrome \(https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/\)](https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/)). probably need my own, gdi.

probably also need the starter list of lenin/stalin/einstein/engels, maybe link RedPrintsPub/MLRH.

index tags: Philosophy, Communists, Reading List, Dialectics, CHAZ, CHOP, Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il, Kim Jong-un, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, Xi Jinping, Bhagat Singh, Nia Frome, Roderic Day, Aren LeBrun, IronProle, Tankiepilled, @TANKIEPILLED

On Learning

2022-10-14

"My lifelong passion, I guess, if I had to pick *one* lifelong passion in some arbitrary hypothetical."

You can pick up learnings from everywhere. Many people are saying the same thing, because they make the same observations of nature.

Dialectics:

"Snowball"

Gibbons quote – wealthy are able to do well due to their abundance of resources, from Parenti (Julius Caesar?)

Engels and Enlai and Castro grew up as members of exploiting classes and nevertheless used their resources to build positive change – at the expense of their personal wealth.

Community:

both the rich and the poor understand "networking" and the importance of human connections [Parasite]

Folks like Matt Levine and Michael Lewis are very good thinkers in their respective fields. Whether or not you see exactly eye-to-eye with them, you can probably learn something from the way they think and describe the world.

Folks like Guevara and Mao give fighters' perspectives, as did Nkrumah and Jackson. Engels that of an every-man, Aurelius that of an emperor, Lundy Bancroft that of a psychologist dedicated to a specific subfield.

Seriousness:

"Stay Hungry"

"Carpe Diem"

"Whatever happens, happens"

"What is to be done?"

"Memento Mori"

"Time is Money"

If you read enough of a variety, you'll find who you tend to agree with the most. They'll probably self-describe their ideology and alignment, and I have an idea [and hope] you'll figure out which group is fighting the hardest, for the most. That exercise is left to the reader.

index tags: Learning, Books

On Technology

2022-10-14

"Hint: it's a weapon"

Never forget that technology is a weapon. If you feel the world is not as perfect as it should be, then you must struggle to put the weapon of technology at the service of society. You must rescue society before that can be accomplished, so that technology benefits the greatest number of human beings possible, so that we can build the society of tomorrow-whatever name you choose to give it-the society we dream of and that we call - as it was called by the founder of scientific socialism - communism.

- Che Guevara

There is a weapon in this mural - a U.S.-made M-1 rifle. When it was in the hands of Batista's soldiers that weapon was hideous. But that same weapon became extraordinarily beautiful when it became part of the arsenal of the people's army.

- Che Guevara

Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun.

- Mao Zedong

TODO: write about these (?) for now, readers, just ponder those ^
TODO: link people using guns in texas to help protect homeless encampments
TODO: link encampments being destroyed, vids from twitter? from eg. LA
TODO: talk about experiences with the same in CHAZ
TODO: slum comparison? like, these are slums dudes, please take care of your [neighbors \(/posts/on-charity-and-charitability\)](#)
TODO: RedSails links: On Crypto

- technology and surveillance state
 - Shoshanna Zuboff
 - Yasha Levine
 - Che – technology is a weapon

Che was working on automation back in the day.

index tags: Technology, Che Guevara, Mao Zedong, Shoshanna Zuboff, Yasha Levine, RedSails, Roderic Day, Guns, Weapons, Surveillance

On Uniting

2022-10-15

"Work together, let's do this."

In short, we must unite all those who can be united, so that we can reduce the enemy's numbers to a minimum... For us, the more friends we have, the better, and the fewer enemies we have, the better.

- Mao Zedong [<https://redsails.org/unite-all-the-forces/>]

[Now]

That was 1956 (at a CPC Politburo speech). Let's take a look at the current conditions of nature.

Ah, yes, 2022 (speaking from NY, USA). Pandemic, wildfires, hurricanes, people dying of the heat, and people dying of the cold.

Homelessness and hunger are around. They always are, but look at the prices and look at the people and do some quick addition to draw your own conclusions.

People die preventable deaths due to perverse incentives within the pharmaceutical industry. The disabled have been ignored completely as they struggle to navigate an uncaring society in precarious positions. Racial minorities, the LGBTQ+ community, and women have all long-been oppressed in a variety of harmful, lasting ways.

There's fast-moving and scary technology that nobody understands, with dangerous profit motive and lack of regulation. There's been stark polarization between people, extreme disconnection and isolation; families who can't talk to each other anymore. From my vantage, many seem to be drowning.

Kids are interacting with porn and twitter and tiktok and Disney Avengers media (ie. propaganda) at ages I don't want to think about. The coming generation will be developing their understanding of the world in a very different way than I did, as I developed mine very differently than the generations before me.

Everyone is being shaped by new technology, disease, and conditions that very few people (if any) fully understand.

And of course (for those familiar with history and what happens outside the continental US): the rampant imperialist extraction of labor and natural resources; the expansion of fascist forces (both within the US and globally); the sanctioning and violent sabotage of any anti-imperial or socialist threat (from Fred Hampton to the people of Korea and Vietnam to the po; the settler-colonization of Palestine (with US aid); the propaganda war against China [[link](#) – xinjiang atrocity blitz]; the aggression and provocation of Russia; the current unincorporated territories of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa...; the \$800B spent yearly on the DoD, dedicated to a militant defense of International Finance Capital; the long, blood-stained history of profit-driven slavery, settler-colonialism, neocolonialism, and war.

Oh yeah, and back in Cap Hill, Seattle, cops teargassed me in my apartment for 2 months straight a couple years ago. They got me with teargas and pepper spray and a whole lotta flashbangs outside my apartment. Lucky enough to avoid the rubber bullets and lucky enough to avoid the real ones. That whole experience is why I'm here in the first place.

I could list for days and I'm forgetting much, but hopefully I've painted an adequate picture. We are seeing all of the long-predicted ruthless downstream effects of our current economic system and its correlated political superstructure.

[Focus]

So what are we trying to accomplish? What's the focus here?

In the words of a comrade, "I don't know a fuckin thing, my guy" – keep that in mind as I muse on my worldview. [[link](#) – RedArmyDuck]

My perspective is that we are (very fucking obviously) observing collapse. The only logical conclusion to be drawn from that is that we must build as hard as possible in order to salvage. Figuring out how to do that is the focus.

[Unity]

How does this tie back in to unity?

Maybe you've got some concept of "left unity"; maybe not. But just for a sec, look at it like this: My perspective is that every person I know (and I have 8 million nearby) would agree with most of my observations.

If they were willing to have the serious conversations (+ maybe do some reading), they would agree with almost all of them. (also, to be clear: not everyone is willing)

I'm looking at this as an "us vs the problem" situation (a healthy relationship technique!)

If the problem is "the earth will exterminate humans", then the "us" is every human on earth. That's who we're uniting.

[Enemy]

I want to be clear about who the enemy is here. I am talking in terms of people.

The enemy is the person in pursuit of individualistic success (ie. personal safety, security, survival) at the expense of societal ruin.

Many people don't understand history well enough to understand the current trajectory we're on. They don't understand what's going on. They don't have a useful understanding of social classes. They just don't know what we have to do. We need to show them, so that they can let go of individualistic ideals and understand that we're on the same team here.

(This is the time to reread that Mao quote up top). We need to turn people away from individualism, towards collective survival. That is how we unite. That is how

Unless you're actively, intentionally working towards the destruction of the planet by actively, intentionally working towards the maintenance of capitalism – well, we probably have something we agree on.

If you don't have effectual power within your current position; if you care about the future; if you have kids and care for their futures – we can easily be allies.

If you think everything's doomed and you've given up, we're enemies right now; but if I can convince you to care, about anything, I think we can be united in an effort towards some end. We can become allies, even if we aren't yet.

[So]

So let's kill the invasive lanternflies and eradicate the invasive kudzu; while remembering that the bees and the spiders and the fruits and the vegetables are all playing a valuable role. Some bad actors have to be cut from the bunch, but we should take care to try to salvage as many good actors as possible. And in the case of humans, we should be working to make as many bad actors into good actors as possible – many of them are well-intentioned but ill-informed and misguided! We must guide them.

[consider moving stuff to On Charity, linking here]

So why don't we talk to our friends and our neighbors and start having those conversations? Maybe just check-in with folks you care about?

Maybe foodprep some stew and go tabling with literature? Give a bag of necessities to the houseless person on your block if you can afford it? Reach out to local groups who share similar ideals as you, see what they're up to?

Maybe take a leaf out of Mr. Rogers' book and look for the helpers around you. Try to follow the lead of the good role-models you find. Look for the folks still masking, if that's rare in your area.

Maybe find the ways you can help throw lifebuoys to the people struggling, before the water fills their lungs. They'll thrash and they'll hold their breath, I see people fighting HARD, but nature will run its course. The lifebuoy is the difference in outcome, and someone needs to throw it. Quickly, accurately! If you miss, don't fret – just try to find the next lifebuoy and the next place to throw.

Maybe join a union. Take training to become an EMT or medic.

Take training to understand how weaponry works, and familiarize yourself with the tools available to you. Understand that power grows from the barrel of a gun, understand what technology ~is~ [On Technology]. Think about all modern tech through that lens, see how you can reclaim our

modern resources for good use! [tiktok teens blowing up polls – a great example of a community fighting for good together!]

Volunteer to firefight. Read to the elderly; read to the children. Build safety nets for yourself and your community in every way possible.

Start a mini bookstore [TANKIEPILLED]. Find ways to get books to others cheap [RedPrintsPublishing].

Run errands with your friends. Offer to babysit for the parents who need it, it gives them a break and kids share lots of new, unique perspectives if you're willing to engage with them.

Pay kindness forward. Buy the next person in line a coffee. Generating goodwill is a positive force! Many have said it, you must generate goodwill among the masses if you're to succeed as the vanguard of anything! (Che, Mao) – whether or not you have others to work with yet, generate that goodwill!

If you've got any concept of "mass line work" – what do you think that is, in your current situation?

Maybe try to parse all the possible learnings you can, from every place you can.

- "don't want stupid soldiers or cowardly intellectuals"
- study the enemy [Art of War – Lao Tzu], and remember
- Form reading groups with people you want to learn with? (or just read some books yourself?) [link – resources]

Start small. Find people, converse. Start noticing all the small issues you see day-to-day and start figuring out how to fix em. Just set good examples, if that's all you can do. Hold the door open for someone.

Maybe just try to build better habits. Floss more, stay healthy. Get sleep. Test varying levels of social media usage to figure out what works best for you and your mental health ([On Logging Off and Touching Grass]).

Carry around a reusable bag, tip well. Put your shopping cart all the way back.

Figure out your strengths and leverage them wherever. Identify your weaknesses and work towards improvement.

It won't always work, but that's fine. Iterate. Repeat. Science is research–hypothesis–experimentation–observation–analysis–understanding, all on a tight loop, ever–improving.

[Reach for the Stones to cross the river – Deng]

[Einstein – trying the same thing on repeat is insanity]. So try something different once you've drawn current

Trust yourself. Learn! Grow! Find ways to feel meaningful. If you practice your skills with discipline and seriousness, you will see yourself able to achieve improvement in all facets. Make friends, allies, comrades! Build respect, for yourself and for others. That's the good stuff, that's why we're around.

[End]

And if the end result is that we fail, and we just live through ever-worsening conditions until we can no longer survive, then you may as well at least try to spread some positivity while you're around.

So it goes [kurt vonnegut – slaughterhouse 5]. So fucking what? We're all dying anyway; whatever happens, happens [cowboy bebop].

You're here and you're now, you're the only one who can make it happen. I encourage you to try.

[PS]

Remember, put your oxygen mask on first. Don't overexert, don't burn out. Be responsible, be smart, and prioritize being able to approach the problem again after some much needed shut-eye. You're most helpful healthy, and alive.

If you need help, reach out – I'm looking out for you. My name is Aaron and I speak for the trees; I speak for the kids, and the earth, and the future; I speak for the downtrodden, the dirty, the dispossessed; I speak for what's right, and I speak in the hopes that you will too.

You'll find me here, at entropicemailaddress@protonmail.com or github.com/aaronsteel, and on NYYCL communication channels. Here in NY, you may find me at headquarters here [Communist Party Headquarters] or walking about Astoria, or really anywhere around. Elsewhere, you might find me visiting old friends at VACPUSA or FRSO Seattle.

And if you liked this, maybe check out my thoughts [On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing). ~AS

index tags: Uniting, Mao Zedong

On Wikipedia

2022-10-16

"or: using resources for what they are, getting the best out of everything we've got"

TODO: GrayZone articles, analysis

TODO: ecured, prolewiki

TODO: explain that people should remember these incentives, understand the motives, but still use wikipedia and other commonplace resources where they're helpful.

TODO: RedSails links: Virtual Factory

index tags: Media, Wikipedia, GrayZone, EcuRed, ProleWiki, RedSails, Roderic Day

On Astrology and Religion

2022-10-18

"False Prophets, Kindness, Jesus, Muhammad, Brahma, Intifada, etc."

TODO: Religion is the opiate of the masses quote, explanation

There are material factors around your time of birth. Those born next to Christmas may have unique experiences around what they do for gifts, maybe they receive fewer gifts. People who enjoy their birthdays in the summer may develop a strong affinity for the beach; those in the fall for halloween or candy apples. There are environmental factors surrounding birth that lend themselves to real, material trends observable in people.

One interesting example of that sorta phenomenon is present with why high schoolers look older in photos from decades past [link Vsauce video].

I'll be frank: most astrology is garbage, imo. But people like it because it gives em some reassurance or hope or guidance or gossip in their lives. It's fun for some.

There are lots of old ancient pieces of wisdom, from the native Americans to the Chinese centuries BC. Eastern cures and herbal remedies, misunderstood by the West. There's meaning in putting positive intentional energy into things! There's a reason placebos work! If it's a placebo at play making things better, then let em have the placebo!

In the same vein, I'm not quite religious. I believe in the material reality we live in, and that's about it. And I think many religious institutions have caused immense harm, there are bad paradigms that crop up in organized religion. But there are many good religious people, there is positive to be found in religion. Sikhism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, Christianity all posit positive ideals and encourage positive growth. Many people are saved by religion, religion can help people grow into more positive members of society. Islam helps guide fighters in intifada resistance, in uprising against oppression. Many people are able to find community through religion. Try to foster support, reach out to people within these groups. Show them where you agree with them; maybe show them where you disagree too.

Where young men have been indoctrinated by misleading authorities (ie. false prophets) like Ben Shapiro and Jordan Peterson, understand that their willingness to accept those leaders stems from their isolation, loneliness, and depression. They are willing and ready to fight to improve their situation how they know how; we must show them why hating women and minorities isn't the right answer, we must explain the historical perspective of women and demonstrate their analogous struggles. We must connect the young men with women of all generations to correct misled ideals. We must get them to consume better media, stay away from too much Breaking Bad and pornography [Porn – andrea dworkin].

We must do the same with young women. Though I don't have an inherent women's perspective – though I do not personally know what it's like to be a woman – I learn from as many women I can. Young women would do well to find understanding of young men, learn how to handle those situations with care alongside vigilance. [Slave and master are both awkward in each other's presence – author? Kwame Ture? Fanon?] – We must work towards equality, which can only happen by taking conscious steps towards fully understanding the inequalities and finding the right ways to eradicate them. [Women hold half the sky – Mao, Sankara]

We must do the same with the elderly and the middle-aged, we must show them how times have changed; we must demonstrate the changing conditions in our world (look! they're all around). We must teach the old dogs new tricks, because they've got useful wisdom and experience and we want that on our side – we can all learn from each other. Fix their outdated perspectives, and learn history to better understand what you haven't experienced yourself.

We must foster growth with every demographic. Find out how disabled people are struggling. Listen to what kids are troubled about; they're learning from every minor thing around them, they need good guidance. Look at the animals around you – you can't speak to em, but figure out if they're surviving, look at how their lives have changed with the development of society. See what they need too.

If God exists, God exists within every man and woman and person around. within every disabled person, trans person, child. within every convict, within every sinner, within each vice. within every rat and cat and pigeon and worm. If you believe humans are formed in the image of God, you can see God's work in the roads and buildings we build, the churches and the schools and the big tall towers that get higher every day. God is found in the sun, in the rocks, in the water. In the wind, and in ripe tomatoes, in juicy oranges, and rotting mushrooms. In the litter, in the cigarettes, in the microplastics that seep into our bodies. In the music and the laughter and the sobbing. In the smell of chocolate, in the warmth of a hug. If we are all God's creations, then our legacy is God's work; what we do is what God is doing.

[Siddhartha rock quote]

If you believe in God, then grow flowers in the earth and build our reality forward in God's image. And if you don't believe in God, well, try not to be too harsh towards those who find meaning in a different way; you may as well grow the flowers too.

So, sure, I'll let the Astrologists have their fun. We have enough in common. Lmk what Aries are supposed to be up to these days, maybe I'll get some good use out of it.

index tags: Philosophy, Religion, Astrology

On Hobbies

2022-10-18

"I like doin stuff, you should try it"

I find immense values in variety. I love trying new things, because each new facet of life provides learnings about nature, about how the world works. Many of the concepts learned in one area are often applicable to others. Do you get why I keep saying learning is great yet?

Some of mine:

Academically, I come from a math and computer science background. Professionally, I've worked as a teacher and a software developer. But all forms of math, science, engineering, and building have always been passions of mine.

I love building stuff. Making robots, writing bots, designing/fabricating musical instruments, woodworking beds and tables.

While I don't consider corporate software development a ~hobby~, per se, I do spend a BUNCH of my time on it every week. So I try to learn all I can, do my best. I've gotten interesting perspectives on the worlds of finance and technology through my professional career, and I've been able to

meet and talk to many interesting people through work. I can try to make the environment better at work and via my work, as much as possible. Wherever you find yourself,

I play music. My parents, very thoughtfully, forced me to play piano growing up. I hated it. Didn't practice. (Liked the theory bits, funny enough, most of that is actually just math). Quit when I was a teen. Though I've loved ~listening~ to music my entire life, thoroughly. During the pandemic, I was alone in an apartment for six months and picked up the guitar. Played a lot, got kinda good, then it got fun. Got back into playing the piano, got a bit into recording and writing and even singing occasionally.

Exercising is a recent hobby, one I wish I fostered more growing up, but one I'm glad I'm fostering now. [shame to not see a man at his strongest by socrates or whoever; mao on exercise]. I run, when I can force myself, but I love walking around ny and climbing (rope and bouldering, with an occasional deep water solo when given the opportunity). I ski and I golf occasionally, very bougie and environmentally questionable, I'm sorry, I know. I'll try anything though, from biking to hiking to wrestling.

I try to enjoy food. It's my (and my family's) way of learning and sharing culture, there are so many interesting cuisines to try. I'm not a great chef, but I do make my attempts. I'll get better with time (I must believe).

I've played some video games. I enjoy em. Notably:

- Hearthstone. Probably the only video game I'd really consider myself good at.
- Super Auto Pets. I'm solid at this one as well, but it's hard to know for sure because there's no competitive ladder.
- Similar with Slay the Spire, hard to know if I'm actually good because it's a singleplayer with too many ascensions to finish – but I've spent enough time to have learned from the game. Roguelites in general give a nice sense of learning and improvement. (Hades was fun too!)
- Breath of the Wild.
- Hidden in Plain Sight.
- A short hike.

I do a bunch of (minor expeditions) into visual arts. I've tried my hand at origami, kirigami, painting, sketching, doodling, photography, graphic design, embroidery, fashion (ie. trying to look cool).

I've recently gotten into birdwatching. I used to despise the pigeons, just a few years ago. They don't get out of your way, they're too used to humans. There's a lot of nature in ny, and it's all trying it's hardest to survive in the world we all find ourselves in. We need to foster a good environment for all of it, for all of us.

I guess I also practice writing in various forms. Getting more into it recently. Here, texting, telling stories. Journalling to gain clarity on my own thoughts. Note-taking and list-making to remember things and keep organized. Sending cards and emails to check-in, reach-out, express gratitude, ask questions, ...

index tags: Hobbies, Music, Guitar, Piano Games, Engineering, Science, Math, Exercise, Birdwatching, Food, Building, Woodworking, Robotics, Software, Writing, Art, Health(care)

On Media

2022-10-19

"I'm gonna pull this out whenever someone asks me what I'm watching"

Media conveys ideas. You learn things from the things you read and watch and listen to. You change because of what you see on the internet and what you hear in the news. You will probably change whilst reading this very site! (if you're paying any attention, I know focus is difficult sometimes).

I like to consume good media. Media I find useful, that I can gain good knowledge or ideas from. Who doesn't? Everyone likes to connect with a hopeful story or interesting (yet relatable) history. People love a good story.

These are some of my favorites, in many mediums and of many genres. Starting, of course, with my favorite medium: words. Here are my thoughts [on fiction \(/posts/on-fiction\)](/posts/on-fiction), [on music \(/posts/on-music\)](/posts/on-music), and [on audiovisual media \(/posts/on-audiovisual-media\)](/posts/on-audiovisual-media) (eg. movies, shows).

what's the thing about the guy who can pinpoint the exact right moment to do something? is that lies of locke lamora? something else?

TODO: cleanup, asdfaowghrndfspaehgwbfsd. always with the organization, this guy.

TODO: disney, pornography

TODO: link non-fic stuff?

index tags: Media, Movies, Shows, Podcasts, YouTube, Fiction, Art, Stories, Books, Pornography

On North American Communists (and similar)

2022-11-01

"The Hometown. Learnings from my people, all of em."

Well. I hated history class growing up. I went to a history-focused high school and did my best to skirt around the system of forcing you to double up one year. Too many dates, too much old boring stuff. Never piqued my fancy, I didn't see the beauty in it.

2020 sure had some stuff happen though, yeah? And as lots of stuff happened, many of my prior assumptions of reality were ruptured; I saw new sights, I learned new things about how the world worked. I've always been doing that; but I started to see some of the bigger pictures as I grew up a bit. At some point near June of that year I figured "*ok, I actually need to understand the past in order to figure out the present*" (and I needed to figure out the present in order to know how to best work into the future).

So, here are the resources that helped me really understand American history.

American Communists (and, y'know, similar)

Some people, in places like Oakland, had been seeing this problem for a very fucking long time. Those who mostly grow up in affluent suburbs don't see the same as the black kids in the city. Material reality shapes us, we'll get there in a minute. Check out what the [BPP](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Panther_Party) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Panther_Party) did – look at this piece by [Sundiata Acoli](http://www.sundiataacoli.org/about) (<http://www.sundiataacoli.org/about>) – [A Brief History of the Black Panther Party and Its Place In the Black Liberation Movement \(2008\)](https://redsails.org/a-brief-history-of-the-black-panther-party/) (<https://redsails.org/a-brief-history-of-the-black-panther-party/>). see what Huey P. Newton [wrote](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary_Suicide) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revolutionary_Suicide), see what Assata [wrote](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assata:_An_Autobiography) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Assata:_An_Autobiography) and [said](https://redsails.org/assata-and-pastors/) (<https://redsails.org/assata-and-pastors/>).

But these thoughts are had worldwide. Those are just some, from black voices in Cali and Cuba. From real Amerikan political prisoners, martyrs, and asylums.

If you want the voice of the hard-working Italian-American working class, grown and raised in East Harlem, [Michael Parenti](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Parenti) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Michael_Parenti) was very influential for me as I started the next steps of my journey (ie. post-teargas). [Blackshirts and Reds](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) and [Inventing Reality](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) were the most influential. But even [The Assassination of Julius Caesar](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/37811.The_Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/37811.The_Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar) posed thought provoking ideas about information from my old latin classes. For the quick intro on Parenti, [this video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP8CzIFhc14) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xP8CzIFhc14>) – well-known in some circles as yellow parenti – is a lecture from 1986. It's a great start, it helped me when I was figuring out how to live life.

Other North American perspectives:

TODO: Malcolm X / Martin Luther King Jr

TODO: links to old speeches by Debs and Lenin letters to American workers

TODO: [Zinn](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/2767.A_People_s_History_of_the_United_States) -> [Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20588662-an-indigenous-peoples-history-of-the-united-states) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/20588662-an-indigenous-peoples-history-of-the-united-states>) -> [J. Sakai](https://readsettlers.org/) (<https://readsettlers.org/>) -> [They Were her Property](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40887375-they-were-her-property) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40887375-they-were-her-property>). Think about these when you think intersectionality; think about these when you understand your childhood, as you process trauma.

TODO: Steinbeck

Next: [Cuba \(/posts/on-latin-america/\)](/posts/on-latin-america/)!

PS – come here later if you want, it may not make sense yet.

Eventually, I started realizing all these people who stood the ground I stand were revolutionaries in their own rites.

The abolitionists fought for change. Harriet Tubman was a [guerilla](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-querilla-warfare) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-querilla-warfare>) of her time. The US Civil War is arguably [America's greatest left-wing revolution](https://gravelinstitute.org/videos/what-they-didnt-teach-you-about-the-civil-war/) (<https://gravelinstitute.org/videos/what-they-didnt-teach-you-about-the-civil-war/>).

Eventually I realized that [George Jackson](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/489637.Blood_in_My_Eye) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/489637.Blood_in_My_Eye) and the BPP (see above) were the modern followers in those footsteps, continuing to fight for those improperly imprisoned and born into struggle.

Reading all of these different books from different wakes of life allowed me to better understand the current time period, how life works, my role here on the pale blue dot.

Seeing these people, understanding how they lived their lives, has given me insight into how I want to live my own. Very tied in with my [philosophies \(/posts/on-philosophy\)](/posts/on-philosophy) and [values \(/posts/on-values\)](/posts/on-values), I strive to learn from wherever possible and make the best use possible of every resource at my disposal.

So now, well, I'm a big fan of history. Still a huge fan of [learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning). Always looking to bring positive growth to the place I call home, always looking to make life brighter for all of the life here trying to live.

Times they are a-changin'; we'll keep at it, changing with em.

TODO: decolonization

TODO: abolition

index tags: Communists, Reading List, North America, America, USA, BPP, Black Panther Party, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr, Huey P. Newton, Revolutionary Suicide, Assata Shakur, Michael Parenti, Blackshirts and Reds, Inventing Reality, Howard Zinn, George Jackson, Blood in my Eye, J. Sakai, Settlers, Stephanie Jones-Rogers, They Were Her Property, Harriet Tubman, Abolition, Decolonization, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

On Latin America and the rest of the Americas

2022-11-02

"As well as all the hard working people, communist and not, fighting for the emancipation of the Latino and indigenous peoples."

Coming from the [North Americas \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america).

Latin America (with a focus on Cuba)

Branching out from the US, hmm, let's see. For Cuba, there's [Che](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che_Guevara) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che_Guevara) and Fidel. I love [Che Guevara Talks to Young People](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People) – I reference it heavily in [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology). For a quick Cuban piece, check out

[On the Ideology of the Cuban Revolution \(1960\) \(https://redsails.org/la-ideologia-de-la-revolucion-cubana/\)](https://redsails.org/la-ideologia-de-la-revolucion-cubana/) by Che. Or, here are a couple longer interviews by Fidel: [One \(https://redsails.org/fidel-and-gawronski/\)](https://redsails.org/fidel-and-gawronski/), [two \(https://redsails.org/fidel-in-quadalajara/\)](https://redsails.org/fidel-in-quadalajara/). Oh, and when you get there, the most important for me: [Guerilla Warfare \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-guerilla-warfare\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-guerilla-warfare) by Che. About the real logistics of [organizing \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing) his troops, what it took to fight those battles, all the real-life little details that matter.

As they report in Havana, [there's a great friendship between cuba and north korea \(https://havanatimes.org/news/the-great-friendship-between-cuba-and-north-korea/\)](https://havanatimes.org/news/the-great-friendship-between-cuba-and-north-korea/). Their struggles are one and the same, against imperialism. They have fought the same battles. Survived the same attack, steely peoples the both of them. Enjoying life; fighting hard to keep doing that.

Head here for more [On Che Guevara \(/posts/on-che-guevara\)](/posts/on-che-guevara).

US + Latin American History

United States backed coups in Latin America

Copied from a thread of Armani's ([@historyoarmani2 \(https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2\)](https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2)'s) [here \(https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2/status/1370837690585866244\)](https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2/status/1370837690585866244):

Guatemala 1954: the USA overthrew Jacobo Arbenz Guzman because he had a land reform program that took over large estates. The CIA believed Guzman was a Communist because he gave more than 200,000 acres of American-owned land to poor people.

Brazil 1964: USA backed military coup overthrew João Goulart because he had ties with communist countries & urged congress to approve land redistribution. The day before he was ousted he proposed a package to congress which would benefit the working class people of Brazil.

Dominican Republic 1965: after getting rid of the dictator Trujillo, Dominicans had their first free election & elected Juan Bosch. His pro castro sentiments, creation of the Dominican Revolutionary Party, & ability to unite all factions of Dominican society threatened the USA.

Chile 1973: the first Marxist president to ever be democratically elected, Salvador Allende was overthrown by the United States and murdered during the coup because he nationalized healthcare, large industries, gave free education and food for children, and redistributed land.

Nicaragua 1980s: Not a coup, but one of the worst cases of US involvement in Latin America by the hands of the cia, which funded Contra death squads against the Popular People's Movement. 50,000+ people were murdered by the US backed Contras

El Salvador 1980s: Not a coup but US funds death squads to destroy the Popular People's Movement, killing 75,000+ people.

Grenada 1980s: The USA invaded Grenada after a People's Revolution took control of the country and started implementing communist policies. The United States wanted to prevent "communism from spreading to other Caribbean countries"

Venezuela 2002: The failed coup backed by the US was an attempt to get Hugo Chavez out of office because he was a self declared socialist who was and had strong ties with Cuba and Fidel Castro.

Haiti 2004: Haiti's first democratically elected President was Jean-Bertrand Aristide. He was overthrown by the US which led to the US occupying the country. He called for former colonizer, France, to pay \$21 billion in restitution

Honduras 2009: Democratically elected president Manuel Zelaya was overthrown by the US when he shifted from his party's center right ideology and began seeking advice from Hugo Chavez to combat poverty, and joined a leftist alliance formed by Cuba and Venezuela

Bolivia 2019: Democratically elected president Evo Morales was overthrown by US backed right wing party when he decided to keep Bolivia's resources in country instead allowing outside businesses to export them

TODO: Bolivia, Venezuela, oh, right, literally all of Latin America other than Cuba.

Speaking of the Cuban–Korean friendship, next up: [Korea \(/posts/on-asia\)](#)!

index tags: Communists, Reading List, South America, Latin America, America, Cuba, Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Evo Morales, RedSails, @historyoarmani2, United States backed coups in Latin America, Guatemala, Brazil, Dominican Republic, Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Grenada, Venezuela, Haiti, Honduras, Bolivia

On Asia

2022–11–03

"We may as well address Mao now, since everyone keeps talking about rent these days (and I'd like to maybe own a house someday)."

Asia (with a focus on Korea, China, and Vietnam)

For Korean perspective on Socialism, check out a bunch of Kim Il–Sung's speeches [here](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/60734264-socialist-education-in-korea) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/60734264-socialist-education-in-korea>). There's a reason he's a hero of the people, he has valuable perspective to share as a guerilla leader.

TODO: quote, che, everyone arrives at marxism through observing nature and drawing their own conclusions

TODO: quote, Korean/Cuban about the shared struggle

TODO: Pachinko

TODO: Vietnam / Ho. RedSails, how I arrived at the third international (ie. which was the party that stood against imperialism. eventually understanding Lenin's words. pull quote, also link.)

TODO: Laos

Continuing on from Korea but staying within Asia (and also suffering under the outward expansion of Imperial Japan), China!

- Mao
 - Zhou Enlai
 - Deng
 - Xi
-

Philippines

- activism
 - [Activist Study \(Araling Aktibista\) \(https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/\)](https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/) – "*The Activist Study (Araling Aktibista), or ARAK as it's known, is part of the required study for activists in the Filipino revolutionary movement. The study includes Mao Zedong's Five Golden Rays, along with lessons on Revolutionary Study and Analysis, the Mass Line, and Democratic Centralism and the Committee System—all essential texts for studying and forming revolutionary practice.*"

TODO: Anakbayan tie-in

India

TODO: link Bhagat Singh

That isn't even getting to the real starts. For that, we'd have to get Europe, to Marx. Following the Paris Commune, in Germany. Then Lenin, in Russia. Working hard and coming up with the Leninism part of the Marxism–Leninism. His four works are essential. And finally, Stalin, the synthesizer of Marxism–Leninism.

To move forward, we'll go back to the "start": Europe time, let's talk about [Germany and Russia \(/posts/on-europe\)](#)

index tags: Communists, Reading List, Asia, Korea, China, Vietnam, Philippines, India, Kim Il-sung, Kim Jong-il, Kim Jong-un, Mao Zedong, Deng Xiaoping, Zhou Enlai, Xi Jinping, Bhagat Singh, ARAK, Anakbayan

On Europe

2022-11-04

"Marx; Lenin; Stalin. If you've been putting it off, you should get to reading em. They're smart folks and they understood how the world works. Listen to what they have to say, and learn from their experiences."

Europe.

It is difficult for me to imagine what 'personal liberty' is enjoyed by an unemployed person, who goes about hungry, and cannot find employment.

Real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home and of bread. Only in such a society is real, and not paper, personal and every other liberty possible.

That's Joseph Stalin for ya. That's a personal favorite quote. He was a man who worked hard, during trying times, to provide the best possible for the people of the world.

TODO: links for all

- Marx
- Lenin
- Stalin
- How history works, how nature is, what society's current iteration entails (ie. Marxism):

- Three Sources and Component Parts
 - diamat
 - Capital – yeah ok, this is the one I haven't read. getting there.
-

Italy

TODO: Antonio Gramsci

TODO: Domenico Losurdo

Soviet History

the illegal dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 accelerated NATO's aggressive expansion east.

From Armani (@historyoarmani2 (<https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2>)) on [this](https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2/status/1583608471022227456?t=GmLVI26uh4YY6NlrSH7oqA&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/historyoarmani2/status/1583608471022227456?t=GmLVI26uh4YY6NlrSH7oqA&s=19>) thread:

1992: NATO begins to move into Adriatic Sea. By 1993 NATO votes to take military action.

1994: NATO bombs Bosnia and Herzegovina

1995: NATO bombs Bosnia and Herzegovina (again)

Between '95 and '98, NATO began shifting its focus to the Middle East.

1999: Poland, Hungary, and Czech Republic become NATO members

1999: NATO bombs Albanian refugees near Gjakova. 73 Kosovo Albanian civilians were killed. 16 were children.

1999: NATO bombs Yugoslavia, killing over 600 civilians.

After these bombings, countries realized it was time to join the North Atlantic alliance or die.

By 2001 NATO forced North Macedonian UÇK fighters to disarm and initiated Article 5 which led to the illegal invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq.

For the next decade NATO ravaged the Middle East, funding terror groups and destabilizing an entire region.

2011- NATO orders a No-Fly Zone over Libya which eventually leads to Gaddafis assassination and the complete destruction of Libya.

By 2014, NATO turned back towards Eastern Europe as China and Russia began aligning themselves economically and militarily.

Since the illegal dissolution of the Soviet Union, NATO has been on a vicious campaign to acquire the globe under a veil of western influence and domination.

But somehow the North Atlantic Treaty Organization has convinced y'all it stands for peace.

TODO: Walter Rodney russian rev

Oh wow and actually, Walter Rodney is the perfect segue into [Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa)

index tags: Communists, Reading List, Europe, Germany, Russia, Italy, Georgia, Karl Marx, Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Antonio Gramsci, Domenico Losurdo, Soviet History, the illegal dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 accelerated NATOs aggressive expansion east, NATO, @historyoarmani2

On Africa

2022-11-05

"Oh man you're gonna see the circle in a second, you're gonna love this"

Alright. With Africa, the resource I go back to most heavily (and that I still probably haven't read in-full, cover-to-cover, full disclosure – just being honest) is [How Europe Underdeveloped Africa](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40630.How_Europe_Underdeveloped_Africa) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40630.How_Europe_Underdeveloped_Africa)

Another great author is Frantz Fanon. Check out [The Wretched of the Earth](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/66933.The_Wretched_of_the_Earth) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/66933.The_Wretched_of_the_Earth)!

Check out [Aimé Césaire](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/86598.Discourse_on_Colonialism) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/86598.Discourse_on_Colonialism) – text [here](https://redsails.org/discours-sur-le-colonialisme/) (<https://redsails.org/discours-sur-le-colonialisme/>).

TODO: okay yeah there's a whole bunch more to talk about here! Very much

TODO: Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara, [Women's Liberation](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3039894-women-s-liberation-and-the-african-freedom-struggle) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/3039894-women-s-liberation-and-the-african-freedom-struggle>), tie back in with Mao in Asia, Women hold up half the sky.

TODO: Tie all that back in with [The Woman Question](https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/) (<https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/>), that includes LGBTQ+ folks too!

TODO: [AAPRP](https://aaprp-intl.org/overview-of-essential-aspects-of-nkrumahism-toureism-ideology-of-the-aaprp/) (<https://aaprp-intl.org/overview-of-essential-aspects-of-nkrumahism-toureism-ideology-of-the-aaprp/>) tie in

TODO: figure out what the heck is going on in australia.

TODO: Kwame Ture speeches

But with that, we can kinda move back into the modern era of the [US \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america), with the slave trade and new learnings in mind. We can now approach works like [Settlers](https://readsettlers.org/) (<https://readsettlers.org/>) and [Black Skin, White Masks](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/274392.Black_Skin_White_Masks) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/274392.Black_Skin_White_Masks) with the context necessary.

We can understand the behaviors of our forefathers and their enemies better in order to forge our understanding of the present, into the future. You can pretty much attack any of the articles or works mentioned so far, you've got a bit of modern history from all the continents at least (missing LOTS of details, ha, I kinda apologize and kinda don't).

Continuing on to the next geographic region on my brain: [Palestine \(/posts/on-the-middle-east\)](/posts/on-the-middle-east)

index tags: Communists, Reading List, Africa, Frantz Fanon, Walter Rodney, Burkina Faso, Thomas Sankara, Aimé Césaire, Osagyefo Kwame Nkrumah, Kwame Nkrumah, Kwame Ture

On Black Liberation

2022-11-06

"This is the tie-in page between North America and Africa"

This is an article dedicated to the lasting impact of the trans-atlantic slave trade.

For now, I'll link the prior related articles:

- [On North America \(/posts/on-north-america\)](/posts/on-north-america)

- [On Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa)

And I'll link the future related articles:

- [On Abolition \(/posts/on-abolition\)](/posts/on-abolition)

And I'll link you to these related readings on the topic, for a good curation of authors to check out:

- [articles on RedSails.org \(https://redsails.org/@black-liberation/\)](https://redsails.org/@black-liberation/)

Continuing on to the next geographic region on my brain: [Palestine \(/posts/on-the-middle-east\)](/posts/on-the-middle-east)

TODO: tags

index tags: Communists, Africa, America, North America, Black Liberation, Black Panther Party, Black Nationalism, Abolition# On the Middle East

2022-11-07

"Mostly concerning the Apartheid state in Palestine rn."

Palestine

TODO: Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine

TODO: Falastiniyat

index tags: Communists, Reading List, Palestine, Israel, Apartheid, Falastiniyat, George Habash, Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, PFLP

On Feminism

2022-11-08

"Women's Liberation, Gender Studies, LGBTQ+ Politics and Media, etc."

It is common to say that something is good in theory but not in practice. I always want to say, then it is not such a good theory, is it?

[\(Catharine A. MacKinnon, 1996\) \(https://redsails.org/what-is-a-white-woman-anyway/\)](https://redsails.org/what-is-a-white-woman-anyway/)

Going to change lots as I iterate here, for now:

Some articles that have shaped my perspective:

- [The Woman Question \(https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/\)](https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/) (2016) by [Lori Watson](#)

<https://read.dukeupress.edu/tsq/article-standard/3/1-2/246/91778/The-Woman-Question>

- [Men value my opinion \(https://redsails.org/los-hombres-valoran-mi-opinion/\)](https://redsails.org/los-hombres-valoran-mi-opinion/) (2020) by [Sobrina de Alguien \(https://redsails.org/@sobri/\)](https://redsails.org/@sobri/)
- [There Is No Unmarked Woman \(https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bmlzZC5uZXR8bXJzLWctZW5nbGlzaHxneDo1MTBiMTNkMzc4NWY3Z](https://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=bmlzZC5uZXR8bXJzLWctZW5nbGlzaHxneDo1MTBiMTNkMzc4NWY3Z) (1994) by [Deborah Tannen \(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deborah_Tannen\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deborah_Tannen)
- [From Practice to Theory, or What is a White Woman Anyway? \(https://redsails.org/what-is-a-white-woman-anyway/\)](https://redsails.org/what-is-a-white-woman-anyway/) (1996) by [Catharine A. MacKinnon \(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catharine_A._MacKinnon\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catharine_A._MacKinnon)
- [Stalinists and Feminazis \(https://redsails.org/stalinists-and-feminazis/\)](https://redsails.org/stalinists-and-feminazis/) (2021) by [Roderic Day \(https://redsails.org/@roderic/\)](https://redsails.org/@roderic/)

More articles by more authors:

- [articles on RedSails.org \(https://redsails.org/@feminism/\)](https://redsails.org/@feminism/)

TODO: sub-genre articles: Pornography, Catharine MacKinnon, Andrea Dworkin, Marxist v Liberal views.

TODO: fiction reading list tie-in?

TODO: brief LGBTQ history. Stonewall riots, AIDS epidemic, links to authors/books.

TODO: links to resources/other compilations of resources that can help kids and young lgbtq folks

TODO: resources for abused women and girls

TODO: resource for children in abusive households (?)

TODO: resources for parents/etc of lgbtq+ kids, to help well-meaning adults get on board when possible. always aim for best solution for kid, provide all relevant parties with the proper resources to have successful conversations around these emotionally-sensitive topics.

TODO: Engels

TODO: Lundy Bancroft

TODO: Index tags

index tags: Resource List, Reading List, Feminism, Communists, Marxist Feminism, LGBTQ+, ACAB, Health(care), Trans Rights, Pornography, Prostitution, The Woman Question, Lori Watson, Men Value My Opinion, Sobrina de Alguien, From Practice to Theory: or What is a White Woman Anyway?, Catharine A. MacKinnon, Stalinists and Feminazis, Roderic Day, RedSails

On Modern (Non-Fiction) Literature

2022-11-20

"There are a bunch of books around. Let's look at a few authors that have materialist perspectives, if not communist ones."

This is assuming you've gone through most of the stuff in October and the first few days of November, which cover a bunch of prerequisites and a bunch of non-fiction literature, organized by geographic location. This is a bucket of stuff that's less geographically specific and doesn't fall into any other categories better (yet).

Modern

The world is changing! For modern resources on technology, check out [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology).

articles

- RedSails
- LASD cops [TANKIEPILLED]

bourgeoisie media, in the minds of billionaires

- Matt Levine Money Stuff
- Bloomberg articles that are pro- Amazon company towns, link Blair Mountain and other
- Shoe Dog
- Snowball
- Signal and the Noise
- Principles
- Michael Lewis – Liar's Poker, The Big Short, Moneyball

also link [fiction recs \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media)

dialectics and incentives within the household, women's liberation

[Why Does He Do That?: Inside the Minds of Angry and Controlling Men](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/224552.Why_Does_He_Do_That_?)
([https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/224552.Why Does He Do That ?](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/224552.Why_Does_He_Do_That_?))

Engels – History of Private Property and the State
Jennette McCurdy
Mao, Sankara

Trans rights

[The Women Question \(https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/\)](https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/) by [Lori Watson](#)
(<https://read.dukeupress.edu/tsq/article-standard/3/1-2/246/91778/The-Woman-Question>).

Porn

[Pornography: Men Possessing Women](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/163256.Pornography)
(<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/163256.Pornography>) by Andrea Dworkin

Linguistics

Because Internet

index tags: Media, Books, Non-Fiction, Articles, LGBTQ+, Trans Rights, Feminism, ACAB, Police, Pornography, Linguistics, Dialectics, Abuse, Matt Levine, Michael Lewis

On Fiction

2022-11-21

"Books, articles, short stories, novellas, zines, and other forms of words."

This may even include casual uncategorized non-fiction, who knows what these iterations might bring.

fiction (shortest to longest)

[Flash Crash \(https://escapepod.org/2019/06/06/escape-pod-683-flash-crash/\)](https://escapepod.org/2019/06/06/escape-pod-683-flash-crash/) by Louis Evans

[17776 \(https://www.sbnation.com/a/17776-football\)](https://www.sbnation.com/a/17776-football) and [20220](https://www.sbnation.com/c/secret-base/21410129/20020) by [Jon Bois \(https://twitter.com/jon_bois\)](https://twitter.com/jon_bois)

[Siddhartha \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha) by Herman Hesse

[Slaughterhouse-Five \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4981.Slaughterhouse_Five\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/4981.Slaughterhouse_Five) by Kurt Vonnegut

[Lies of Locke Lamora \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/29588376-the-lies-of-locke-lamora\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/29588376-the-lies-of-locke-lamora) by Scott Lynch

[The Dispossessed \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13651.The_Dispossessed\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/13651.The_Dispossessed) by Ursula K. Le Guin

[Pachinko \(/posts/on-asia\)](/posts/on-asia) by Lee Min-jin

Poetry

[On Earth We're Briefly Gorgeous \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/41880609-on-earth-we-re-briefly-gorgeous\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/41880609-on-earth-we-re-briefly-gorgeous) by Ocean Vuong

Artistic

[House of Leaves \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/24800.House_of_Leaves\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/24800.House_of_Leaves) by Mark Z. Danielewski

[Exercises in Style \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/319790.Exercises_in_Style\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/319790.Exercises_in_Style) by Raymond Queneau (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Raymond_Queneau)

[Hopscotch \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53413.Hopscotch\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53413.Hopscotch) by Julio Cortázar

To-Read

The following are just books that are on my list to-read. Can't vouch for them, but most come on recommendation:

[A Grain of Wheat \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/836746.A_Grain_of_Wheat\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/836746.A_Grain_of_Wheat) by Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

[One Hundred Years of Solitude](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/320.One_Hundred_Years_of_Solitude)

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/320.One_Hundred_Years_of_Solitude) by Gabriel García Márquez

[Parable of the Sower \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52397.Parable_of_the_Sower\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52397.Parable_of_the_Sower) by Octavia E. Butler

[Ubik \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/22590.Ubik\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/22590.Ubik) by Philip K. Dick

[The Sorrow Of War: A Novel of North Vietnam](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/780889.The_Sorrow_Of_War)

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/780889.The_Sorrow_Of_War) by Bảo Ninh

Some [Émile Zola \(https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4750._mile_Zola\)](https://www.goodreads.com/author/show/4750._mile_Zola).

[All Systems Red \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/32758901-all-systems-red\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/32758901-all-systems-red) and the rest of The Murderbot Diaries by Martha Wells

[For Whom the Bell Tolls](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/46170.For_Whom_the_Bell_Tolls)

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/46170.For_Whom_the_Bell_Tolls) and [The Old Man And The Sea \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1256215.The_Old_Man_And_The_Sea\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/1256215.The_Old_Man_And_The_Sea) by Ernest Hemingway

[Earthlings \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/50269327-earthlings\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/50269327-earthlings) by Sayaka Murata – I liked [Convenience Store Woman \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38357895-convenience-store-woman\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38357895-convenience-store-woman).

[Vita Nostra \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38633526-vita-nostra\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/38633526-vita-nostra) and the rest of the Метаморфозы series by Marina Dyachenko.

[The Fifth Season \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19161852-the-fifth-season\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/19161852-the-fifth-season) by N.K. Jemisin.

[Words Are My Matter \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/29363335-words-are-my-matter\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/29363335-words-are-my-matter) by Ursula K. Le Guin.

[Exhalation \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/41160292-exhalation\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/41160292-exhalation) by Ted Chiang

[Anxious People \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53799686-anxious-people\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53799686-anxious-people) and [A Man Called Ove \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18774964-a-man-called-ove\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/18774964-a-man-called-ove) by Fredrik Backman

[The Skin \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/138456.The_Skin\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/138456.The_Skin) by Curzio Malaparte

index tags: Media List, Reading List, Fiction, Art, Stories, Books

On Music

2022-11-22

"Tunes."

Music

- Sufjan Stevens
- Lucy Dacus
- Slow Pulp
- Alvays
- Parquet Courts
- Ghais Guevara
- badbadnotgood
- Palm
- Funkadelic
- katy kirby
- Texas Sun/Moon
- Emily Yacina (?)
- Ceres and Calypso
- Alex G
- Waxahatchee
- Frank Ocean
- Whitney
- Mitski
- Anderson .Paak
- Japanese Breakfast
- Laura Stevenson
- Adult Mom
- Phantogram
- Manatree
- Justice
- Vince Staples
- Bleached
- The Strokes
- Slothrust
- DJ Earworm / Girl Talk
- Michael Jackson

index tags: Media List, Music, Art

On Audiovisual Media

2022-11-23

"Movies, shows, videos in the news and on the web."

Movies

- Sorry to Bother You
- Certain Women

- King of Devil's Island
- The Wind the Shakes the Barley
- Battleship Potempkin
- Come and See
- Beginners
- Parasite
- Okja
- Snowpiercer
- 12 Angry Men
- In Bruges, Seven Psychopaths, 3 Billboards – Martin McDonagh knows how to write a movie
- The Prestige
- Shenzhen: The Silicon Valley of Hardware
- Dog Day Afternoon
- Nausicaä of the Valley of the Wind
- Grave of the Fireflies
- Castle in the Sky
- Kiki's Delivery Service
- Spirit of the Beehive
- Shawshank Redemption
- Short Term 12
- The Act of Killing
- Fargo
- Bacurau
- Ocean's 11 / Rififi
- Robin Hood

Shows

- Avatar the Last Airbender and it's sequel The Legend of Korra
- Cowboy Bebop
- The Rehearsal – (check thoughts to roderic)
- Black Sails
- Bojack Horseman

youtube

- vihart
- northernlion

TODO: link the vihart vid that's a good example of dialectics in nature.

podcasts

- 5-4
- blowback
- revleftradio

TODO: Kids section?

index tags: Media List, Movies, Shows, Podcasts, YouTube

On Che Guevara

2022-12-01

"If you tremble with indignation at every injustice then you are a comrade of mine. ~Che Guevara' ~Aaron Steel"

If you tremble with indignation at every injustice then you are a comrade of mine.

At the risk of seeming ridiculous, let me say that the true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality.

Never forget that technology is a weapon. If you feel the world is not as perfect as it should be, then you must struggle to put the weapon of technology at the service of society. You must rescue society before that can be accomplished, so that technology benefits the greatest number of human beings possible, so that we can build the society of tomorrow—whatever name you choose to give it—the society we dream of and that we call – as it was called by the founder of scientific socialism – communism.

(see: [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology))

Che Guevara

I've spoken about Che already in [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology\)](/posts/on-technology) and [On Latin America \(/posts/on-latin-america\)](/posts/on-latin-america). In those, I discuss Che's Speech "[Technology is a Weapon](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People)" (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People) and give a general run-down of Cuba, respectively.

In this article, I'm going to get into more of my specific notes from some of his texts and speeches.

In "Something new in the Americas", Che discusses the tasks and responsibilities he saw that would fall to the coming generations.

In "Never forget, technology is a weapon", Che discusses the role of technology within society and the corollary role of technology-builders. This was a speech directed to architecture students, rather than the politically-driven crowds that Che often spoke to. As an engineer, as someone who works to build technology for society, the ideas resonated with me very heavily. The ideas conveyed in this speech have been fundamental towards my growth as an engineer and organizer.

And in Guerilla Warfare, Che goes over his golden rules for combat and outlines the logistics undertaken in order to fight and overthrow the Batista regime. He aims to show that with the support of the people, with inspired troops who serve as faithful compañeros, great success is

possible against a powerful enemy. And he outlines the day-to-day details necessary to consider for fighters who wanted to be successful in that fight. In Che's words:

This is not a model but a description of one reality, of how the organization worked in one country where it proved possible to achieve triumph over an army that was fairly well organized and armed.

TODO: also I want to talk more about Che generally, discuss how inspiring he's been worldwide and to me personally. He's December 1st, after all! The first of the specifics.

Something new in the Americas

[Speech \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che Guevara Talks to Young People\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People)

- Civilization never made an analysis with the necessary depth, from a scientific viewpoint, of the role of moral and spiritual values over the course of history. That is the most important intellectual challenge that the twentieth century has left to youth.
 - Che realized the futility of working alone to achieve something great for humanity (childhood dream of being a revered medical researcher) – revolution requires an entire people who are mobilized, who know how to use arms and practice unity in combat.
 - Young people must retain their freshness and enthusiasm and learn to lead those who are older and have lost those. They must stay political, to be apolitical is to turn their back on the movements of the world.
 - *"To the powerful masters we represent all that is absurd, negative, irreverent, and disruptive in this America that they so despise and scorn,"* Guevara told the students at the University of Havana in March 1960. But to the great mass of the people of the Americas, *"we represent everything noble, sincere and combative."*
 - *"Sin cuota pero sin bota"* – without a quota but without the boot
 - *"Although it may seem paradoxical, I would also like to greet today the delegation representing the purest of the North American people. [Ovation] I would like to salute them not only because the North American people are not to blame for the barbarity and injustice of their rulers, but also because they are innocent victims of the rage of all the peoples of the world, who sometimes confuse a social system with a people."*
-

Never forget, technology is a weapon

[Speech \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che Guevara Talks to Young People\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/405935.Che_Guevara_Talks_to_Young_People)

- "Every true man must feel on his own cheek the blow to the cheek of another." ~José Martí
- Behind technology there is always someone controlling it; and that someone is society. You can either be for or against that society. There are those in the world who think that exploitation is good and there are those who think it is bad and must be ended. And even when there is no discussion of politics, a political being cannot renounce this inherent aspect of the human condition.
- Never forget that technology is a weapon. If you feel the world is not as perfect as it should be, then you must struggle to put the weapon of technology at the service of society. You must rescue society before that can be accomplished, so that technology benefits the greatest number of human beings possible, so that we can build the society of tomorrow—whatever name you choose to give it—the society we dream of and that we call – as it was called by the founder of scientific socialism – communism.

[Guerilla Warfare \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-guerilla-warfare\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6739402-guerilla-warfare)

Seven Golden Rules:

- Do not engage in a fight that cannot be won.
- Move continuously, hit and run.
- Use the enemy as the main supplier of weapons.
- Hide your movements.
- Make use of the element of surprise in military actions.
- Form new columns once some power has been won.
- In general, proceed through three phases: strategic defense, balance between the possibilities of enemy action and guerrilla action, and finally the total annihilation of the adversary.

Notes:

- Guerrillas need land they're thoroughly familiar with (including good maneuverability, hiding, and with the support of the people in semi-populated areas) → this leads them to agrarian revolution, since the main reform in those types of locations is changing the form of land ownership.
- pulls examples of Mao in China, Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam, Algeria, Puerto Rico
- continuous blows to the enemy to create the illusion they're always surrounded
- Heavy flexibility, heavy consideration of resources are required. Attrition is the method of attack until the fields are more equal.
- Important guerrilla tactics: perfect knowledge of the area; surveillance and foresight as to the lines of escape; vigilance over all the secondary roads that might bring in reinforcements to the point of attack; intimacy with people in the zone so as to ensure their help in regard to supplies, transport, and temporary or permanent hiding places if it becomes necessary to leave wounded compañeros behind; numerical superiority at a chosen point of action; total mobility; and the possibility of counting on reserves
- Need to acquire arms and ammunition via the enemy
- The conditions for a good social living environment are antithetical to favorable guerrilla warfare environments
- Urban warfare must be extremely discreet and must not operate with the same large-scale goals as warfare under favorable conditions – urban attacks must focus on specific tactical goals in order to effectively drive the movement forward
- But the guerrilla fighter, as the conscious element of the vanguard of the people, must display the moral conduct of a true priest of the desired reform. To the stoicism forced by the difficult conditions of warfare should be added an austerity born of rigid self-control that prevents a single excess, a single slip, whatever the circumstances. The guerrilla soldier should be an ascetic.
- Guerrillas as social reformers: must explain the necessity of change and demonstrate the necessity of armed revolution. They must work towards progressive radicalization.
- Guerrilla as a combatant: physical, mental, and moral qualities required. Should ideally be familiar with the environment. They should be vigilant and audacious; ready to risk their lives but unwilling to risk unnecessarily; cautiously optimistic for the best after analyzing and understanding the dangers/possibilities. They must be close-lipped even among comrades due to infiltration attempts.
- The guerrilla fighter must never for any reason leave a wounded compañero at the mercy

of the enemy troops, because this means abandoning him or her to an almost certain death. At whatever cost, the wounded must be removed from the combat zone to a secure place. The greatest exertions and the greatest risks must be taken in this task. The guerrilla soldier must be an extraordinary compañero.

- Guerillas must be indefatigable even when exhaustion seems unbearable. They must be able to endure a lack of food, water, clothing, and shelter. They must also be able to cure sickness and wounds by nature alone within the guerilla zone. They must have an iron constitution in order to become part of the landscape in which they fight. Generally between 25–35 (old enough to consciously make the decision) but 16–65 can be useful and accepted in certain cases. They must carry their homes and armaments on their back, which they should do efficiently and meticulously. To do this, they must have an ideal driving them. They should be able to survive on their own if separated
- The normal routine is the long hike. Let us take the example of a mountain guerrilla fighter located in wooded regions under constant enemy harassment. In these conditions the guerrilla band moves during daylight hours, without eating, in order to alter its position; when night arrives, camp is set up in a clearing near a water supply according to a routine, each group assembling in order to eat together; at dusk the fires are lighted with whatever is around.
- Promotions based on courage, ability, and spirit of sacrifice.
- If encircled, guerillas must hold off the enemy until nightfall, find the best path out, and escape in silence under the cover of darkness. It is extremely difficult to prevent this type of escape.
- The man in the attacking vanguard must always fall into ambush – this creates a growing fear of death without escape for the leader of enemy attack to the point that nobody wants to be the vanguard. Without a vanguard, the enemy can no longer move forward.
- In setting up supply lines, guerillas must pay for the things they receive; in times of extreme economic downturn, they must give bonds or promissory notes ("bonds of hope"). Once food can be centralized/organized, the guerilla force can act as the dotp of a small planned economy in order to help the constituency of the area.
- Essential foods: meat, salt, vegetables, starches, or grains
- Mules are great for transport under night. Waypoint houses are a necessity to prevent daytime visibility of supply movements.
- Maintaining great relationships with the peasants and being smart about sourcing food and other necessities will allow for a lasting supply for the entire troop.
- The council — or central department of justice, revolutionary laws, and administration — is one of the vital features of a guerrilla army fully constituted and with its own territory.
- Use stereotypes to your advantage, eg. women as couriers to avoid interference and evade harsher punishment
- Relied heavily on breaking immediate communications of the enemy → how is removing competitive advantage possible within modern technology and communications infrastructure?
- Sabotage can target national scale determined objectives (eg. taking out communications/railroads) or local lines of combat.
- Leather work (shoes, knapsacks, cartridge belts) and armories (weapon repair, explosives) are important industries in guerilla warfare. Iron and tin products are useful for construction. Communications are an important internal industry and lives depend on quick comms. Tobacco, salt, and leather are important ingredients to get. Storing beef in the form of dried jerky is great in uncertain circumstances.
- Propaganda comes in two types: propaganda originating outside free territory (from the national civil organization) and propaganda originating within. The functions of both are related and should be organized simultaneously. It is generally preferable to go with truth in the long term and the most captivating methods of disseminating propaganda should

be utilized. Propaganda should promote the ideals and truths of the struggle to gain and keep support from the masses.

- Need good intelligence. Get people (especially women) to infiltrate. Correct information is extremely important. Infiltrated groups have infrastructure laid to sow doubt and fear which can be snowballed/controlled into favorable circumstances.
- When there is a large liberated area and recruits do not have to go through the guerilla struggle, schools are necessary to train and prepare soldiers. These should teach combat and recoup supplies and indoctrinate to establish a great ideological foundation within its members.
- *"This is not a model but a description of one reality, of how the organization worked in one country where it proved possible to achieve triumph over an army that was fairly well organized and armed."*
- The participation of the people in politics, that is to say, in the expression of their own desires made into laws, decrees, and resolutions, should be constant. Need to foster community and mutual aid, public support and popular participation.

index tags: Reading Notes, Che Guevara, Never Forget: Technology is a Weapon, Something New in the Americas, Guerilla Warfare, Cuba, Seven Golden Rules, Logistics, José Martí

On Michael Parenti

2022-12-02

"Mikey P from New Yawk"

In the United States, for over a hundred years, the ruling interests tirelessly propagated anticommunism among the populace, until it became more like a religious orthodoxy than a political analysis. During the cold war, the anticommunist ideological framework could transform any data about existing communist societies into hostile evidence. If the Soviets refused to negotiate a point, they were intransigent and belligerent; if they appeared willing to make concessions, this was but a skillful ploy to put us off our guard. By opposing arms limitations, they would have demonstrated their aggressive intent; but when in fact they supported most armament treaties, it was because they were mendacious and manipulative. If the churches in the USSR were empty, this demonstrated that religion was suppressed; but if the churches were full, this meant the people were rejecting the regime's atheistic ideology. If the workers went on strike (as happened on infrequent occasions), this was evidence of their alienation from the collectivist system; if they didn't go on strike, this was because they were intimidated and lacked freedom. A scarcity of consumer goods demonstrated the failure of the economic system; an improvement in consumer supplies meant only that the leaders were attempting to placate a restive population and so maintain a firmer hold over them.

The essence of capitalism is to turn nature into commodities and commodities into capital. The live green earth is transformed into dead gold bricks, with luxury items for the few and toxic slag heaps for the many. The glittering mansion overlooks a vast sprawl of shanty towns, wherein a desperate, demoralized humanity is kept in line with drugs, television, and armed force.

In pursuit of counterrevolution and in the name of freedom, U.S. forces or U.S.-supported surrogate forces slaughtered 2,000,000 North Koreans in a three-year war; 3,000,000 Vietnamese; over 500,000 in aerial wars over Laos and Cambodia; over 1,500,000 in Angola; over 1,000,000 in Mozambique; over 500,000 in Afghanistan; 500,000 to 1,000,000 in Indonesia; 200,000 in East Timor; 100,000 in Nicaragua (combining the Somoza and Reagan eras); over 100,000 in Guatemala (plus an additional 40,000 disappeared); over 700,000 in Iraq; 3 over 60,000 in El Salvador; 30,000 in the "dirty war" of Argentina (though the government admits to only 9,000); 35,000 in Taiwan, when the Kuomintang military arrived from China; 20,000 in Chile; and many thousands in Haiti, Panama, Grenada, Brazil, South Africa, Western Sahara, Zaire, Turkey, and dozens of other countries, in what amounts to a free-market world holocaust.

Michael Parenti

There's much to be said for Parenti. His lectures are short and very easily accessible.

And his history books are some of the first that helped shaped my understanding of history as it occurred. He outlines the perspectives of historical forces well; he demonstrates the incentives at play during some brutal periods of history.

I came to Parenti because of twitter user Aren LeBrun ([@proustmalone](https://twitter.com/proustmalone) (<https://twitter.com/proustmalone>)). Aren is well-spoken and cutting, and he mentioned that he got much of his insight into the way the world works from reading Parenti. So I decided to put him on the ever-growing list of books-to-read.

While looking for one to read, his most popular book – [The Assassination of Julius Caesar](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/37811.The_Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/37811.The_Assassination_of_Julius_Caesar) – happened to be in an old area of interest. I had a bit of Ancient Rome in the brain already, so I thought it would be a great place to start.

TODO: say stuff about it, Gibbons quote, notes

As I was reading, I searched Parenti online. I think I had watched a lecture (or at least some clips) at this point. Online, many recommended [Blackshirts and Reds](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) as an essential work. I was interested, I've always known my modern history is a weak point, so I read it in a couple hours.

TODO: say stuff about it, USSR quote – compare to today, notes

After that, I decided to check out [Inventing Reality](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality). This was another really great read that helped me gain clarity on how history went down. Parenti does a great job of pulling relevant newspaper clippings while illustrating the events that occurred.

TODO: notes

TODO: link yellow parenti, other lectures

TODO: Gibbons quote – Caesar?

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [Blackshirts and Reds](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/404273.Blackshirts_and_Reds) (1997) – A great read on WW2 and Cold War history, fairly short and goes pretty quick.
 - [Anticommunism & Wonderland](https://redsails.org/anticommunism-and-wonderland/) (<https://redsails.org/anticommunism-and-wonderland/>) (1997) – These are chapters 3 and 4 of Blackshirts and Reds, which serve as a good standalone work if you want something shorter to start.
 - [Inventing Reality](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) (https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) (1986) – A Marxist–Leninist take on news media; similar to Chomsky's Manufacturing Consent, but better and published first.
 - [Friendly Feudalism: The Tibet Myth](https://redsails.org/friendly-feudalism/) (<https://redsails.org/friendly-feudalism/>) (2007)
-

Inventing Reality

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/673719.Inventing_Reality) (1986)

notes

- Media serves to portray (and normalize) existing power structures and maintain the status quo. Black people are overrepresented in bad news stories. Black people and women are underrepresented in news media.
- The "minimal effect" of media (ie. re-enforcing current stances and world view) is the intended effect. Media promotes tunnel vision, explaining the small-picture cause and effect without looking at larger causal links between wealth/power/policy.
- "The existing media market of ideas is more like the larger economic market of which it is a part: oligopolistic and accessible mostly to those who possess vast amounts of capital, or who hold views that are pleasing to the possessors of capital."
- Real news is more expensive than canned features and soft stuff is also less offensive (more appealing to advertisers)
- Must follow direct (and implied) orders from bosses/owners; must not offend advertisers; must maintain reader goodwill.
- Discussion of "freedom of press" centers around government influence or limitation, whereas censorship generally occurs in the private sector powered by owners/advertisers who determine what gets shown to the public.
- There is a conditional autonomy that grants power to those who support the ideals of those already in power; editors only become (and stay) editors if the owners support their work. Thus, editors serve as conduits of owner censorship rather than resistors to it. Similarly, reporters are given autonomy so long as their work is satisfactory to their masters.
- "The press does not speak the voice of the nation. It does not even speak the voice of

those who write for it." ~Fanny Wright, 1829

- All reporting is influenced by prior biases and current incentives, which serve to promote the status quo. "Total objectivity" doesn't exist (perception is inescapably biased) and in journalism it is used to prevent journalists from injecting their own opinions or asking too many uncomfortable questions. Orthodoxy masks itself as objectivity.
- Cannot ask questions that go against the class interests of the owning class: Why are wealth and power so unequally distributed between classes within nations and between developed and Third World nations? Why do corporations have so much power and citizens so little? Why is there so much underemployment, want, and economic insecurity in so many countries in which capitalism is said to be working so well? Why does the United States need a global network of military bases around the world? And why are US leaders hostile toward any nation that charts an independent course, one that might infringe upon the interests of multinational corporate investors?
- "Objectivity is believing those in power and printing their press releases"
- it is not the laziness that is allowing the manipulation; it is the manipulative control that encourages and rewards the lazy, superficial ("objective") approach.
- Maintain appearances via a) ideological congruity between the working press and media owners, b) limited range of views that don't question the status quo, c) anticipatory self-censorship, d) rewards for conforming to the existing system, e) obvious instances of coercion, censorship, and bias are explained away as outliers or isolated issues, f) suppression is not often felt, so journalists perceive autonomy guided by integrity despite the actual control editors and owners have.
- Lots of CIA propaganda comes in (directly via journalists, indirectly via blowback articles initially published elsewhere).
- Although corporate mishaps may be reported on, the underlying class interests and the rippling out of imperialism are both ignored. Foreign policy and US global interventionism are glistened over at best.
- Washington Post is owned by Jeff Bezos
- Consumer ideology fostered via the 60–80% of print space and 22% of television time dedicated to advertising as well as during the programming that emphasizes spending. The consumer ideology fabricates false needs and panders in a false way to real needs. Media teaches people to define their needs and lifestyles according to the dictates of the commodity market.
- Big business enhances its legitimacy and social hegemony by portraying itself as society's Grand Provider.
- Advertising shows us our want and frustration are products of our own deficiency. They advertise not only the consumer wares but also the capitalist system and normalize a gluttonous American lifestyle.
- Today, one-third of all corporate advertising is directed at influencing the public on political and ideological issues as opposed to pushing consumer goods.
- Public service announcements are monopolized by the Advertising Council, a nonprofit corporation run by corporate, network, and bank officials. They run with the theme: Personal charity, individual effort, and neighborly good-will can solve any mess. Collectivist, class-oriented, political actions and governmental regulations are not needed in a land of self-reliant volunteers. The goal is to change individual behavior, not social conditions.
- Gulf war spoken about through football euphemisms, abstracts the slaughter of a people to a mere strategic victory by a better player.
- Weather is only spoken about within the smaller context of "what's it like out today?" and the underlying causes are not discussed. Bad trends for the world are ignored while focus is directed to the immediate niceness of warming weather. The usefulness of snow is ignored and low snowfall is lauded despite the lack of snow making it difficult for

northern climes to renew themselves.

- News media promotes business perspectives but rarely lend a voice to the labor perspective. The economy is presented as something business and the government attend to while organized labor tags along as a junior partner that occasionally threatens the system.
- Owners and managers are painted as offering concessions patiently and earnestly while strikers are portrayed as violent, crazy, and greedy.
- Worker viewpoints aren't covered, the causes of strikes aren't covered, solidarity between strikers and unions isn't covered.
- The government is portrayed as a neutral arbiter working towards the "national interest" of restarting production.
- This portrayal of organized labor creates a negative view in the eyes of the people, even those with otherwise progressive views. This discourages unionization and creates suspicion around labor organizations.
- There exists not only public opinion but media opinions about public opinion. What the people think is one thing; what is publicized about what they think can be something else. Despite not controlling opinions, the news can control opinion visibility. Protestors are painted in a negative light while ignoring the underlying causes of the protests.
- The news reported a move towards conservatism while ignoring pro-labor, anti-war, anti-corporation, anti-imperialist, and anti-governance protests, strikes, and movements during the 70s and 80s.
- The right generally cannot stir popular support for economic policies that support pentagon funding or corporate tax cuts and therefore relies on non-economic issues such as busing, school prayer, porn, and abortions.
- Centrist media generally favors conservative viewpoints on free-enterprise capitalism, labor unions, protest, etc. even if they don't see eye to eye on all issues.
- Fraudulent claims are repeated until they're accepted as true, such as Russian interference.
- The view on the left that academia generally sides with the corporate-military establishment is ignored while the view on the right that academia is filled with "cultural marxism" and radical political correctness pervades the media.
- Dukakis had popular policy support and an electorate that was ready for change after eight years of Reagan. Low voter turnout was spurned by the ineffectuality of the Democratic candidate and low enthusiasm for either candidate. This led to the Bush presidency, which was used to signal a turn towards conservatism.
- Accuracy in Media attacks liberal bias while receiving syndicate support and public exposure that no leftist media can reach.
- Conservative christian groups receive millions in funding while leftist Christian groups who support housing and war reforms generally don't have enough financial backing to gain media exposure.
- Protests are covered with a bias against protestors. Intersectional issues are covered as people protesting "various issues" since the press treats political issues as isolated, unrelated events.
- The press: ignores and undercounts leftist protests; favors rightist protests for eg. abortion and anticommunist movements; ignores the underlying issues being protested while covering the events (not lending visibility to chants or speeches given) and scants content through single-issue reductionism (eg. MLK was a good civil rights leader but his criticisms of the US economic system are largely unpublicized, Malcolm X was a militant black separatist whose anti-imperialist views were also uncovered, both got assassinated when they started linking racial issues to class and economic conditions); trivialization and marginalization of protests for their surface-level appearances (anarchists = set things on fire); and exaggeration of protestor violence while ignoring the state violence being

protested.

- The media lumps together syndicalism, anarchism, communism, etc into a danger to the American life; opposition to the institutions of the powerful are taken as opposition to America itself.
- Anti-red sentiment was present during Eugene Debs' attempts to improve railway working conditions and increased during the Russian revolution era. In 1919, fourteen nations (including Britain, France, and the US) sent an expeditary force to overthrow the new Russian gov. When this failed, the media picked up stories about Russia wanting war with the US and attacking India.
- Those leading and participating in strikes were denounced and arrested. Socialists who won congress seats were denied them. These efforts killed the strikes, brought wages down, and decimated the ranks of unions.
- At the same time, Mussolini was praised for bringing back the Italian economy and Hitler was reported as "softening down" in 1933. This led to news pleading great takes such as, "let's give Adolf a chance"
- After WW2, cold war propaganda was a way to inculcate the people with want for more government military and defense spending. This was a boon to the corporations that fulfilled such contracts. The anticommunist sentiment led to laws decreasing the efficacy of unions by taking away the right to work, forcing unions to accept corporate spies, and allowing owners to refuse to bargain collectively. CIO had to expell many unions, membership reduced by a quarter, and the union movement lost momentum it never regained. Despite all of this, the press still called the Truman admin "soft on communism"
- McCarthy came around. Reporters knew he was a liar and power manipulator but reported what he said due to "objectivity"; the press played his lies for years despite his claims having been proven false and objectivity was mocked when the story's almost always favored McCarthy. Opposition to McCarthy challenged his methods as "ineffective against communism" but did not challenge the assumption that communists deserved persecution for their political associations and beliefs. His undoing was the eventual targeting of the Republican Eisenhower admin, when conservative publishers decided to stop publishing him.
- Red peril propagated by gov-industrial-media complex because of 1) limiting labor movements/gains, 2) distracting from the crises of capitalism, 3) marshaling public support for defense spending.
- Whether or not fascists and capitalists believe their rhetoric, their ability to mass distribute it limits political discourse and consciousness.
- Anti-communist and anti-soviet genuflection was commonplace for liberal and leftist intellectuals. This showing worsened anti-communist hysteria around the cold war and reduced the leftist space, rather than lending them credibility. Hardliners who chose to give nuanced pros/cons of the USSR (refusing to take a purely anticommunist stance) were rejected by those on the anticommunist left.
- In the early 80s, the USSR reduced their arms and called on the US to do the same. This was ignored by the press or dismissed as propaganda initiatives, and US News reported a Soviet arms buildup while they were calling for cutbacks. When the Soviets agreed to an arms freeze with the US, this wasn't reported on by major news media.
- The Red Menace image propagated by government and media repeatedly attempted to direct popular discontent away from domestic realities (poverty, riots, strikes due to the effects of capitalism) and toward imaginary foes.
- Lithuania: fascist in 1926; "democratic" in 1990 post-communism but with striking similarities to fascist Lithuania.
- Reformist eastern european governments cut price controls/subsidies for food/housing/transportation/clothing, healthcare, education; they sold lands, factories, and news media to rich westerners; they removed much progress in the ways of women's

rights. This led to severe economic recessions, drops in real economic income, increased crime rates, and more corruption in places like Poland and Hungary.

- Homelessness was caused by family quarrels and nether world restlessness. Freed from the restrictions of communism, people now could pursue their preferred life-style, abandoning their domiciles and sleeping on the floors of train stations. Not once did the Times suggest that the new government and the free market itself—with its unemployment, wage cuts, inflation, and a doubling of rents—had anything to do with the homeless families of Hungary
- The major press did not reveal much of the knowledge they held about the Vietnam war and the US atrocities committed; reporters were expected to share the military's view of the war and its progress. Those who did try to share these stories and images found difficulties publishing and were banned from returning by the US-supported South Vietnamese gov. Despite the reporting, the underlying goals of US intervention were rarely questioned – the criticism lay mostly in the effectiveness and necessity of the tactics used. The rationale for the war was avoided by the media, the war was a "blunder" rather than an atrocity, and the post-war state of vietnam was due to "economic failure" rather than destruction of capital by US military forces.
- In Chile, Allende was democratically elected and then couped by a fascist Pinochet. Allende was villainized while Pinochet was portrayed as a hero of the economy (despite the lower classes being far worse off) – The Times advocated for Pinochet's dictatorship over democracy for achieving economic growth but conceded that "left behind [were] large numbers of the urban poor, who live less well today than they did 15 years ago."
- Grenada, 1983: US invaded. Media focused on how we were doing rather than what we were doing. False claim ("rescuing students") used to justify the invasion despite the students denying any threat or inability to leave the island (this was largely ignored by the media). Media exaggerated Cuban presence and went along with Reagan's expansions of scope ("rescuing the Caribbean" as opposed to just students)
- This treatment by the media can be observed in Cuba, Zaire, Guatemala, El Salvador, Indonesia, East Timor, South Africa, Cambodia, Turkey, the Dominican Republic, the entire Arab world, including Palestine, and most other Third World nations and regions. The media 1) accepts the White House narratives, 2) downplays reactionary repression as well as the US' role in it, 3) suppresses the third world's struggle for national independence, economic justice, and revolutionary change, and 4) reduces these struggles to encounters between the virtuous US and it's savage/demonic adversaries.
- Nicaragua: Sandinistas were blamed as totalitarian in the media while the US funded a contra war and embargoed the country. Democracy was criticized when it legitimately elected the Sandinistas in 1984 but was accepted without question when US-backed candidates were elected in 1990 based on promises that the war and embargo would stop. The media blamed the Sandinistas management of the economy more than the contra war or the embargo, but in reality they were voting for an end to war more than they were voting out the Sandinistas.
- Panama: Omar Torrijos (populist-reformist who worked with communist Cuba and extracted money from businesses/banks to fund social programs). Got killed via exploding plane in 1981, likely by the CIA via funding to Manuel Noriega. Noriega was a known drug and weapons runner, but after his allegiance to the US waned he was villainized and the US invaded. The media covered their invasion as liberation, ignored popular working-class support of Noriega, and didn't give info on civilian casualties due to lack of verification (despite citing an insane 80k–100k deaths by communism in Romania at the same time). The demonization of Manuel Noriega continued in full force during the invasion of his country, thereby reversing the roles of aggressor and victim. Deposed officials from Noriega's gov were jailed and kept without trial while crime/poverty/destitution increased under the US-backed Endara gov.

- Iraq: Confirmed Iraq–Kuwait interactions weren't a UN or US concern, went into Kuwait; Bush used this opportunity to claim Saddam Hussein was going to control all oil reserves and destroy Israel. When Iraq attacked Israel in retaliation to massive US aerial attacks, this was used to paint Iraq as engaging in a conflict that the US in fact incited. The media also highlighted the possibility of nuclear arms in Iraq while not discussing why this was more of a threat than the nuclear powers in China, Pakistan, Israel, or South Africa. No questions were asked about why other invaders (Syria on Lebanon, Israel on Lebanon, SA on Angola, Indonesia on East Timor, etc.) were ignored while Iraq's aggression on Kuwait was used to demonize Hussein and go to war with Iraq. Iraq's consistent demonization was used to reverse the roles of victim and victimizer. Iraq went from a rather highly urbanized and mechanized society to relegation to a pre-industrial age with the disabilities of postindustrial dependence on energy and technology. The press gave almost no attention to the real reasons for the war (protect interests/profits of oil cartels, beat Iraq into submission, boost military budget, drive the savings and loan scandal off the news, and bolster Bush's image as a bold leader).
- When the UN criticized the White House line it was ignored in the news; when they went along with WH policy, the media gave great attention to the organization.
- Haiti: Jean–Bertrand Aristides also villainized by media and his call for a minimum wage, land reform, enforcement of taxation were ignored. Replaced by US–supported Jacque Honorat. Same message of "if democracy picks a leftist leader, democracy has to go."
- Any challenge to the privileged class order is portrayed as an attack on all social order and an invitation to "chaos"; any revolutionary or even reformist action is portrayed as "economic mismanagement."
- Focus is put on the "middle–class," generally a privileged petty bourgeoisie, in order to paint discontent at leftist leaders. Those who lose power, privileges, and wealth under populist leaders are given a voice but rarely are peasants interviewed.
- The media thus: 1) doesn't say anything positive about democratic economic reforms of a leftist gov, 2) can only show sympathy for the wealthy and privileged unless a peasant shows disdain for the populist gov, 3) say nothing about devastating wars, embargoes, sanctions, and 4) assume economic adversity is due to mismanagement.
- Most common form of media misrepresentation is omission.
- When we see that news selectivity is likely to be on the side of those who have power, position, and wealth, we move from a liberal complaint about the press's poor performance to a radical analysis of how the press fulfills its system–supporting function all too well
- Transmitting information at face value without examining its veracity maintains a noncommittal "objectivity" while propagating false information.
- "Both sides" is often two variations on what's essentially the same side.
- Framing and labeling also paint an impression without necessarily providing supporting evidence for the conclusions implied.
- Many stories are "neutralized" so as to not evoke too much emotion; those who complain about social inequities and popular grievances are painted as overwrought.
- Passive voice to avoid saying who did the killing when "killing of civilians has left 75,000 dead"
- Scanting content to only discuss trivialities and surface level news without discussing the underlying issues is used to give a feeling of understanding without presenting the full story.
- It is said that cameras don't lie. But we must remember that liars use cameras.
- Music and images are both used to pain impressions and set the mood.
- The goal of the owning class, as Marx and Engels put it, is to present "a particular interest as general or the 'general interest' as ruling."⁸ This indeed is what the press does, as I have tried to demonstrate throughout this book, treating a wide range of subjects from a

ruling-class perspective but presenting this perspective as the objective, general one, as representative of things as they really are

- In providing coverage to maintain credibility, the ruling interests are sometimes left to the back burner. Persistent coverage of the war in Vietnam, given with upbeat predictions and anticommunist rationales, were not enough to outweigh the costly conflict.
- there is an element of struggle and indeterminacy in all our social institutions and political culture.

index tags: Communists, Reading List, Reading Notes North America, America, USA, New York, Michael Parenti, Parenti, Blackshirts and Reds: Rational Fascism and the Overthrow of Communism, Inventing Reality: The Politics of News Media, The Assassination of Julius Caesar: A People's History of Ancient Rome, @proustmalone, Aren LeBrun

On Covid

2022-12-03

"The (Ongoing) Pandemic."

Alright. This post is going to be a composite of:

- current world data links
- links to current thoughts from doctors/etc about what people should do (ie. wear an n95 or better mask, especially when you're around other people who may need to be there to survive – they could be immunocompromised or otherwise vulnerable)
- strategies used around the world and results
- personal thoughts re ^

TODO: all that, and maybe more

index tags: Resource List, Covid, Pandemic

On Einstein

2022-12-04

"Another notable communist."

While I started developing an interest in figuring out the path forward into the future, as I stumbled into communist texts, I came across many famous figures whose politics had been previously obscured or unmentioned while learning about them in history classes.

The first of these is Einstein. He put forth good effort into promoting Socialism as an ideology and wrote his summarized thoughts in his article [Why Socialism?](https://monthlyreview.org/2009/05/01/why-socialism/) (<https://monthlyreview.org/2009/05/01/why-socialism/>), published in the [Monthly Review](#)

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monthly_Review) originally in May 1949.

Although I don't agree with all of Einstein's views, he was forward thinking and he applied scientific thought to the problems of society to reach his conclusions. It's a short article that I recommend you read in full, but here are a couple quotes that show what he's getting at:

Man is, at one and the same time, a solitary being and a social being. As a solitary being, he attempts to protect his own existence and that of those who are closest to him, to satisfy his personal desires, and to develop his innate abilities. As a social being, he seeks to gain the recognition and affection of his fellow human beings, to share in their pleasures, to comfort them in their sorrows, and to improve their conditions of life. Only the existence of these varied, frequently conflicting, strivings accounts for the special character of a man, and their specific combination determines the extent to which an individual can achieve an inner equilibrium and can contribute to the well-being of society. It is quite possible that the relative strength of these two drives is, in the main, fixed by inheritance. But the personality that finally emerges is largely formed by the environment in which a man happens to find himself during his development, by the structure of the society in which he grows up, by the tradition of that society, and by its appraisal of particular types of behavior. The abstract concept 'society' means to the individual human being the sum total of his direct and indirect relations to his contemporaries and to all the people of earlier generations. The individual is able to think, feel, strive, and work by himself; but he depends so much upon society—in his physical, intellectual, and emotional existence—that it is impossible to think of him, or to understand him, outside the framework of society. It is 'society' which provides man with food, clothing, a home, the tools of work, language, the forms of thought, and most of the content of thought; his life is made possible through the labor and the accomplishments of the many millions past and present who are all hidden behind the small word 'society.' It is evident, therefore, that the dependence of the individual upon society is a fact of nature which cannot be abolished—just as in the case of ants and bees. However, while the whole life process of ants and bees is fixed down to the smallest detail by rigid, hereditary instincts, the social pattern and interrelationships of human beings are very variable and susceptible to change. Memory, the capacity to make new combinations, the gift of oral communication have made possible developments among human being which are not dictated by biological necessities. Such developments manifest themselves in traditions, institutions, and organizations; in literature; in scientific and engineering accomplishments; in works of art. This explains how it happens that, in a certain sense, man can influence his life through his own conduct, and that in this process conscious thinking and wanting can play a part.

The economic anarchy of capitalist society as it exists today is, in my opinion, the real source of the evil. We see before us a huge community of producers the members of which are unceasingly striving to deprive each other of the fruits of their collective labor—not by force, but on the whole in faithful compliance with legally established rules. In this respect, it is important to realize that the means of production—that is to say, the entire productive capacity that is needed for producing consumer goods as well as additional capital goods—may legally be, and for the most part are, the private property of individuals.

I am convinced there is only one way to eliminate these grave evils, namely through the establishment of a socialist economy, accompanied by an educational system which would be oriented toward social goals. In such an economy, the means of production are owned by society itself and are utilized in a planned fashion. A planned economy, which adjusts production to the needs of the community, would distribute the work to be done among all those able to work and would guarantee a livelihood to every man, woman, and child. The education of the individual, in addition to promoting his own innate abilities, would attempt to develop in him a sense of responsibility for his fellow men in place of the glorification of power and success in our present society.

index tags: Communists, Germany, Europe, Socialism, Communism, Capitalism, Why Socialism?, Monthly Review, Society, Einstein, Science

On Abolition

2022-12-05

"Abolition reading list."

First, prerequisite thoughts in [On Black Liberation \(/posts/on-black-liberation\)](/posts/on-black-liberation) and prior articles. Reading those might be helpful prerequisites to the following books about abolition. This page is (so far) only going to contain links to others' work on abolition, in case you'd like to learn more about it. I haven't yet gotten to all these, so this list is also for my sake.

If you're new to abolition:

- [We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/56019003-we-do-this-til-we-free-us) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/56019003-we-do-this-til-we-free-us>) by Mariame Kaba

If you need something concise & easy:

- ["Prisons Make Us Safer": And 20 Other Myths about Mass Incarceration](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/54615850-prisons-make-us-safer) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/54615850-prisons-make-us-safer>) by Victoria Law

- [Are Prisons Obsolete?](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/108428.Are_Prisons_Obsolete_) ([https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/108428.Are Prisons Obsolete_](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/108428.Are_Prisons_Obsolete_)) by Angela Y. Davis

If you're an academia nerd:

- [Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55566309-abolition-geography) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55566309-abolition-geography>) by Ruth Wilson Gilmore

If you wanna feel hopeful for the future:

- [Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/90528.Freedom_Dreams) ([https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/90528.Freedom Dreams](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/90528.Freedom_Dreams)) by Robin D.G. Kelley

If you wanna understand how we got here:

- [America on Fire: The Untold History of Police Violence and Black Rebellion Since the 1960s](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55298326-america-on-fire) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55298326-america-on-fire>) by Elizabeth Hinton
- [Assata: An Autobiography](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/100322.Assata) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/100322.Assata>) by Assata Shakur
- [Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28007898-blood-in-the-water) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/28007898-blood-in-the-water>) by Heather Ann Thompson

Want to hear from a lot of different voices:

- [Abolition For The People](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58021042-abolition-for-the-people) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58021042-abolition-for-the-people>) by Colin Kaepernick

Don't understand what comes after we get rid of the cops?

- [Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/51778952-beyond-survival) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/51778952-beyond-survival>) edited by Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha and Ejeris Dixon
- [Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity in This Crisis \(And the Next\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/54654726-mutual-aid) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/54654726-mutual-aid>) by Dean Spade
- [The Care We Dream of: Liberatory and Transformative Approaches to LGBTQ+ Health](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58991274-the-care-we-dream-of) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/58991274-the-care-we-dream-of>) edited by Zena Sharman

Thanks to twitter user [@RoomofOnesOwn](https://twitter.com/RoomofOnesOwn) (https://twitter.com/RoomofOnesOwn/status/1555692120849145858?t=qTFC8hdab_x6-hlmzZ_zNQ&s=19) for compiling this list.

index tags: Reading List, Abolition, Communists, America, North America, Africa, Mass Incarceration, LGBTQ+, ACAB, Health(care), We Do This 'Til We Free Us: Abolitionist Organizing and Transforming Justice, Mariame Kaba, Prisons Make Us Safer And 20 Other Myths about Mass Incarceration, Victoria Law, Are Prisons Obsolete?, Angela Y. Davis, Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation, Ruth Wilson Gilmore, Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination, Robin

D.G. Kelley, America on Fire: The Untold History of Police Violence and Black Rebellion Since the 1960s, Elizabeth Hinton, Assata: An Autobiography, Assata Shakur, Blood in the Water: The Attica Prison Uprising of 1971 and Its Legacy, Heather Ann Thompson, Abolition For The People, Colin Kaepernick, Beyond Survival: Strategies and Stories from the Transformative Justice Movement, Leah Lakshmi Piepzna-Samarasinha, Ejeris Dixon, Mutual Aid: Building Solidarity in This Crisis (And the Next), Dean Spade, The Care We Dream of: Liberatory and Transformative Approaches to LGBTQ+ Health, Zena Sharman, RoomofOnesOwn

On Marx

2022-12-06

"and Marxism, and communism, etc."

Karl Marx

Marx is one of the two co-founders of Marxism (along with [Friedrich Engels \(/posts/on-engels\)](/posts/on-engels) – [timeline here \(https://en.prolewiki.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Marx_and_Engels\)](https://en.prolewiki.org/wiki/Timeline_of_Marx_and_Engels)).

Why does that matter? Why should I care? Well, what he's getting at is how history shapes our shared material nature. He does a good job analyzing society and the driving forces behind societal change. His analyses lead him to very interesting hypotheses about the future, who others have tried to test and realize; many people continue to work towards Marxian ends based on his worldview.

He's the start of much of this history, and he's worth reading. If his stuff is too intimidating or verbose for you yet, [Engels \(/posts/on-engels\)](/posts/on-engels) or [Lenin \(/posts/on-lenin\)](/posts/on-lenin) are worth checking out first. [Stalin \(/posts/on-stalin\)](/posts/on-stalin) and [Mao \(/posts/on-mao\)](/posts/on-mao) are also worth checking out if you're willing to check out the full ML-MZT spectrum of work. I'm trying to compile easy starting points for all each of these authors.

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [Wage-Labour and Capital \(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/index.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/index.htm) (1847) is a great starter read for Marx
- [Value, Price and Profit \(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1865/value-price-profit/\)](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1865/value-price-profit/)
- [Capital \(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch01.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/ch01.htm) (1867) – but don't start here, come back later probably. It's a difficult work, imo.
- [Manifesto of the Communist Party \(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/\)](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/) (1848) – This one's overrated. You really don't need to read it. Come back after Capital, it'll be crystal clear what he's getting at.

For physical copies, check out [RedPrintsPublishing \(https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing\)](https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing)

On Engels

2022-12-07

"(the second head of Marxism)"

Friedrich Engels

[Friedrich Engels \(/posts/on-engels\)](#) and Karl Marx came up with a lot of the terminology used in forthcoming (including current) discussions about oppression, economics, politics, feminism, history, etc. Their definitions of terms is useful to know, so that you can fully understand many other (including current) authors' perspectives.

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [The Principles of Communism](#) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/11/prin-com.htm>) (1847) – the best starter guide to get onboard with all the Communist/Socialist terminology
- [On Authority \(https://redsails.org/on-authority/\)](#) (1872) – explains authority (and it's necessity within society) very concisely.
- [Socialism: Utopian and Scientific](#) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1880/soc-utop/index.htm>) (1880) – Good to get your feet wet with a bit of dialectics and historical materialism.

For physical copies, check out [RedPrintsPublishing](#) (<https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing>)

TODO: more of a bio, links to the naturey sciencey stuff

TODO: gotta probably get the temperature quotes in here, and some quantitative -> qualitative stuff. maybe link the vihart vid that's a good example of dialectics in nature.

On Authority notes

[On Authority \(https://redsails.org/on-authority/\)](#) – Friedrich Engels (1872)

- present-day society tends more and more to replace isolated action by combined action of individuals.
- "All these workers, men, women and children, are obliged to begin and finish their work at the hours fixed by the authority of the steam, which cares nothing for individual autonomy... The automatic machinery of the big factory is much more despotic than the small capitalists who employ workers ever have been."
- "Wanting to abolish authority in large-scale industry is tantamount to wanting to abolish

industry itself, to destroy the power loom in order to return to the spinning wheel."

- "A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is the act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon — authoritarian means, if such there be at all; and if the victorious party does not want to have fought in vain, it must maintain this rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionists... Therefore, either one of two things: either the anti-authoritarians don't know what they're talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion; or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the movement of the proletariat. In either case they serve the reaction."

Socialism: Utopian and Scientific notes

[Socialism: Utopian and Scientific \(https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1880/soc-utop/index.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1880/soc-utop/index.htm) – Friedrich Engels (1880)

1. The development of utopian socialism

- France in the 18th century. Utopians (Saint-Simon, Fourier, Owen) focused on equality in order to emancipate everyone. Having found rationality and reason in the idealized understanding of the 18th century bourgeoisie lifestyle, they made this the standard. Oppression by sword turned into oppression by gold.
- "Politics is the science of production, and foretells the complete absorption of politics by economics" ~Saint-Simon, 1816
- Robert Owens formed communism based on a business foundation in order to reconstruct society for the common good. Three obstacles which especially blocked the path to social reform were private property, religion, and the present form of marriage.
- The utopians believed their truth, reason, and justice of their solutions would overtake the world. But these are subjective. To make a science of socialism it must be placed upon a real basis.

2. Dialectics

- Metaphysics discusses ideas and things isolated, whereas dialectic considers both thesis and antithesis (both positive and negative hypotheses) until truth is found.
- Hegelian philosophy was founded on the eternal change observed. The whole world (natural, historical, intellectual) is abstracted as a process. Hegel wanted intellectuals to follow this process and regarded the world as a culmination of ideas.
- Old materialism looked upon history as irrational and violent; new materialism observes in it the evolution of humanity. Instead of seeing production and economic interests as incidental elements in the history of civilization, we now realize history has been composed of class struggle. Earlier socialism critiqued the failings of capitalism but could not explain how the exploitation arose.
- The discovery of surplus-value explains the secret of capitalistic production to constantly heap increasing masses of capital into the hands of the possessing classes.
- The understanding of the materialistic conception of history and of surplus-value explaining the exploitative nature of capitalistic production (thanks Marx) turned socialism into a science.

3. Historical Materialism

- Proposes that production of the means to support human life and the exchange of things produced is the basis of all social structure.
- The capitalist production and its upholder concentrate and enlarge scattered/limited

means of production. They transform individual means into social means of production only workable but a collectivity of men. Production turned from individual to social products such that nobody could say "I made that; this is my product."

- The reduction of individual production's relative efficacy showed the incompatibility of socialized production with capitalistic appropriation – it presupposes the private production of individuals who owns his own product and brings it to market. The relative worthlessness of individual production turns almost all workers into wage-labourers for life. The contradiction (of capitalistic appropriation and socialized production) manifested as the antagonism between proletariat and bourgeoisie.
- Now, the contradiction between socialized production and capitalistic appropriation presents itself as an antagonism between the organization of production in the individual workshop and the anarchy of production in society generally.
- The extension of markets cannot keep pace with the extension of production. The collision becomes inevitable, and as they do not break apart the capitalist mode of production they become periodic in the business (boom/bust) cycle.
- When the state becomes a true representation of the whole of society and takes possession of the means of production in the name of society, this is its last independent act as a state. It is not abolished; it dies out
- The oppressive dynamic of production was necessary in times of deficient development due to the division of labor forming a division based on classes. But this historical justification (insufficient production) no longer exists under modern social conditions in the present period.
- Socialization of the means of production does away with the anarchy in social production and the struggle for individual existence, as well as the extravagance and political control of the ruling class.

index tags: Philosophy, Communists, Reading List, Reading Notes, Marxism, Dialectics, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Engels, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Principles of Communism, On Authority, Socialism: Utopian and Scientific, RedPrintsPublishing

On Lenin

2022-12-08

"Ah, now we get to this 'Marxism-Leninism' stuff."

There are decades where nothing happens; and there are weeks where decades happen.

The representatives of the modern labour movement find that they have plenty to protest against but nothing to despair about. Despair is typical of the classes which are perishing, but the class of wage-workers is growing inevitably, developing and becoming strong in every capitalist society, Russia included. Despair is typical of those who do not understand the causes of evil, see no way out, and are incapable of struggle. The modern industrial proletariat does not belong to the category of such classes.

[\(L. N. Tolstoy and the Modern Labour Movement, 1910\)](#)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1910/nov/28.htm>

The generation of people who are now at the age of fifty cannot expect to see a communist society. This generation will be gone before then. But the generation of those who are now fifteen will see a communist society, and will itself build this society. This generation should know that the entire purpose of their lives is to build a communist society. In the old society, each family worked separately and labour was not organised by anybody except the landowners and capitalists, who oppressed the masses of the people. We must organise all labour, no matter how toilsome or messy it may be, in such a way that every worker and peasant will be able to say: I am part of the great army of free labour, and shall be able to build up my life without the landowners and capitalists, able to help establish a communist system. The Young Communist League should teach all young people to engage in conscious and disciplined labour from an early age. In this way we can be confident that the problems now confronting us will be solved.

[\(The Tasks of the Youth Leagues, 1920\)](#)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/oct/02.htm>

Can a nation be free if it oppresses other nations? It cannot.

[\(The Right of Nations to Self-Determination, 1914\)](#)

<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1914/self-det/ch04.htm>

Three keys to success: read, read, read.

Vladimir Lenin

Vladimir Lenin was a Russian revolutionary leader, covered first in [On Europe \(/posts/on-europe\)](#)

TODO: more of a bio

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism](#)
<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1913/mar/x01.htm> (1913) – a very concise (and arguably the best) intro to Marxism.

- [Letter To American Workers](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1918/aug/20.htm) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1918/aug/20.htm>) (1918)
- [The State and Revolution](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/>) (1917)
- [Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/>) (1916)
- [What Is To Be Done?](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1901/witbd/>) (1901)
- [articles on RedSails.org](https://redsails.org/@lenin/) (<https://redsails.org/@lenin/>)
- [“Left-Wing” Communism: an Infantile Disorder](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1920/lwc/>) (1920)
- [Freedom to Criticise and Unity of Action](https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1906/may/20c.htm) (<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1906/may/20c.htm>) (1906)

For physical copies, check out [RedPrintsPublishing](https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing) (<https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing>)

The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism

(<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1913/mar/x01.htm>) (1913)

notes

1. Marxism (specifically materialist philosophy) is a continuation on other study and provides answers to prominent questions by great minds. Natural science discoveries support historical materialism where they cause idealists to revise their understanding of how the world works.
 - Knowledge reflects nature; so to, social knowledge reflects the economic system of society. Politics are a superstructure on the economic foundation.
 2. Marx saw relationships between people, rather than things. He understood the dynamics between the players of the game. The cornerstones here are the labor theory of value and the doctrine of surplus-value.
 - By increasing the dependence on capital, capitalism creates the giant power of united labor.
 3. Utopian socialism has no basis in material reality. The driving force of change has always been class struggle.
 - "People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the interests of some class or other behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises. Champions of reforms and improvements will always be fooled by the defenders of the old order until they realise that every old institution, how ever barbarous and rotten it may appear to be, is kept going by the forces of certain ruling classes."
 - Marx's philosophy and economics demonstrate the true position of the proletariat within capitalism and explain the spiritual slavery within which we exist.
-

The State and Revolution

(<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1917/staterev/>) (1917)

notes

- The state is a product and a manifestation of the irreconcilability of class antagonisms
- Marx did not indulge in utopias; he expected the experience of the mass movement to provide the reply to the question as to the specific forms this organisation of the proletariat as the ruling class would assume and as to the exact manner in which this organisation would be combined with the most complete, most consistent "winning of the battle of democracy."
- To organize the whole economy on the lines of the postal service so that the technicians, foremen and accountants, as well as all officials, shall receive salaries no higher than "a workman's wage", all under the control and leadership of the armed proletariat--that is our immediate aim. This is what will bring about the abolition of parliamentarism and the preservation of representative institutions. This is what will rid the laboring classes of the bourgeoisie's prostitution of these institutions.
- To prevent the true meaning of his struggle against anarchism from being distorted, Marx expressly emphasized the "revolutionary and transient form" of the state which the proletariat needs. The proletariat needs the state only temporarily. We do not after all differ with the anarchists on the question of the abolition of the state as the aim. We maintain that, to achieve this aim, we must temporarily make use of the instruments, resources, and methods of state power against the exploiters, just as the temporary dictatorship of the oppressed class is necessary for the abolition of classes.
- "Have these gentlemen ever seen a revolution? A revolution is certainly the most authoritarian thing there is; it is an act whereby one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part by means of rifles, bayonets and cannon, all of which are highly authoritarian means. And the victorious party must maintain its rule by means of the terror which its arms inspire in the reactionaries. Would the Paris Commune have lasted more than a day if it had not used the authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie? Cannot we, on the contrary, blame it for having made too little use of that authority? Therefore, one of two things: either that anti-authoritarians don't know what they are talking about, in which case they are creating nothing but confusion. Or they do know, and in that case they are betraying the cause of the proletariat. In either case they serve only reaction."
- the bourgeoisie bureaucracy is unfit to carry out orders of the proletarian state.
- "And so, in the first phase of communist society (usually called socialism) "bourgeois law" is not abolished in its entirety, but only in part, only in proportion to the economic revolution so far attained, i.e., only in respect of the means of production. "Bourgeois law" recognizes them as the private property of individuals. Socialism converts them into common property. To that extent--and to that extent alone--"bourgeois law" disappears...The state withers away insofar as there are no longer any capitalists, any classes, and, consequently, no class can be suppressed...But the state has not yet completely withered away, since it still remains the safeguarding of "bourgeois law", which sanctifies actual inequality. For the state to wither away completely, complete communism is necessary."
- "The state will be able to wither away completely when society adopts the rule: "From each according to his ability, to each according to his needs", i.e., when people have become so accustomed to observing the fundamental rules of social intercourse and when their labor has become so productive that they will voluntarily work according to their ability."
- "From 1852 to 1891, or for 40 years, Marx and Engels taught the proletariat that it must smash the state machine. Yet, in 1899, Kautsky, confronted with the complete betrayal of Marxism by the opportunists on this point, fraudulently substituted for the question whether it is necessary to smash this machine the question for the concrete forms in which it is to be smashed, and then sought refuge behind the "indisputable" (and barren) philistine truth that concrete forms cannot be known in advance!!"
- "All these gentry, who play a tremendous, very often a predominant role in the

parliamentary work and the press of their parties, repudiate outright the dictatorship of the proletariat and pursue a policy of undisguised opportunism. In the eyes of these gentry, the "dictatorship" of the proletariat "contradicts" democracy!! There is really no essential distinction between them and the petty-bourgeois democrats."

Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism

(<https://www.marxists.org/archive/lenin/works/1916/imp-hsc/>) (1916)

notes

- Everywhere, capitalism leads to the concentration of production which leads to monopoly, with minor differences in manifestation and form.
- The change from the old type of capitalism, in which free competition predominated, to the new capitalism, in which monopoly reigns, is expressed, among other things, by a decline in the importance of the Stock Exchange. The review, *Die Bank*, writes: "The Stock Exchange has long ceased to be the indispensable medium of circulation that it formerly was when the banks were not yet able to place the bulk of new issues with their clients."
- Thus, the twentieth century marks the turning-point from the old capitalism to the new, from the domination of capital in general to the domination of finance capital.
- "Incidentally," adds Hilferding, "all these reorganisations and reconstructions have a twofold significance for the banks: first, as profitable transactions; and secondly, as opportunities for securing control of the companies in difficulties."
- We at once see standing out in sharp relief four of the richest capitalist countries, each of which holds securities to amounts ranging approximately from 100,000 to 150,000 million francs. Of these four countries, two, Britain and France, are the oldest capitalist countries, and, as we shall see, possess the most colonies; the other two, the United States and Germany, are capitalist countries leading in the rapidity of development and the degree of extension of capitalist monopolies in industry. Together, these four countries own 479,000 million francs, that is, nearly 80 per cent of the world's finance capital. In one way or another, nearly the whole of the rest of the world is more or less the debtor to and tributary of these international banker countries, these four "pillars" of world finance capital.
- Typical of the old capitalism, when free competition held undivided sway, was the export of goods. Typical of the latest stage of capitalism, when monopolies rule, is the export of capital.
- Monopolist capitalist associations, cartels, syndicates and trusts first divided the home market among themselves and obtained more or less complete possession of the industry of their own country. But under capitalism the home market is inevitably bound up with the foreign market. Capitalism long ago created a world market. As the export of capital increased, and as the foreign and colonial connections and "spheres of influence" of the big monopolist associations expanded in all ways, things "naturally" gravitated towards an international agreement among these associations, and towards the formation of international cartels.
- "It is time our state socialists, who allow themselves to be blinded by a beautiful principle, understood, at last, that in Germany the monopolies have never pursued the aim, nor have they had the result, of benefiting the consumer, or even of handing over to the state part of the promoter's profits; they have served only to facilitate, at the expense of the state, the recovery of private industries which were on the verge of bankruptcy." ~*Die Bank* (Berlin Review)
- Certain bourgeois writers (now joined by Karl Kautsky, who has completely abandoned the Marxist position he had held, for example, in 1909) have expressed the opinion that international cartels, being one of the most striking expressions of the internationalisation

of capital, give the hope of peace among nations under capitalism. Theoretically, this opinion is absolutely absurd, while in practice it is sophistry and a dishonest defence of the worst opportunism. International cartels show to what point capitalist monopolies have developed, and ~the object~ of the struggle between the various capitalist associations.

- The capitalists divide the world, not out of any particular malice, but because the degree of concentration which has been reached forces them to adopt this method in order to obtain profits. And they divide it “in proportion to capital”, “in proportion to strength”, because there cannot be any other method of division under commodity production and capitalism. But strength varies with the degree of economic and political development. In order to understand what is taking place, it is necessary to know what questions are settled by the changes in strength.
- The epoch of the latest stage of capitalism shows us that certain relations between capitalist associations grow up, based on the economic division of the world; while parallel to and in connection with it, certain relations grow up between political alliances, between states, on the basis of the territorial division of the world, of the struggle for colonies, of the “struggle for spheres of influence”.
- Salvation lies in monopoly, echoed the political leaders of the bourgeoisie, hastening to appropriate the parts of the world not yet shared out.
- Definition of imperialism must include: (1) the concentration of production and capital has developed to such a high stage that it has created monopolies which play a decisive role in economic life; (2) the merging of bank capital with industrial capital, and the creation, on the basis of this “finance capital”, of a financial oligarchy; (3) the export of capital as distinguished from the export of commodities acquires exceptional importance; (4) the formation of international monopolist capitalist associations which share the world among themselves, and (5) the territorial division of the whole world among the biggest capitalist powers is completed. Imperialism is capitalism at that stage of development at which the dominance of monopolies and finance capital is established; in which the export of capital has acquired pronounced importance; in which the division of the world among the international trusts has begun, in which the division of all territories of the globe among the biggest capitalist powers has been completed.
- The question is: what means other than war could there be under capitalism to overcome the disparity between the development of productive forces and the accumulation of capital on the one side, and the division of colonies and spheres of influence for finance capital on the other?
- Imperialism has the tendency to create privileged sections also among the workers, and to detach them from the broad masses of the proletariat.
- The distinctive feature of the present situation is the prevalence of such economic and political conditions that are bound to increase the irreconcilability between opportunism and the general and vital interests of the working-class movement: imperialism has grown from an embryo into the predominant system; capitalist monopolies occupy first place in economics and politics; the division of the world has been completed; on the other hand, instead of the undivided monopoly of Great Britain, we see a few imperialist powers contending for the right to share in this monopoly, and this struggle is characteristic of the whole period of the early twentieth century. Opportunism cannot now be completely triumphant in the working-class movement of one country for decades as it was in Britain in the second half of the nineteenth century; but in a number of countries it has grown ripe, overripe, and rotten, and has become completely merged with bourgeois policy in the form of “social-chauvinism”.
- “It is not the business of the proletariat,” writes Hilferding “to contrast the more progressive capitalist policy with that of the now bygone era of free trade and of hostility towards the state. The reply of the proletariat to the economic policy of finance capital, to

imperialism, cannot be free trade, but socialism. The aim of proletarian policy cannot today be the ideal of restoring free competition—which has now become a reactionary ideal—but the complete elimination of competition by the abolition of capitalism.”

- Kautsky broke with Marxism by advocating in the epoch of finance capital a “reactionary ideal”, “peaceful democracy”, “the mere operation of economic factors”, for objectively this ideal drags us back from monopoly to non-monopoly capitalism, and is a reformist swindle.
- We have seen that in its economic essence imperialism is monopoly capitalism. This in itself determines its place in history, for monopoly that grows out of the soil of free competition, and precisely out of free competition, is the transition from the capitalist system to a higher socio-economic order.
- Firstly, monopoly arose out of the concentration of production at a very high stage. Secondly, monopolies have stimulated the seizure of the most important sources of raw materials, especially for the basic and most highly cartelised industries in capitalist society: the coal and iron industries. Thirdly, monopoly has sprung from the banks. Fourthly, monopoly has grown out of colonial policy.
- The receipt of high monopoly profits by the capitalists in one of the numerous branches of industry, in one of the numerous countries, etc., makes it economically possible for them to bribe certain sections of the workers, and for a time a fairly considerable minority of them, and win them to the side of the bourgeoisie of a given industry or given nation against all the others. The intensification of antagonisms between imperialist nations for the division of the world increases this urge. And so there is created that bond between imperialism and opportunism.
- From all that has been said in this book on the economic essence of imperialism, it follows that we must define it as capitalism in transition, or, more precisely, as moribund capitalism.
- What then does this catchword “interlocking” express? It merely expresses the most striking feature of the process going on before our eyes. It shows that the observer counts the separate trees, but cannot see the wood. It slavishly copies the superficial, the fortuitous, the chaotic. It reveals the observer as one who is overwhelmed by the mass of raw material and is utterly incapable of appreciating its meaning and importance. Ownership of shares, the relations between owners of private property “interlock in a haphazard way”. But underlying this interlocking, its very base, are the changing social relations of production. When a big enterprise assumes gigantic proportions, and, on the basis of an exact computation of mass data, organises according to plan the supply of primary raw materials to the extent of two-thirds, or three-fourths, of all that is necessary for tens of millions of people; when the raw materials are transported in a systematic and organised manner to the most suitable places of production, sometimes situated hundreds or thousands of miles from each other; when a single centre directs all the consecutive stages of processing the material right up to the manufacture of numerous varieties of finished articles; when these products are distributed according to a single plan among tens and hundreds of millions of consumers (the marketing of oil in America and Germany by the American oil trust)—then it becomes evident that we have socialisation of production, and not mere “interlocking”, that private economic and private property relations constitute a shell which no longer fits its contents, a shell which must inevitably decay if its removal is artificially delayed, a shell which may remain in a state of decay for a fairly long period (if, at the worst, the cure of the opportunist abscess is protracted), but which will inevitably be removed.

Should we participate in bourgeois parliaments?

- Although lefts consider parliamentarianism obsolete, the masses of proletarians are still in favor of it and are often "counter-revolutionary" – this makes it obvious that parliamentarianism is not yet politically obsolete
- It is important to understand that what is obsolete to the communists is not obsolete to a class. You must follow the actual state of the class-consciousness and preparedness of the entire class (not only of its communist vanguard), and of all the working people (not only of their advanced elements).
- Participating in bourgeois-democratic parliament helps prove its obsolescence to the masses and facilitate its successful dissolution.
- Revolutionary tactics will not develop into action without revolutionary mood and the conditions to facilitate the growth of this mood. It will be more difficult to spur revolution in Europe or the US, but it will be more difficult to continue the revolution and bring it to consummation in Russia.

index tags: Philosophy, Communists, Reading List, Reading Notes, Marxism, Marxism-Leninism, Dialectics, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism, Letter To American Workers, The State and Revolution, Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism, What Is To Be Done?, RedSails, Left-Wing Communism: an Infantile Disorder, Freedom to Criticise and Unity of Action, Voting, Dialectical Method, Materialist Theory, Historical Materialism, RedPrintsPublishing

On Stalin

2022-12-09

"(The synthesizer of aforementioned 'Marxism-Leninism')"

It is difficult for me to imagine what 'personal liberty' is enjoyed by an unemployed person, who goes about hungry, and cannot find employment. Real liberty can exist only where exploitation has been abolished, where there is no oppression of some by others, where there is no unemployment and poverty, where a man is not haunted by the fear of being tomorrow deprived of work, of home and of bread. Only in such a society is real, and not paper, personal and every other liberty possible.

Joseph Stalin

Joseph Stalin (born Ioseb Besarionis dze Jughashvili) was the democratically-elected leader of the USSR and synthesizer of Marxism-Leninism, covered first in [On Europe \(/posts/on-europe\)](#).

For W.E.B. Du Bois' thoughts, see his [On Stalin \(https://redsails.org/on-stalin/\)](https://redsails.org/on-stalin/).

TODO: more of a bio

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [Dialectical and Historical Materialism \(https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/\)](https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/) (1938) – maybe my favorite text of all-time.
- [The Foundations of Leninism \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/foundations-leninism/index.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/foundations-leninism/index.htm) (1924)
- [Anarchism or Socialism? \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1906/12/x01.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1906/12/x01.htm) (1906)
- [Marxism and the National Question \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1913/03a.htm) (1913)
- [Marxism and Problems of Linguistics \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1950/jun/20.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1950/jun/20.htm) (1950)
- [articles on RedSails.org \(https://redsails.org/@stalin/\)](https://redsails.org/@stalin/)

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[Dialectical and Historical Materialism \(https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/\)](https://redsails.org/dialectical-and-historical-materialism/) (1938) notes

"In its essence, dialectics is the direct opposite of metaphysics."

I: Marxist Dialectical Method

a) Nature Connected and Determined

- dialectics regards nature as a connected whole → no phenomenon in nature can be understood if taken by itself, isolated from surrounding phenomena

b) Nature is a State of Continuous Motion and Change

- dialectics regards nature as a state of constant movement → requires that phenomena should be considered not only from the standpoint of their interconnection and interdependence, but also from the standpoint of their change and development

c) Natural Quantitative Change Leads to Qualitative Change

- dialectics regards the process of development as passing from insignificant and imperceptible quantitative changes to open 'fundamental changes' to qualitative changes; a development in which the qualitative changes occur not gradually, but rapidly and abruptly, taking the form of a leap from one state to another; they occur not accidentally but as the natural result of an accumulation of imperceptible and gradual quantitative changes.
- eg. ice freezing (abrupt qualitative change) after temperature change (gradual quantitative change) – "What are known as the constants of physics are in most cases nothing but designations for the nodal points at which a quantitative increase or decrease of movement causes a qualitative change in the state of the given body, and at which, consequently, quantity is transformed into quality." (Engels)

d) Contradictions Inherent in Nature

- dialectics holds that internal contradictions are inherent in all things and phenomena of nature, for they all have their negative and positive sides, a past and a future, something dying away and something developing; and that the struggle between these opposites, the struggle between the old and the new, between that which is dying away and that which is being born, between that which is disappearing and that which is developing, constitutes the internal content of the process of development, the internal content of the transformation of quantitative changes into qualitative changes
- thus, the dialectical method holds that the process of development takes place as a disclosure of the contradictions inherent in things and phenomena, as a "struggle" of opposite tendencies which operate on the basis of these contradictions.

If the world is in a state of constant movement and development then it is clear that there can be no "immutable" social systems, no "eternal principles" of private property and exploitation, no "eternal ideas" of the subjugation of the peasant to the landlord, of the worker to the capitalist. Hence, the capitalist system can be replaced by the socialist system, just as at one time the feudal system was replaced by the capitalist system.

Further, if the passing of slow quantitative changes into rapid and abrupt qualitative changes is a law of development, then it is clear that revolutions made by oppressed classes are a quite natural and inevitable phenomenon. Hence, the transition from capitalism to socialism and the liberation of the working class from the yoke of capitalism cannot be effected by slow changes, by reforms, but only by a qualitative change of the capitalist system, by revolution. Hence, in order not to err in policy, one must be a revolutionary, not a reformist.

II: Marxist Philosophical Materialism

III: Historical Materialism

These irreconcilable contradictions between the character of the productive forces and the relations of production make themselves felt in periodical crises of over-production, when the capitalists, finding no effective demand for their goods owing to the ruin of the mass of the population which they themselves have brought about, are compelled to burn products, destroy manufactured goods, suspend production, and destroy productive forces at a time when millions of people are forced to suffer unemployment and starvation, not because there are not enough goods, but because there is an overproduction of goods.

The Foundations of Leninism

(<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1924/foundation-leninism/index.htm>) (1924) notes

I. The Historical Roots of Leninism

Imperialism – moribund capitalism led by three contradictions: between labour and capital, the contradiction among the various financial groups and imperialist Powers in their struggle for sources of raw materials and foreign territory, and the contradiction between the handful of ruling, "civilised" nations and the hundreds of millions of the colonial and dependent peoples of the world.

Due to the combination of tsar rule and capitalist exploitation, Russia was ripe for revolution during the early 1900s.

II. Method

1. test dogma by trying to join theory with practice, 2. test policy by the material effects they have on the masses, 3. reorganize the party along revolutionary lines in preparation for revolutionary struggle, and 4. ruthlessly self-criticize in order to train genuine cadres and leaders of the party.

"The attitude of a political party towards its own mistakes is one of the most important and surest ways of judging how earnest the party is and how it in practice fulfils its obligation towards its class and the toiling masses. Frankly admitting a mistake, ascertaining the reasons for it, analysing the circumstances which gave rise to it, and thoroughly discussing the means of correcting it—that is the earmark of a serious party; that is the way it should perform its duties, that is the way it should educate and train the class, and then the masses"

III. Theory

1. Importance: Theory is the experience of the working-class movement in all countries taken in its general aspect. Of course, theory becomes purposeless if it is not connected with revolutionary practice, just as practice gropes in the dark if its path is not illumined by revolutionary theory.

"Without a revolutionary theory there can be no revolutionary movement"

"The role of vanguard fighter can be fulfilled only by a party that is guided by the most advanced theory"

2. The "theory" of spontaneity is a theory of opportunism, a theory of worshipping the spontaneity of the labour movement, a theory which actually repudiates the leading role of the vanguard of the working class, of the party of the working class.

In practice this theory, which appeared on the scene even before the first revolution in Russia, led its adherents, the so-called "Economists," to deny the need for an independent workers' party in Russia, to oppose the revolutionary struggle of the working class for the overthrow of tsarism, to preach a purely trade-unionist policy in the movement, and, in general, to surrender the labour movement to the hegemony of the liberal bourgeoisie.

Marx said that the materialist theory could not confine itself to explaining the world, that it must also change it.

3. The theory of the proletarian revolution proceeds from three theses:
 - i) The domination of finance capital in the advanced capitalist countries; the issue of stocks and bonds as one of the principal operations of finance capital; the export of capital to the sources of raw materials, which is one of the foundations of imperialism; the omnipotence of a financial oligarchy, which is the result of the domination of finance capital—all this reveals the grossly parasitic character of monopolistic capitalism, makes the yoke of the capitalist trusts and syndicates a hundred times more burdensome, intensifies the indignation of the working class with the foundations of capitalism, and brings the masses to the proletarian revolution as their only salvation
HENCE: intensification of the revolutionary crisis within the capitalist countries and growth of the elements of an explosion on the internal, proletarian front in the "metropolises."
 - ii) The increase in the export of capital to the colonies and dependent countries; the expansion of "spheres of influence" and colonial possessions until they cover the whole globe; the transformation of capitalism into a world system of financial enslavement and colonial oppression of the vast majority of the population of the world by a handful of "advanced" countries—all this has, on the one hand, converted the separate national

economies and national territories into links in a single chain called world economy, and, on the other hand, split the population of the globe into two camps: a handful of "advanced" capitalist countries which exploit and oppress vast colonies and dependencies, and the huge majority consisting of colonial and dependent countries which are compelled to wage a struggle for liberation from the imperialist yoke

HENCE: intensification of the revolutionary crisis in the colonial countries and growth of the elements of revolt against imperialism on the external, colonial front.

- iii) The monopolistic possession of "spheres of influence" and colonies; the uneven development of the capitalist countries, leading to a frenzied struggle for the redivision of the world between the countries which have already seized territories and those claiming their "share"; imperialist wars as the only means of restoring the disturbed "equilibrium" – all this leads to the intensification of the struggle on the third front, the inter-capitalist front, which weakens imperialism and facilitates the union of the first two fronts against imperialism: the front of the revolutionary proletariat and the front of colonial emancipation

HENCE: under imperialism wars cannot be averted, and that a coalition between the proletarian revolution in Europe and the colonial revolution in the East in a united world front of revolution against the world front of imperialism is inevitable.

Anarchism or Socialism?

(<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1906/12/x01.htm> (1906) notes

Contents:

- The Dialectical Method
- The Materialist Theory
- Proletarian Socialism

The Dialectical Method:

- Dialectics tell us everything in the world is changing (in constant motion). We must ask what is being destroyed and what is being created; what grows and what decays?
- Minor, quantitative changes (evolution) lead to major, qualitative changes (revolution)
- Hegel's dialectical method repudiates all immutable ideas and is thus scientific and revolutionary; his philosophical system, which rests on the immutable idea, is metaphysical (and this reliance on the "unknowable" leads to an unscientific, empty theology). Marx thus praised the dialectical method while laying criticism to the Hegel's metaphysical system.
- How can something be good and bad at the same time? Consider a democratic republic. It is neither all good nor all bad. It is good when it destroys the feudal system but bad when it strengthens the bourgeois system. Thus we must fight for it while it is a positive and fight against it while it is negative. Thus the same democratic republic can be "good" and "bad" at the same time – it is both "yes" and "no."
- Cuvier's cataclysms were due to unknown causes, but Marx and Engel's catastrophes are engendered by dialectics; revolution is not caused spontaneously at random, but is brought on by the development of the productive forces. Darwinism repudiates Cuvier's cataclysms and it dialectically understood development, including revolution; it is not accepted uncritically in Marxism, but serves to show both evolution and revolution (quantitative and qualitative changes) are two essential forms of the same motion.
- Anarchists fail to understand the dialectical method of Marx and Engels. They conjure up

their own dialectics and fight against them ruthlessly. They fight their own imagination, smashing their own inventions, while heatedly asserting that they are smashing the opponent.

The Materialist Theory:

- "It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness." ~Marx
- Both ideal and material phenomena exist in the world – they exist as different forms of the same nature or society. The dualists said they negate each other, which isn't true. The idealists necessitation on a "universal idea" is nonsense as well. Marxism allows us to identify shifts in power (quantifiable evolutions in "nature" eg. in the material world) that lead to and allow for hierarchical shifts (qualitative changes in the hierarchical structure and "social life" eg. in the ideal world).
- A single indivisible nature can be expressed in two different forms (material and ideal); a single and indivisible social life can be expressed in these two forms as well. They develop simultaneously. This is the monism of the materialist theory.
- In the same way that conscious thought held requirements in the structure of an organism and the development of its nervous system, development of the ideal and of consciousness is preceded by development of the material side.
- Hence arose the well-known materialist proposition: in the process of development content precedes form, form lags behind content. eg. Shoemaker who closes his own business due to competition from larger firms then becomes a proletariat worker. His views will not match those of the proletariat until after acclimation to his new placement within the social hierarchy.
- In social life, too, first the external conditions change, first the material conditions change, and then the ideas of men, their habits, customs and their world outlook change accordingly. In Marx's opinion, economic development is the "material foundation" of social life, its content, while legal-political and religious-philosophical development is the "ideological form" of this content, its "superstructure," Marx draws the conclusion that: "With the change of the economic foundation the entire immense superstructure is more or less rapidly transformed."
- On this point the materialist theory says that our conceptions, our "self," exist only in so far as external conditions exist that give rise to impressions in our "self." Whoever unthinkingly says that nothing exists but our conceptions, is compelled to deny the existence of all external conditions and their effects on the self.
- "When I look at a tree and see it—that only shows that this tree existed even before the conception of a tree arose in my head, that it was this tree that aroused the corresponding conception in my head...."
- "the existing form never fully corresponds to the existing content: the former lags behind the latter, to a certain extent the new content is always clothed in the old form and, as a consequence, there is always a conflict between the old form and the new content."

Proletarian Socialism:

- The economic development of the capitalist system shows that present-day production is assuming a social character, that the social character of production is a fundamental negation of existing capitalist property; consequently, our main task is to help to abolish capitalist property and to establish socialist property.
- the process of production has assumed a social, collective character but the private character of appropriation does not correspond to the social character of production → since collective labor must lead to collective property, proletarian socialism is inevitable

- Strikes, boycott, parliamentarism, meetings and demonstrations are all good forms of struggle as means for preparing and organising the proletariat. But not one of these means is capable of abolishing existing inequality. All these means must be concentrated in one principal and decisive means; the proletariat must rise and launch a determined attack upon the bourgeoisie in order to destroy capitalism to its foundations. This principal and decisive means is the socialist revolution.
- ". . . The first step in the revolution by the working class, is to raise the proletariat to the position of ruling class. . . . The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands . . . of the proletariat organised as the ruling class . . ." ~Marx, 1847
- The socialist dictatorship of the proletariat is needed to enable the proletariat to expropriate the bourgeoisie, to enable it to confiscate the land, forests, factories and mills, machines, railways, etc., from the entire bourgeoisie. The expropriation of the bourgeoisie—this is what the socialist revolution must lead to.
- But trade unions and co-operatives alone cannot satisfy the organisational needs of the militant proletariat. This is because the organisations mentioned cannot go beyond the limits of capitalism, for their object is to improve the conditions of the workers under the capitalist system. The workers, however, want to free themselves entirely from capitalist slavery, they want to smash these limits, and not merely operate within the limits of capitalism. Hence, in addition, an organisation is needed that will rally around itself the class-conscious elements of the workers of all trades, that will transform the proletariat into a conscious class and make it its chief aim to smash the capitalist system, to prepare for the socialist revolution. Such an organisation is the Social-Democratic Party of the proletariat.

Marxism and Problems of Linguistics

<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1950/jun/20.htm>
(1950) notes

- Is it true that language is a superstructure on the base? -> No. The base is the economic structure of society (ie. the phase of development; eg. feudalism, capitalism, socialism). A change in base leads to change in the superstructure (ie. its political, legal and other views, and the corresponding institutions). The change in base has little inherent impact on language (new vocabulary enriches the language, but the underlying system does not change). -> Further, the superstructure is created to ensure the elimination of moribund superstructures via active defense of its base. Language changes over the course of history, not established by any one class to protect their class interests. "Hence the functional role of language, as a means of intercourse between people, consists not in serving one class to the detriment of other classes, but in equally serving the entire society, all the classes of society. This in fact explains why a language may equally serve both the old, moribund system and the new, rising system; both the old base and the new base; both the exploiters and the exploited." -> Lastly, the superstructure is not directly connected with production, with man's productive activity. It is connected with production only indirectly, through the economy, through the base. Language, on the contrary, is connected with man's productive activity directly, and not only with man's productive activity, but with all his other activity in all his spheres of work, from production to the base, and from the base to the superstructure. For this reason language reflects changes in production immediately and directly, without waiting for changes in the base. For this reason the sphere of action of language, which embraces all fields of man's activity, is far broader and more comprehensive than the sphere of action of the superstructure. More, it is practically unlimited.

- a) Language, as a means of intercourse, always was and remains the single language of a society, common to all its members; b) The existence of dialects and jargons does not negate but confirms the existence of a language common to the whole of the given people, of which they are offshoots and to which they are subordinate; c) The "class character" of language formula is erroneous and non-Marxist.
- In the forties of the past century when there was no monopoly capitalism as yet, when capitalism was developing more or less smoothly along an ascending line, spreading to new territories it had not yet occupied, and the law of uneven development could not yet fully operate, Marx and Engels concluded that a socialist revolution could not be victorious in one particular country, that it could be victorious only as a result of a joint blow in all, or in most, civilized countries. This conclusion subsequently became a guiding principle for all Marxists...However, at the beginning of the twentieth century, especially in the period of the first world war, when it became clear to everyone that pre-monopoly capitalism had definitely developed into monopoly capitalism, when rising capitalism had become dying capitalism, when the war had revealed the incurable weaknesses of the world imperialist front, and the law of uneven development predetermined that the proletarian revolution would mature in different countries at different times, Lenin, proceeding from Marxist theory, came to the conclusion that in the new conditions of development, the socialist revolution could fully prove victorious in one country taken separately, that the simultaneous victory of the socialist revolution in all countries, or in a majority of civilized countries, was impossible owing to the uneven maturing of the revolution in those countries, that the old formula of Marx and Engels no longer corresponded to the new historical conditions...It is evident that here we have two different conclusions on the question of the victory of socialism, which not only contradict, but exclude each other.
- Marxism is the science of the laws governing the development of nature and society, the science of the revolution of the oppressed and exploited masses, the science of the victory of socialism in all countries, the science of building communist society. As a science, Marxism cannot stand still, it develops and is perfected. In its development, Marxism cannot but be enriched by new experience, new knowledge -- consequently some of its formulas and conclusions cannot but change in the course of time, cannot but be replaced by new formulas and conclusions, corresponding to the new historical tasks. Marxism does not recognize invariable conclusions and formulas, obligatory for all epochs and periods. Marxism is the enemy of all dogmatism.

index tags: Philosophy, Communists, Reading List, Reading Notes, Marxism, Marxism-Leninism, Dialectics, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Joseph Stalin, Stalin, Mao Zedong, W.E.B. Du Bois, Dialectical Method, Materialist Theory, Proletarian Socialism, National Question, Historical Materialism, Anarchism, Socialism, Communism, Dialectical and Historical Materialism, Foundations of Leninism, Anarchism or Socialism?, Marxism and the National Question, Marxism and Problems of Linguistics, RedSails, RedPrintsPublishing

On Mao

2022-12-10

"...if you got a buncha Marxism-Leninism stewin in a pot, sprinklin in a bit of Mao Zedong Thought can never hurt. adds some full-bodied perspective."

Women hold up half the sky.

(see: [On Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism/\)](/posts/on-feminism/))

Political power grows out of the barrel of the gun.

(see: [On Technology \(/posts/on-technology/\)](/posts/on-technology/))

The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history.

(see: [On Organizing \(/posts/on-organizing/\)](/posts/on-organizing/))

We Communists are like seeds and the people are like the soil. Wherever we go, we must unite with the people, take root and blossom among them.

(see: [On Uniting \(/posts/on-uniting/\)](/posts/on-uniting/))

Mao Zedong

Mao Zedong (first covered in [On Asia \(/posts/on-asia/\)](/posts/on-asia/)) was a Chinese Marxist-Leninist revolutionary who lead the Chinese people to their proletarian revolution in order to found the PRC.

TODO: more of a bio

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [We Must Unite All The Forces That Can Be United \(https://redsails.org/unite-all-the-forces/\)](https://redsails.org/unite-all-the-forces/) (1956)
- [To Be Attacked By The Enemy Is Not A Bad Thing But A Good Thing \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_32.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_32.htm) (1939)
- [Where Do Correct Ideas Come From? \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-9/mswv9_01.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-9/mswv9_01.htm)
- [Oppose Book Worship \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_11.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_11.htm) (1930)
- [On Practice \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_16.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_16.htm) (1937)
- [On Contradiction \(https://redsails.org/on-contradiction/\)](https://redsails.org/on-contradiction/) (1937)
- [On Guerilla Warfare \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/1937/querrilla-warfare/\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/1937/querrilla-warfare/) (1937)
- [On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party](#)

- https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_5.htm (1929)
- [Combat Liberalism \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_03.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_03.htm) (1937)
- [Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art \(https://redsails.org/mao-on-literature-and-art/\)](https://redsails.org/mao-on-literature-and-art/) (1942)
- [In Memory of Norman Bethune \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_25.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-2/mswv2_25.htm) (1939)
- [Serve the People \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_19.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_19.htm) (1944)
- [The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_26.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-3/mswv3_26.htm) (1945)
- [articles on RedSails.org \(https://redsails.org/@mao/\)](https://redsails.org/@mao/)
- [Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership \(http://www.marx2mao.com/Mao/QCML43.html\)](http://www.marx2mao.com/Mao/QCML43.html) (1943)
- [ARAK aka Araling Aktibista – Activist Study \(https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/\)](https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/) – required study for activists in the Filipino revolutionary movement, the study includes Mao Zedong's Five Golden Rays and other essential texts on the Mass Line.

For physical copies, check out [RedPrintsPublishing \(https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing\)](https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing)

Misc quotes

From the Little Red Book, probably seen on twitter.

What is work? Work is struggle. There are difficulties and problems in those places for us to overcome and solve. We go there to work and struggle to overcome these difficulties. A good comrade is one who is more eager to go where the difficulties are greater.

src: ["On the Chungking Negotiations" \(October 17, 1945\), Selected Works, Vol. IV, p. 58. \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch21.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch21.htm)

Communists should set an example in being practical as well as far-sighted. For only by being practical can they fulfil the appointed tasks, and only far-sightedness can prevent them from losing their bearings in the march forward.

src: ["The Role of the Communist Party of China in the National War" \(October 1938\), Selected Works, Vol. II, p. 198. \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch28.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch28.htm)

Conscientious practice of self-criticism is still another hallmark distinguishing our Party from all other political parties. As we say, dust will accumulate if a room is not cleaned regularly, our faces will get dirty if they are not washed regularly. Our comrades' minds and our Party's work may also collect dust, and also need sweeping and washing. The proverb "Running water is never stale and a door-hinge is never worm-eaten" means that constant motion prevents the inroads of germs and other organisms. To check up regularly on our work and in the process develop a democratic style of work, to fear neither criticism nor self-criticism, and to apply such good popular Chinese maxims as "Say all you know and say it without reserve", "Blame not the speaker but be warned by his words" and "Correct mistakes if you have committed them and guard against them if you have not" – this is the only effective way to prevent all kinds of political dust and germs from contaminating the minds of our comrades and the body of our Party.

src: ["On Coalition Government" \(April 24, 1945\), Selected Works, Vol. III, pp. 316–17.](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch27.htm)
(<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/red-book/ch27.htm>)

To Be Attacked By The Enemy Is Not A Bad Thing But A Good Thing
(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_32.htm) (1939) notes

I hold that it is bad as far as we are concerned if a person, a political party, an army or a school is not attacked by the enemy, for in that case it would definitely mean that we have sunk to the level of the enemy. It is good if we are attacked by the enemy, since it proves that we have drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves. It is still better if the enemy attacks us wildly and paints us as utterly black and without a single virtue; it demonstrates that we have not only drawn a clear line of demarcation between the enemy and ourselves but achieved a great deal in our work.

Oppose Book Worship
(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_11.htm) (1930) notes

Lesson: must look at class relationships and intersections to understand how the world works and how to fix it.

1. No investigation, no right to speak – either know what you're talking about or do not muddy the waters with garbage words.
2. To investigate a problem is to solve it – don't get lost at large scope; inquire into everything in order to gather the necessary materials to build a solution.
3. Oppose book worship – do not blindly follow directives or information without questioning whether or not it furthers the circumstances of the struggle.
4. Without investigating the actual situation, there is bound to be an idealist appraisal of class forces and an idealist guidance in working, resulting either in opportunism or in putschism – wipe out idealism by investigating.
5. The aim of social and economic investigation is to arrive at a correct appraisal of class

forces and then to formulate correct tactics for the struggle – need to find who to ally with and who to overthrow, which is only done via thorough understanding of the situation. Must look at all types of workers/proletariat/bourgeoisie, at all levels (small/middle/rich), in both rural and urban settings.

6. Victory in China's revolutionary struggle will depend on the Chinese comrades' understanding of Chinese conditions – win the support of the majority and do not be optimistic, complacent, or conservative – get into the struggle, investigate facts, foster progressive and militant communist ideals.
7. The technique of investigation – hold fact-finding meetings and investigative discussions. Pull in old people for experience and new people for ideas, pull in those from all facets of life, pull in as many people as you're comfortable with. Prepare and follow detailed outlines, participate personally, probe deeply, and make your own notes.

On Practice (https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-1/mswv1_16.htm) (1937) notes

- First, while practicing, the external relations (phenomenal side; separate aspects) are observed.
- These give rise to perceptions and impressions until a leap into understanding where concepts are formed. Concepts are no longer phenomena; by means of judgement and inference, one is able to draw meaningful conclusions.
- The real task of knowing is, through perception, to arrive at thought, to arrive step by step at the comprehension of the internal contradictions of objective things, of their laws and of the internal relations between one process and another, that is, to arrive at logical knowledge... logical knowledge differs from perceptual knowledge in that perceptual knowledge pertains to the separate aspects, the phenomena and the external relations of things, whereas logical knowledge takes a big stride forward to reach the totality, the essence and the internal relations of things and discloses the inner contradictions in the surrounding world. Therefore, logical knowledge is capable of grasping the development of the surrounding world in its totality, in the internal relations of all its aspects.
- If you want to know the theory and methods of revolution, you must take part in revolution. All genuine knowledge originates in direct experience.
- There can be no knowledge apart from practice. What is indirect experience for me is direct experience for other people. Consequently, considered as a whole, knowledge of any kind is inseparable from direct experience.
- But generally speaking, whether in the practice of changing nature or of changing society, men's original ideas, theories, plans or programmes are seldom realized without any alteration.
- In a revolutionary period the situation changes very rapidly; if the knowledge of revolutionaries does not change rapidly in accordance with the changed situation, they will be unable to lead the revolution to victory.
- The thinking of "Leftists" outstrips a given stage of development of the objective process; some regard their fantasies as truth, while others strain to realize in the present an ideal which can only be realized in the future. They alienate themselves from the current practice of the majority of the people and from the realities of the day, and show themselves adventurist in their actions.
- Idealism and mechanical materialism, opportunism and adventurism, are all characterized by the breach between the subjective and the objective, by the separation of knowledge from practice. The Marxist-Leninist theory of knowledge, characterized as it is by scientific social practice, cannot but resolutely oppose these wrong ideologies. Marxists recognize that in the absolute and general process of development of the universe, the

development of each particular process is relative, and that hence, in the endless flow of absolute truth, man's knowledge of a particular process at any given stage of development is only relative truth. The sum total of innumerable relative truths constitutes absolute truth. [9] The development of an objective process is full of contradictions and struggles, and so is the development of the movement of human knowledge. All the dialectical movements of the objective world can sooner or later be reflected in human knowledge. In social practice, the process of coming into being, developing and passing away is infinite, and so is the process of coming into being, developing and passing away in human knowledge. As man's practice which changes objective reality in accordance with given ideas, theories, plans or programmes, advances further and further, his knowledge of objective reality likewise becomes deeper and deeper. The movement of change in the world of objective reality is never-ending and so is man's cognition of truth through practice. Marxism-Leninism has in no way exhausted truth but ceaselessly opens up roads to the knowledge of truth in the course of practice. Our conclusion is the concrete, historical unity of the subjective and the objective, of theory and practice, of knowing and doing, and we are opposed to all erroneous ideologies, whether "Left" or Right, which depart from concrete history.

- Discover the truth through practice, and again through practice verify and develop the truth. Start from perceptual knowledge and actively develop it into rational knowledge; then start from rational knowledge and actively guide revolutionary practice to change both the subjective and the objective world. Practice, knowledge, again practice, and again knowledge. This form repeats itself in endless cycles, and with each cycle the content of practice and knowledge rises to a higher level. Such is the whole of the dialectical-materialist theory of knowledge, and such is the dialectical-materialist theory of the unity of knowing and doing.

On Contradiction (<https://redsails.org/on-contradiction/>) (1937) notes

- The universality or absoluteness of contradiction has a twofold meaning. One is that contradiction exists in the process of development of all things, and the other is that in the process of development of each thing a movement of opposites exists from beginning to end.
- Every difference in men's concepts should be regarded as reflecting an objective contradiction. Objective contradictions are reflected in subjective thinking, and this process constitutes the contradictory movement of concepts, pushes forward the development of thought, and ceaselessly solves problems in man's thinking.
- To be one-sided and superficial is at the same time to be subjective. For all objective things are actually interconnected and are governed by inner laws, but instead of undertaking the task of reflecting things as they really are some people only look at things one-sidedly or superficially and who know neither their interconnections nor their inner laws, and so their method is subjectivist.
- When Marx applied this law to the study of the economic structure of capitalist society, he discovered that the basic contradiction of this society is the contradiction between the social character of production and the private character of ownership. This contradiction manifests itself in the contradiction between the organized character of production in individual enterprises and the anarchic character of production in society as a whole. In terms of class relations, it manifests itself in the contradiction between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.
- But whatever happens, there is no doubt at all that at every stage in the development of a process, there is only one principal contradiction which plays the leading role.
- Of the two contradictory aspects, one must be principal and the other secondary. The

principal aspect is the one playing the leading role in the contradiction. The nature of a thing is determined mainly by the principal aspect of a contradiction, the aspect which has gained the dominant position.

- This is what Lenin means when he says that dialectics studies "how opposites can be ... identical". How then can they be identical? Because each is the condition for the other's existence. This is the first meaning of identity. (eg. Without the bourgeoisie, there would be no proletariat; without the proletariat, there would be no bourgeoisie.)
- All contradictory things are interconnected; not only do they coexist in a single entity in given conditions, but in other given conditions, they also transform themselves into each other. This is the full meaning of the identity of opposites. (eg. war and peace)
- There are two states of motion in all things, that of relative rest and that of conspicuous change. Both are caused by the struggle between the two contradictory elements contained in a thing. When the thing is in the first state of motion, it is undergoing only quantitative and not qualitative change and consequently presents the outward appearance of being at rest. When the thing is in the second state of motion, the quantitative change of the first state has already reached a culminating point and gives rise to the dissolution of the thing as an entity and thereupon a qualitative change ensues, hence the appearance of a conspicuous change.
- We may now say a few words to sum up. The law of contradiction in things, that is, the law of the unity of opposites, is the fundamental law of nature and of society and therefore also the fundamental law of thought. It stands opposed to the metaphysical world outlook. It represents a great revolution in the history of human knowledge. According to dialectical materialism, contradiction is present in all processes of objectively existing things and of subjective thought and permeates all these processes from beginning to end; this is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction. Each contradiction and each of its aspects have their respective characteristics; this is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. In given conditions, opposites possess identity, and consequently can coexist in a single entity and can transform themselves into each other; this again is the particularity and relativity of contradiction. But the struggle of opposites is ceaseless, it goes on both when the opposites are coexisting and when they are transforming themselves into each other, and becomes especially conspicuous when they are transforming themselves into one another; this again is the universality and absoluteness of contradiction. In studying the particularity and relativity of contradiction, we must give attention to the distinction between the principal contradiction and the non-principal contradictions and to the distinction between the principal aspect and the non-principal aspect of a contradiction; in studying the universality of contradiction and the struggle of opposites in contradiction, we must give attention to the distinction between the different forms of struggle. Otherwise we shall make mistakes. If, through study, we achieve a real understanding of the essentials explained above, we shall be able to demolish dogmatist ideas which are contrary to the basic principles of Marxism-Leninism and detrimental to our revolutionary cause, and our comrades with practical experience will be able to organize their experience into principles and avoid repeating empiricist errors. These are a few simple conclusions from our study of the law of contradiction.
- Every system has internal forces at play. Some work together and some oppose each other (eg. API contract violation would be a contradiction; force diagram in physics shows how forces work together/against each other to determine the sum and understand its circumstances). These contradictions determine how the system moves at any time on any level.

Purpose: to exchange ideas and examine the relationship between work in the literary and artistic fields and revolutionary work in general

- simultaneous military and cultural fronts for the struggle for liberation.

index tags: Philosophy, Communists, Reading List, Reading Notes, Marxism, Marxism–Leninism, Mao–Zedong–Thought, ML–MZT, Dialectics, Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, Joseph Stalin, Mao Zedong, Mao, Zedong, RedSails, RedPrintsPublishing, We Must Unite All The Forces That Can Be United, To Be Attacked By The Enemy Is Not A Bad Thing But A Good Thing, Where Do Correct Ideas Come From?, Oppose Book Worship, On Practice, On Contradiction, On Guerilla Warfare, On Correcting Mistaken Ideas in the Party, Combat Liberalism, Talks at the Yan'an Forum on Literature and Art, In Memory of Norman Bethune, Serve the People, The Foolish Old Man Who Removed the Mountains, Some Questions Concerning Methods of Leadership, ARAK, Five Golden Rays, Mass Line, Guerilla Warfare, Liberalism, Contradiction, Practice, Dogmatism, Art, Leadership, Feminism, Technology, Organizing, Uniting

On Sankara

2022-12-11

"Why Sankara next? I like him. I like his discipline and ideals, I like his concrete actions, I like what he stands for to this day. I like his symbolic heart and the material change he affected, and I like how he focused on improving things for those who didn't have the vantage. He's a Robin Hood type, he's a hero in my eyes. I also like that he's a fellow guitar head, that's cool too, plus he was always fitted with the military suit and beret, I mean I could list here all day"

Comrades, there is no true social revolution without the liberation of women. May my eyes never see and my feet never take me to a society where half the people are held in silence. I hear the roar of women's silence. I sense the rumble of their storm and feel the fury of their revolt.

(see: [On Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism\)](/posts/on-feminism))

Imperialism is a system of exploitation that occurs not only in the brutal form of those who come with guns to conquer territory. Imperialism often occurs in more subtle forms, a loan, food aid, blackmail . We are fighting this system that allows a handful of men on Earth to rule all of humanity.

(see: [On Lenin \(/posts/on-lenin\)](/posts/on-lenin))

Our revolution is not a public-speaking tournament. Our revolution is not a battle of fine phrases. Our revolution is not simply for spouting slogans that are no more than signals used by manipulators trying to use them as catchwords, as codewords, as a foil for their own display. Our revolution is, and should continue to be, the collective effort of revolutionaries to transform reality, to improve the concrete situation of the masses of our country.

We must dare to invent the future.

As revolutionaries, we don't have the right to say we are tired of explaining. We must never stop explaining. We know that when the people understand, they cannot help but follow us.

Thomas Sankara

First seen in [On Africa \(/posts/on-africa\)](/posts/on-africa)

TODO: intro/bio

TODO: guitar

TODO: more tags, figure out convention for this article, che, etc.

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle](https://libcom.org/article/womens-liberation-and-african-freedom-struggle) (<https://libcom.org/article/womens-liberation-and-african-freedom-struggle>) (1990)
 - [A United Front Against Debt](https://viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/united-front-debt-1987/) (<https://viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/united-front-debt-1987/>) (1987)
-

[Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle](https://libcom.org/article/womens-liberation-and-african-freedom-struggle)
[\(<https://libcom.org/article/womens-liberation-and-african-freedom-struggle>\)](https://libcom.org/article/womens-liberation-and-african-freedom-struggle) (1990) notes

Speech: The revolution cannot triumph without the emancipation of women.

Given: March 08, 1987

- Posing the question of women in Burkinabe society today means posing the abolition of the system of slavery to which they have been subjected for millennia. The first step is to try to understand how this system works, to grasp its real nature in all its subtlety, in order then to work out a line of action that can lead to women's total emancipation.
- The women of Burkina were able to ascertain after several years of this ministry's existence that nothing had changed for them. And it could not be otherwise, given that the approach to the question of women's liberation that led to the creation of this

pseudoministry refused to recognize, show, and take into account the real cause of women's subjugation and exploitation. So we should not be surprised that, despite the existence of this ministry, prostitution grew, women's access to education and jobs did not improve, their civil and political rights were ignored, and the general conditions of their lives in town and countryside alike improved not one iota.

- There can be no clearer way to conceptualize and explain the question of women and the liberation struggle ahead of us. "The genuine emancipation of women is that which entrusts responsibilities to them and involves them in productive activity and in the different struggles the people face. Women's genuine emancipation is one that exacts men's respect and consideration."
- What is clearly indicated here, sister comrades, is that the struggle to liberate women is above all your struggle to deepen our democratic and popular revolution, a revolution that grants you from this moment on the right to speak and act in building a new society of justice and equality, in which men and women have the same rights and responsibilities. The democratic and popular revolution has created the conditions for such a liberating struggle. It now falls to you to act with the greatest sense of responsibility in breaking through all the shackles and obstacles that enslave women in backward societies like ours and to assume your share of the responsibilities in the political fight to build a new society at the service of Africa and all humanity.
- So what tasks does our democratic and popular revolution have in respect to women's emancipation? What acquisitions do we have, and what obstacles still remain? One of the main acquisitions of the revolution with regard to women's emancipation was, without any doubt, the establishment of the Women's Union of Burkina (UFB). This is a major acquisition because it has provided the women of our country with a framework and a solid mechanism with which to wage a successful fight. Establishing the UFB represents a big victory in that it allows for the mobilization of all politically active women around well-defined and just objectives, under the leadership of the National Council of the Revolution. The UFB is an organization of militant and serious women who are determined to change things, to fight until they win, to fall and fall again, but to get back on their feet and go forward without retreating. This is the new consciousness that has taken root among the women of Burkina, and we should all be proud of it. Comrades, the Women's Union of Burkina is your combat weapon. It belongs to you. Sharpen it again and again so that its blade will cut more deeply, bringing you ever-greater victories.
- Another sure source of the problem is the feudal, reactionary, and passive attitude of many men who by their behavior continue to hold things back. They have absolutely no intention of jeopardizing the total control they have over women, either at home or in society in general. In the struggle to build a new society, which is a revolutionary struggle, these men place themselves on the side of reaction and counterrevolution by their conduct. For the revolution cannot triumph without the genuine emancipation of women.
- We are not pleading for anyone to condescendingly do women a favor. We are demanding, in the name of the revolution—whose purpose is to give, not to take—that justice be done to women
- Comrades, sisters and brothers, experience shows us more and more that in changing the classical order of things only the organized people are capable of wielding power democratically. Justice and equality are the basic principles that allow women to show that societies are wrong not to have confidence in them on the political and economic level. The woman, wielding the power she has gained among the people, is in a position to rehabilitate all women condemned by history. In undertaking to profoundly and qualitatively transform our society, the changes wrought by our revolution must include the aspirations of the Burkinabe woman.
- Comrades, the future demands that women be freed, and the future, everywhere, brings revolutions. If we lose the fight to liberate women we will have lost all right to hope for a

positive transformation of our society into something superior. Our revolution will then have no meaning. It is to wage this noble struggle that all of us, men and women, are summoned.

- Comrades, there is no true social revolution without the liberation of women. May my eyes never see and my feet never take me to a society where half the people are held in silence. I hear the roar of women's silence. I sense the rumble of their storm and feel the fury of their revolt. I await and hope for the fertile eruption of the revolution through which they will transmit the power and the rigorous justice issued from their oppressed wombs

Speech: Women's role in the democratic and popular revolution

Given: October 02, 1983

- The genuine emancipation of women is that which entrusts responsibilities to them and involves them in productive activity and in the different struggles the people face. Women's genuine emancipation is one that exacts men's respect and consideration. Emancipation, like freedom, is not granted but conquered. It is for women themselves to put forward their demands and mobilize to win them.

A United Front Against Debt

(<https://viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/united-front-debt-1987/>) (1987)

notes

- Debt is neo-colonialism, in which colonizers have transformed themselves into "technical assistants." We should rather say "technical assassins." They present us with financing, with financial backers. As if someone's backing could create development. We have been advised to go to these lenders. We have been offered nice financial arrangements. We have been indebted for 50, 60 years and even longer. That means we have been forced to compromise our people for over 50 years.
- We cannot accept to be told about the merit of those who repay and the mistrust toward those who do not. On the contrary, we must recognize today that it is normal for the wealthiest to be the greatest thieves. When a poor man steals it is merely a theft, a petty crime -- it is solely about survival and necessity. The rich are the ones who steal from the treasury, customs duties, and who exploit the people.
- Notes support from Fidel Castro, François Mitterrand, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Félix Houphouët-Boigny for not paying debt
- Notes that weapons are used against other Africans and that peace must be attained. The weapons bought do not reach the oppressors.
- Advocates for removing dependence on external nations, advocates to produce what they need and consume what they produce within Africa in a united front against debt.

index tags: Communists, Africa, Burkina Faso, Reading List, Reading Notes, Thomas Sankara, Sankara, A United Front Against Debt, Neo-Colonialism, Debt, Fidel Castro, François Mitterrand, Gro Harlem Brundtland, Félix Houphouët-Boigny, Guitar, Women's Liberation, Women's Liberation and the African Freedom Struggle, Feminism, Vladimir Lenin

On Voting

2022-12-12

"Literally just so we don't waste time"

My thoughts on Voting and US Electoral Politics

- Communist and Socialist parties should run candidates if/when/where that's financially feasible and stands a real chance to win.
 - Where that's not possible, Communists and Socialists should run in local offices and work to coalition build (ie. [unite \(/posts/on-unity\)](/posts/on-unity)) until it is.
-
- In the meantime, voting is quick. Imo, you should vote for the most progressive candidate likely to realistically win. Takes a few hours every season, if that.
 - And resources are sparse. The Democratic and Republican establishments are both wings of ruthless capitalism and brutal imperialism. We should not be spending our resources giving money or time to parties who unilaterally allow misery at home and endorse it overseas.
 - Vote for whoever you want, or don't vote if you think that's the most useful use of your ballot. I'm not telling you what to do – though I do think some candidates (especially at local levels, in certain areas) are materially better than some of their opponents. And after that, go give a pair of socks to the guy on the street; read a [book \(/posts/on-site-contents-by-topic\)](/posts/on-site-contents-by-topic); see if any of your friends want to go volunteering with you; reach out to someone you miss; lay down and vibe to some [music \(/posts/on-music\)](/posts/on-music); go for a run, or a swim, or a climb. Don't waste any more time on US electoral politics than you have to, keep your eyes on the [prize \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing).
-

index tags: Voting, Communists, Democrats, Republicans, US, America, North America, Electoral Politics, Bernie Sanders, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Joe Biden

On Hồ Chí Minh

2022-12-13

"Uncle Ho, "

Remember, the storm is a good opportunity for the pine and the cypress to show their strength and their stability.

It is well known that the black race is the most oppressed and most exploited of the human family. It is well known that the spread of capitalism and the discovery of the New World had as an immediate result the rebirth of slavery which was, for centuries, a scourge for the Negroes and a bitter disgrace for mankind. What everyone does not perhaps know, is that after sixty-five years of so-called emancipation, American Negroes still endure atrocious moral and material sufferings, of which the most cruel and horrible is the custom of lynching.

Hồ Chí Minh

First covered in [On Asia \(/posts/on-asia\)](#), I'll eventually add more info about Uncle Ho. In short: He led the Việt Minh independence movement and he was a key figure in the People's Army of Vietnam and the Việt Cộng during the Vietnam War. Saigon was renamed Ho Chi Minh City in his honor.

For now, I'll link some works (in a logical order) and post some of my own notes for quick takeaways:

- [The Path Which Led Me To Leninism \(https://redsails.org/the-path-which-led-me-to-leninism/\)](https://redsails.org/the-path-which-led-me-to-leninism/) (1960)

The Path Which Led Me To Leninism (1960)

- Post WW1 in Paris, at French Socialist Party
- given Lenin's "Thesis on the national and colonial questions"

There were political terms difficult to understand in this thesis. But by dint of reading it again and again, finally I could grasp the main part of it. What emotion, enthusiasm, clear-sightedness and confidence it instilled into me! I was overjoyed to tears. Though sitting alone in my room, I shouted out aloud as if addressing large crowds: 'Dear martyrs compatriots! This is what we need, this is the path to our liberation!'

My only argument was: 'If you do not condemn colonialism, if you do not side with the colonial people, what kind of revolution are you waging?'

There is a legend, in our country as well as in China, on the miraculous 'Book of the Wise'. When facing great difficulties, one opens it and finds a way out.

Leninism is not only a miraculous 'book of the wise', a compass for us Vietnamese revolutionaries and people: it is also the radiant sun illuminating our path to final victory, to socialism and communism.

index tags: Communists, Asia, Vietnam, Reading List, Reading Notes, Hồ Chí Minh, Hồ, Minh, The Path Which Led Me To Leninism

On Pornography

2022-12-14

"full disclosure: I'm anti"

Where to begin. I'll speak first to the young readers, because they're the most inexperienced and thus the most in need of guidance. But some of these topics are taboo, and I fear lots of folks haven't gotten guidance of this type well into their adulthood.

- Porn is not sex. Porn is not even really like sex. You shouldn't copy what you see in porn, and you should do your best to remember that any potential partners you interact with aren't going to be picture-perfect like some of the edited videos you're used to. They are real humans, who do not exist for your sexual pleasure. You are a real human, who does not exist for anyone else's sexual pleasure.
 - Porn propagates unhealthy images of sexuality, women, gender identities, minorities, misogyny, motherhood, family, ...
 - Porn is the commodification of sex, and it's dangerously addictive (especially in times when people are lonely and isolated, especially in times when dating is at low points due to lack of access [ie. people are busy and also don't have money and also often live with their parents till later] and the commodification of dating [ie. apps that can exacerbate gender tensions and unhealthy gender dynamics; apps that cause people to question their worth and their options])
 - The instant access to an infinite amount of sexual commodification is dangerous to consumers. Porn consumption makes people hypersexual. It makes men get erectile dysfunction at increasingly young ages. It makes people dissatisfied with their real sexual relationships, in favor of internet images.
 - It is much more dangerous to those involved in sex work. From young girls being trafficked into prostitution and for the production of pornography, to prostitutes who deal with violent clients, to women who are being forced to produce OnlyFans videos by their partner or pimp. These are (many of) the exploited people (predominantly women and girls, but men and boys as well) who generate the body of images and videos utilized for pornography. These are the people I am speaking for, first and foremost.
-

Very succinctly:

1. Porn necessitates sexual violence for its production in the current iteration of society. ie. you are (often) watching children and teenagers being raped when you consume pornography.
2. The increasing access to pornography (prevalence of internet-access devices, at younger and younger ages) is causing people (especially boys and young men) to develop unhealthy images of sexuality, relationships, women, and gender/racial minorities. It is extraordinarily dangerous [media \(/posts/on-media\)](#) to consume.
3. The logical follow-up to points 1 and 2 is that you should be doing what you can to stop the consumption of porn (your own, first; then by your friends, and family, and the kids who get iPads before elementary school). You should be thinking about how to stop the trafficking of girls into the sex trade, and you should be thinking about how to destroy an industry that will continue to negatively materially impact women's lives. Building towards gender equality means eradicating the unhealthy notions propagated in porn, because it means eradicating the commonplace sexual violence women face in all facets of life.

In the words of [Emma Lazarus \(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emma_Lazarus\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emma_Lazarus), "Until we are all free, we are none of us free."

All that said:

- Sexuality is natural.
- Sex is a normal thing. Masturbation is healthy.
- Exposure to naked people, kissing, sex at relatively young ages is healthy (in healthy contexts).
- Some amount of natural exposure to porn in the past (eg. stumbling upon an old nude pinup photo in the woods) was probably somewhat acceptable. Looking through a saucy SEARS catalog was probably a good thing to do at 9 years old, as was holding hands with the people I liked. But there's a line that's been crossed, with the advent of technology and the progression of the porn industry. With all social media, the lines between real life and carefully crafted image is blurred. The lines between streaming in hot tubs on Twitch and going on TikTok live in a bikini and whatever technical definition of "porn" you have are becoming increasingly hazy as well. Drones of pornographic content is available on platforms that are commonly accessible by children, not to mention the open internet.
- Historically taboo topics must be broached with honesty and transparency in order to dispel outdated notions and ideals. We must be talking about this stuff, often and loudly, in order to help people understand the dangers of a widely-accepted, corporate-backed industry that's dangerous for everyone involved.
- You should talk to your friends about how to establish healthy friendships and partnerships. You should establish healthy support systems for yourself and for your friends.
- Talking about it more will allow you to make sure your friends are safe and doing well, and it'll give you more perspectives into how relationships should (and shouldn't) work.
- Being communicative with your partner (or potential partners) is the best way to ensure you're on the same page as them. Being communicative with your friends is the best way to ensure you're going through regular experiences and handling them in the best way possible for all the parties involved.
- Relationships (and time alone) are both learning experiences. You can learn a lot about people in any relationship. You can see how they think and what they care about and how they do things. You can emulate their strengths when you notice them; you can strive to avoid their weaknesses, when you notice something about them bothering you. You should be building yourself up through the relationship, and you should be helping your friends and partners do the same. Cover their weaknesses, maybe they'll learn how to cover yours.
- Keep [learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning) from all the people and relationships in your life. Keep [building new ones \(/posts/on-uniting\)](/posts/on-uniting). Keep [working hard \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing). Eventually, you'll be the person you want to be – and [you'll be confident and ready in all your relationships then \(/posts/on-meditations\)](/posts/on-meditations).

As Rituraj ([@ltinerantMedic](https://twitter.com/ltinerantMedic) (<https://twitter.com/ltinerantMedic>)) says on [twitter](https://twitter.com/ltinerantMedic/status/1585452854000889856) (<https://twitter.com/ltinerantMedic/status/1585452854000889856>):

Mainstream porn is the graphic, sexualised depiction of male dominance and female subordination. It eroticises male aggression towards women. It is hate speech, anti-woman propaganda and sexual terrorism against women.

It dehumanises women as sexual objects existing wholly for men's sexual use and abuse. Porn is completely at odds with women's dignity, humanity and equality.

A 2010 content analysis of popular porn videos found that 88.2% of scenes contained physical aggression, and that perpetrators were usually male and the targets of their aggression overwhelmingly female. Dr Michael Flood describes porn as "rape training".

Research has also found pornography consumption is statistically significantly correlated with physical abuse (both victimisation and perpetration), sexual abuse (both victimisation and perpetration), acceptance of rape myths and negative gender equitable attitudes.

Porn is also a significant contributor to intimate partner sexual violence and abuse. New research has found that pornography features prominently in accounts of women who have experienced Intimate Partner Sexual Violence.

While some dismiss porn as "just a fantasy", in reality, it is the filmed abuse, violation and degradation of actual human women. For the women being brutalised on camera, it is real.

A pornographic scene featuring a man choking a woman cannot be produced without an actual woman being choked, for the enjoyment of (mostly male) viewers. When acts of sexual violence, humiliation and cruelty are carried out by men on the bodies of women, this is not fantasy

So, we must disagree – yes, the problem is with pornography itself. It is not merely that boys are seeing it too young, or that it needs to be balanced with less violent and misogynistic representations of sexuality.

We can't achieve gender equality without challenging pornography and its messages. Read [Caitlin Roper's response to Chanel Contos, entitled 'Yes the problem is porn'] at: [Collective Shout](https://www.collectiveshout.org/response%20to%20chanel%20contos) ([https://www.collectiveshout.org/response to chanel contos](https://www.collectiveshout.org/response%20to%20chanel%20contos))

In the words of Star Plátano (@Qban Linx ([https://twitter.com/Qban Linx](https://twitter.com/Qban_Linx))) [here](https://twitter.com/Qban_Linx/status/1584890802378919936) ([https://twitter.com/Qban Linx/status/1584890802378919936](https://twitter.com/Qban_Linx/status/1584890802378919936)),

[Porn] is a garbage industry whose distribution platforms are run by some of the worst people on the planet, completely unaccountable to the public (partially because most people don't even know their names), and the product has deeply warped people's perception of sex and intimacy.

That's not me being a prude, that's just a straightforward cost-benefit analysis.

TODO: citations

TODO: brigid, etc – accts that helped

TODO: Dworkin, MacKinnon, etc. link [Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism\)](#)

index tags: Feminism, Communists, Marxist Feminism, LGBTQ+, Health(care), Trans Rights, Pornography, Prostitution, Catharine A. MacKinnon, Sexuality, Sex, Masturbation, Communication, Relationships, Emma Lazarus, Yes the problem is porn: A response to Chanel Contos, Caitlin Roper, @ItinerantMedic, @Qban_Linx

On Cops

2022-12-15

"another anti, I'm afraid"

TODO: explanation of what cops are, what function they serve under the current capitalist state.

TODO: relevant links re: above

For now, I'll talk about a few links I've got bookmarked.

[This \(https://www.wnyc.org/story/citing-drugs-rikers-nyc-ban-incarcerated-people-getting-letters-mail/\)](https://www.wnyc.org/story/citing-drugs-rikers-nyc-ban-incarcerated-people-getting-letters-mail/) story, headlined "Citing drugs at Rikers, NYC to ban incarcerated people from getting letters in the mail", speaks about correction commissioner Louis Molina citing "fentanyl-soaked children's drawings, love letters, prayer schedules, and T-shirts" as rationale behind NYC banning incarcerated people from getting letters in the mail. As [David Kaib \(https://twitter.com/DavidKaib\)](#) says on [twitter \(https://twitter.com/DavidKaib/status/1585764778550562816\)](#):

This is an obvious lie in service of doing something indefensible. That prison and jail officials lie so blatantly and that journalists treat those lies as true is disgusting.

index tags: North America, America, USA, ACAB, LGBTQ+, Health(care), BPP, Black Panther Party, David Kaib, @DavidKaib, Louis Molina,

On George Jackson

2022-12-16

"fitting one to come after the cops"

Settle your quarrels, come together, understand the reality of our situation, understand that fascism is already here, that people are already dying who could be saved, that generations more will live poor butchered half-lives if you fail to act... Do what must be done, discover your humanity and your love in revolution."

— George L. Jackson

TODO: everything

index tags: George Jackson, North America, America, USA, ACAB, LGBTQ+, Health(care), BPP, Black Panther Party,

On IronProle

2022-12-17

"aka Red, aka Red Army Duck, aka Junkyard Duck, aka a comrade in the Washington area who's been very helpful towards my education."

As seen on [twitter \(https://twitter.com/IronProle\)](https://twitter.com/IronProle), working hard to keep his community fed, healthy, and growing with [From The Heart PNW \(https://allmylinks.com/FromtheheartPNW\)](https://allmylinks.com/FromtheheartPNW).

Please look at the work they're doing to see how you can fulfil similar needs in your own communities. Please help support the work that these folks are doing, if you're able.

Apart from his thoughts on twitter, Red also recommended Activist Study - Araling Aktibista (aka [ARAK \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55825394-activist-study-araling-aktibista\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/55825394-activist-study-araling-aktibista)). It's a great read by the Communist Party of Philippines' Education Department, which you can read from [Foreign Languages Press \(https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/\)](https://foreignlanguages.press/colorful-classics/activist-study-araling-aktibista-arak/) for free.

It's a great resource to get up-to-speed with Red's work and mindset, and I highly recommend checking it out as well.

I'm going to post some of the things I've learned from Red. His outlook on life and his role within it have shaped my understanding of what a comrade should do; of what a comrade does.

I don't have too much of it documented, many of his thoughts may become hard to find with the passage of time. I am absolutely thankful for the learnings I've been able to take from him so far, and his spirit will live on in the work all of us continue to do. I believe, fundamentally, we share a [purpose and attitude \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing).

More than anything, it's been a pleasure to witness some of the beauty of humanity within a comrade I respect dearly. I strive to live a life as meaningful as his, and I work each day towards that effort.

Your first job (src **<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1367948751453655043>**

Your first job in guerrilla warfare is to survive. The fight is long, and the fire is hot. We don't need to run to a flame that's already headed our way.

Prepare yourself for survival and you are preparing yourself for success.

Running toward the fire because you are bored or guilty or for some other secondary reason is for you, not for the People.

Discipline, Frugality and Humility are the ways of the guerrilla warrior. You survive so you can serve.

Build a world worth living in. (src **<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1584717008415096832>**

The Marxism I practice has no room to tell anyone that their pain is not real that that their palliatives are not useful.

Change minds by making a world worth living in and nobody will retreat from it, nobody will seek out such palliatives.

Change conditions and minds will change with them. Heal the leg and the opiate is no longer required.

First things first.

If your Marxism is one of judgement and moralizing, of penalizing and crushing, it is not one that we share in common.

We stay armed with compassion, with constructive works and with a focus on reducing harm.

Build a world worth living in.

Red's take on [understanding the river \(/posts/on-siddhartha\)](/posts/on-siddhartha)
([src](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1583186938491961344)
(<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1583186938491961344>

Once you stop trying to swim against the current and realize things are as they must and should be, everything falls into place.

No wishful thinking, no idealistic daydreaming. No false hopes. Just concrete actions and clarity of purpose.

I could wish things were easier, or i can make them easier for someone else.

I can wish i had a mentor or i can be that mentor i wish i had.

I could hope for long life or i can help build longer lives for those who would otherwise be lost.

Life is as it must be. It is the only way it could be.

From there we can move toward changes that matter. From there we can create history.

First-Things-Firstism ([src](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1583308752627044352)
(<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1583308752627044352>

First-Things-Firstism

Fill Bellies.

Mend Bones.

Settle Minds.

Throttle Aspirations.

If nothing else this should be what you remember from me.

Put first things first.

The first three are self explanatory but the fourth always gets me questions.

We mean that we encourage people with aspirations to advance their profession or their studies to do so, even over the street work, so they can bring their skills back to the work.

You want to get a MD? focus on your studies and give us only your freest time. Get your grades, pass your exams and bring it back to the streets.

Your skills, knowledge, expertise and your newfound income will help the movement.

You wanna be a lawyer? Do it we support it, so you can bring that advantage to the people and their needs.

Its cultivating people and their abilities, building potential for the movement and splitting valuable labor from the exploitation of the owners.

We must be developing our forces at all times and all hands are needed. This fourth point is the longest looking one of the pack, the one that requires a firm rooting in place and time.

But it is crucial to our long term success that we have our own experts.

So instead of going for that better paying job on the east coast, we need to capture that expertise. Maybe they take the lesser job in order to continue serving the people. Maybe they forgo some of that aspiration and join us once more in service at the street level.

This is what it means to throttle aspirations. Not to kill them, in fact to support them, but to limit their usefulness to the bourgeois and maximize their value to our neighbors.

In this way people fulfil themselves and each other effortlessly.

**More book recs from Red ([src](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1571685222475005954)
<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1571685222475005954>**

[How To Hide An Empire \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40121985-how-to-hide-an-empire\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40121985-how-to-hide-an-empire), [How Europe Underdeveloped Africa \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40630.How_Europe_Underdeveloped_Africa\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40630.How_Europe_Underdeveloped_Africa) and [Wages of Destruction \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/711592.The_Wages_of_Destruction\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/711592.The_Wages_of_Destruction)

are three must reads for greenhorns. If you want to have an informed viewpoint on the history of colonialism. It doesn't stop there but it's a great start.

The author of HTHAE, Immerwahr, is pretty spicy and has some occasional chuckle worthy moments when he finds creative ways to describe US settlers.

HEUA, written by Walter Rodney and Angela Davis is data driven history that never stops blowing your mind at the sheer monstrosity of European colonialism.

I forgot to add [Open Veins of Latin America \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/187149.Open_Veins_of_Latin_America\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/187149.Open_Veins_of_Latin_America).

A brutal and eye opening book along the lines of HEUA, very data and fact heavy. A necessary read.

Twitter Dump

More stuff from IronProle, which should get re-organized onto his page after I'm done saving all my twitter stuff.

TODO: re-order all these

TODO: date all the above threads if twitter still exists.

Cancer – Aug 23, 2022 (src
<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1562148357451030528?s=19>)

Wellllll folks

I just got some extremely negative Cancer news. Turns out you cant defeat cancer with self confidence.

If you got a spare thought, save one for my Wife.

It is what it is. I have no control over any of this so im going to just live or die. Im gonna kiss my wife and smoke my weed.

My fate was never under my control. Ive always been a War Man, and wars have casualties. They have defeats.

Whatever you do, dont feel sorry for me. Ive seen my foes defeated in combat. Ive been a professional bicyclist. Ive been a husband and mentor and ive lifted up thousands with my work.

Ive lived more lives than many get.

Make art of me. Celebrate, but never be sorry.

I made peace with death a long time ago. You have to when you take up your rifle. Swords, you get it.

I was hoping i would live to get a warriors death. Maybe i still will.

But either way, War Mans live and we die.

Are you ready to die? – Oct 19, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1582826297419771904?t=g7FH7jYD1jsVwR0zjBorzQ&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1582826297419771904?t=g7FH7jYD1jsVwR0zjBorzQ&s=19))

MH counselor asked me if im ready to die. I answer yes without hesitation.

I tell her that life is just a sparrow flying thru a warm house, in one window and out another. We are dead far longer than we are alive, so you gotta be impactful while you are here.

I told her that if you dont wait for life to fill you up but instead fill the world up with as much of you as you have to offer, death is no worry. Ive left my greasy paw prints all over this society.

Everything is as it should be!

Garden Analogies – Sep 16, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1570969318770487296?t=T-ofqibgfJtzip1kU2aI9yw&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1570969318770487296?t=T-ofqibgfJtzip1kU2aI9yw&s=19))

Garden analogies are so good for explaining revolutionary processes.

A garden is not an event, and neither is a revolution. Both are complex processes, one historical and the other biological.

You cannot pull on your onions to make them grow faster.

Nor can you ignore history and events. We only build by navigating history. We make our own fates, but mediated by conditions that are ever shifting.

**Tilling and Conditioning of the Soil – Sep 16, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1570911724685107202?t=gcRfDV3T2rPDxzjn1RyNuW&s=19)
(<https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1570911724685107202?t=gcRfDV3T2rPDxzjn1RyNuW&s=19>))**

Mutual Aid is a necessary pre-condition but is not the revolution itself. Nobody should be claiming otherwise.

It is the tilling and conditioning of the soil in preparation for the seeds of revolution. Its where we discover new ideas and build new systems.

Logistics cannot simply be summoned from whole cloth. Systems of acquisition and distribution, moving people and things, require strong organization and clear communications.

Mutual Aid is where we put our hands on the materiel limitations of our communities. Where we build up our allies and comrades.

There is no decent excuse for looking down on mutual aid. If you cannot see its worth then that would be your own shortcoming.

Depending on the good will of our communities is a delightful daydream. We must build systems that are robust and efficient, putting labor and materials exactly on target.

This is how we will survive long enough to win. First we must live.

**Young queers – Aug 11, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1557802407676878848?t=1y_yy3b7FigL2gwTU5E8Ng&s=19)
(https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1557802407676878848?t=1y_yy3b7FigL2gwTU5E8Ng&s=19))**

The young queers sometimes don't recognize the struggles that came before them. We had to fight and bleed to make room for yall and we dont look and act like yall. We came from tougher times where we had to become arnored and clawed up.

The veterans of your struggle you now find yourselves in look ugly and mean and appear regressive sometimes.

Like any veteran of a war, we need understanding and compassion.

I learned to walk and talk hetero cuz thats what kept you safe when there was nobody coming to help you.

You could have been the next Matthew Shephard. So we armed up and got really fuckin hard to kill.

"You some kinda queer?" By anyone makes my hair stand up on end.

My Dad taught me that if more than two men ask you "you some kinda queer?" Its time for violence.

If one hetero asks you that, they want to fuck but you should run away.

All this to say that there wasnt celebrations of queer life. There were no supports. Not outside the big cities!

We supported us, but we had to give up huge parts of what many consider queer culture. We survived.

My Dad has been a closet queer his whole life but the fuckin Queer comes out real fast when you starting with some Homophobia. He would put you on your ass.

Im less closeted but you best believe the Queer comes out when its time for war. War Queers!

History – Aug 23, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1562181111404306432?t=Ozgo37tElkCq4o0ugdlstQ&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1562181111404306432?t=Ozgo37tElkCq4o0ugdlstQ&s=19))

Too much left unfinished, but the kids are young and motivated. History will march on and victory will be ours, the working class will take all we've built.

Thanks, as always, Red. Pic of him [here \(https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1562523534991454214?t=RveZJ5nfGdv2lInn_KSLeHQ&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/IronProle/status/1562523534991454214?t=RveZJ5nfGdv2lInn_KSLeHQ&s=19) and somewhere on my hard drive, I'll throw it up on the page when I do my image refactor.

TODO: ^

TODO: link this to/from a Seattle/Washington page when that gets made

index tags: @IronProle, IronProle, Red (Army Duck), North America, America, USA, ACAB, LGBTQ+, Health(care), Seattle, Washington, ARAK, Reading Lists

---# On Kids Books

2022-12-18

"books are cool; kids are cool; what books should we be giving to kids to learn from?"

Haven't read all of these, but it's a place to keep track of em. Please send me suggestions if you've got any good ones.

[Click, Clack, Moo: Cows That Type](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/766955.Click_Clack_Moo)

(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/766955.Click_Clack_Moo) by Doreen Cronin

[The Forgotten Door](https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/409320.The_Forgotten_Door) (https://www.goodreads.com/en/book/show/409320.The_Forgotten_Door)

by Alexander Key

[Noodlephant](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40510934-noodlephant) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/40510934-noodlephant>) and [Okapi Tale](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53348129-okapi-tale)

(<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/53348129-okapi-tale>) by Jacob Kramer

[Selfish Shellfish](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/33348194-selfish-shellfish) (<https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/33348194-selfish-shellfish>) by Víctor Vázquez

Thanks to [@MindyIsser](https://twitter.com/mindyisser) (<https://twitter.com/mindyisser>) for helping compile suggestions [here](https://twitter.com/mindyisser/status/1562838423375052806) (<https://twitter.com/mindyisser/status/1562838423375052806>).

index tags: Media List, Reading List, Fiction, Art, Stories, Books, Kids Books, Children, Mindy Isser, @MindyIsser

On Red Sails

2022-12-19

"and Roderic Day, and Nia Frome"

As is clear from the index, links, and site design, [RedSails](https://redsails.org/) (<https://redsails.org/>) has been a major source of inspiration. The work done by Roderic Day and Nia Frome has helped shape my understanding of what modern communists should be doing, and their work has inspired me to forge my own site in a similar vein.

First and foremost, I'd like to express a quick shoutout to Roderic+Nia for the guidance and help. Thanks a bunch! Keep up the good work, comrades.

Influential works

Roderic and Nia both do a great job writing (and curating!) articles for RedSails. The works done by the team can be found using the [@crew subdirectory \(https://redsails.org/@crew/\)](https://redsails.org/@crew/), or individually under [@roderic \(https://redsails.org/@roderic/\)](https://redsails.org/@roderic/) or [@nia \(https://redsails.org/@nia/\)](https://redsails.org/@nia/).

Technology

Roderic, as a fellow engineer who works in software, really got my attention early on because his perspective resonated with my own. This is especially clear in his [@tech \(https://redsails.org/@tech/\)](https://redsails.org/@tech/) articles. [The Virtual Factory \(02/2021\) \(https://redsails.org/the-virtual-factory/\)](https://redsails.org/the-virtual-factory/) came out right around when I found RedSails, and it's one of my favorites (helped shape my own thoughts [on technology \(/posts/on-technology/\)](/posts/on-technology/)). [Cults and Miracles \(2018\) \(https://redsails.org/cults-and-miracles/\)](https://redsails.org/cults-and-miracles/) and [On Crypto \(2021\) \(https://redsails.org/on-crypto/\)](https://redsails.org/on-crypto/) are both concise and well worth reading to understand the progression of the tech industry through the modern era.

China (and AES [Actually Existing Socialism])

Roderic and Nia were both influential towards my thoughts on China. I think that started with their tweets and that was a long time ago now, so it's hard to paint the full picture.

That said, I distinctly remember Nia's article [China Good \(2020\) \(https://medium.com/@NiaFrome/china-good-1dc6c9f9b39f\)](https://medium.com/@NiaFrome/china-good-1dc6c9f9b39f) off her [medium \(@NiaFrome\) \(https://medium.com/@NiaFrome\)](https://medium.com/@NiaFrome). I'm just gonna quote it:

Okay, let's say that communism is a classless, stateless society, with no money, where production and distribution are organized by the directly associated producers, the whole shebang. It's not very good at economic growth because production is on the basis of need, and responsive to people's wishes, which means we're probably not going to see a lot of 90-hour work weeks.

Capitalism, on the other hand, is quite good at economic growth, since that's its *raison d'être*. Of course it does run up against problems like underconsumption/overproduction, negative externalities, a huge waste of human potential and so on, but it is very good at accumulating wealth, since that's what it's all about. It's a machine for grinding up people's lives to create wealth.

What about socialism? Socialism is the transitional state between capitalism and communism. There are people who will have no truck with talk of a transitional state, which I think is stupid — what do they expect, for it to happen overnight? Marx was quite clear that it would take a while to reach communism. What can we say about socialism? Well, it's a transitional state, so it will by definition have characteristics of both capitalism and communism. Which ones, and in which order will they switch out? We can't know. The thing is, nobody has ever reached world communism, so nobody knows in what order socialism needs to abolish all the moving pieces of capitalism, or on what time frame, to achieve its purpose. It does no good to list all the lovely qualities we attribute to communism and say they must hold for a thing to be socialist, because the point of giving the transitional state its own name is to indicate that things are going to be contradictory, in flux, somewhat capitalist. We can't even know whether socialism should be good at economic growth!

There's a problem faced by all countries that want to abolish capitalism and also face the misfortune of being poor: they need to catch up, to grow economically, or else they will be utterly at the mercy of existing capitalist powers. But communism is not suited to economic growth. You can't devolve production decisions to the direct association of producers because they won't produce enough to keep the country safe from invasion and expropriation — this is more or less the problem the Bolsheviks faced with the Kronstadt rebellion. To grow means they have to make some sort of accommodation with capitalism, that bad mode of production they're trying to leave behind: either state capitalism (turning the whole economy into one firm, replacing market mechanisms with naked command) or market socialism.

The USSR went with the first route. What's more, it exported revolution (it's not important whether you agree with this; it's inarguable that, relative to China's foreign policy, the USSR was more aggressively progressive). Because it went so far down the road of abolishing market mechanisms, it had to rely on a great deal of naked coercion in order to achieve economic growth (the market usefully conceals coercion — if you want to replace it, you basically have to take full responsibility). Forced industrialization and forced collectivization are examples. This made it unpopular, which generated a divide in Soviet culture between the state and the masses. At the same time it was pissing off its people, it was pissing off the capitalist powers by pursuing an interventionist policy abroad. Thus its economy was warped in favor of heavy industry and military expenditures at the expense of consumer goods, which made it brittle and susceptible to a palace coup. Khrushchev tried to fix some of this by disavowing the state violence of Stalinism and reorienting towards a consumer society and peaceful coexistence with the West, but this just meant that there would no longer be any kind of ideological guard against embracing Western values tout court, which led the Soviet people to compare their own (much more communist and therefore less rich) society unfavorably with the West.

Dengism solves both problems at a single stroke: it invites rich countries to invest in China, which gives those countries no interest in regime changing it. To get them to come over it had to shred the social safety net, yes, because that's sine qua non for capitalist accumulation to get off the ground, and it's precisely capitalist accumulation that they wanted to harness. This means China doesn't have to invest disproportionately in military stuff and instead can focus on raising standards of living, generating growth while also reducing poverty. It always pains me to see people scoff at poverty reduction. It is hugely important to democracy, participation, communism, whatever your idea of human flourishing is. China also hasn't pursued a very progressive foreign policy, which achieves much the same thing. The wisdom of Dengism is seen in op-eds wherein Western commentators say "Don't attack China, we have interests there!" and in the stunning approval rating of the Chinese people for their government (much greater public support, consensus, than the Bolsheviks ever saw). This can be partly explained by the fact that China has offloaded responsibility for economic compulsion onto capitalism, something the Soviets could never do. A well-educated and well-fed populace is the single greatest force of production there is, and 88% of those people support socialism.

What determines whether a country is socialist is not whether it's communist, whether it has effectively abolished private property, or whether it has gotten rid of all its billionaires. The important question is the class character of the state and the direction it's heading. We can say even more: if there is a democratic entity that is sovereign over market forces, then it's well on its way to abolishing capitalism, since the capitalist mode of production is defined by the sovereignty of market forces in production.

Nia, like any good Marxist-Leninist, does a good job of analyzing growth within the relevant contexts (ie. the ones that exist within our material nature). She helped me view China's growth through the most fitting lenses.

Roderic's essay [China Has Billionaires \(2021\)](https://redsails.org/china-has-billionaires/) (<https://redsails.org/china-has-billionaires/>) also helped me understand China's socialist transition.

Roderic's [The Xinjiang Atrocity Propaganda Blitz \(2021\)](https://redsails.org/the-xinjiang-atrocity-propaganda-blitz/) (<https://redsails.org/the-xinjiang-atrocity-propaganda-blitz/>) helps understand Western media's bias and streak while reporting on China. Though not about China, [Michael Parenti \(/posts/on-parenti\)](https://redsails.org/anticonnism-and-wonderland/)'s [Anticonnism & Wonderland](https://redsails.org/anticonnism-and-wonderland/) (<https://redsails.org/anticonnism-and-wonderland/>) (1997) [an excerpt from his book, Blackshirts & Reds] is another great read in that vein.

The State

My understanding of the state has been greatly influenced by [Lenin \(/posts/on-lenin\)](https://redsails.org/lenin/), and I highly recommend you read some of his thoughts as well when you're trying to understand the state. State and Revolution is a great intro to this discussion.

After Lenin, [Che \(/posts/on-che\)](https://redsails.org/che/) has also influenced my view greatly. Especially with regards to technology, and moving forward into authors like Yasha Levine and Shoshana Zuboff in the modern day.

Nia's work has been very influential here as well. Her recent piece [On the Abolition/Preservation of the State](https://redsails.org/on-the-aufhebung-of-the-state/) (<https://redsails.org/on-the-aufhebung-of-the-state/>) is very good as a short place to start. Don't get scared by all the unknown philosophers; I still get a little intimidated too, but I remember [Uncle Ho \(/posts/on-ho\)](https://redsails.org/uncle-ho/)'s words in [The Path Which Led Me To Leninism](https://redsails.org/the-path-which-led-me-to-leninism/) (<https://redsails.org/the-path-which-led-me-to-leninism/>) (1960):

There were political terms difficult to understand in this thesis. But by dint of reading it again and again, finally I could grasp the main part of it. What emotion, enthusiasm, clear-sightedness and confidence it instilled into me! I was overjoyed to tears. Though sitting alone in my room, I shouted out aloud as if addressing large crowds: 'Dear martyrs compatriots! This is what we need, this is the path to our liberation!'

Dialectics

Here, I'd say [Mao \(/posts/on-mao\)](https://redsails.org/mao/) is probably my most influential, with [On Contradiction](https://redsails.org/on-contradiction/) (<https://redsails.org/on-contradiction/>) and On Practice and various other quotations. But Engels, Marx, [Lenin \(https://redsails.org/on-the-question-of-dialectics/\)](https://redsails.org/on-the-question-of-dialectics/), [Roderic Day](https://redsails.org/roderic-day/)

(<https://redsails.org/what-is-dialectics/>), vihart (<https://youtu.be/14-NdQwKz9w>), and my background in math all contributed greatly as well.

Analysis of change is a natural human process, we're all familiar with dialectics. Figuring out the terminology used by these authors just helps understand the motion better, it helps us learn from their experiences.

Nia's work is my favorite here: [On Dialectics, or How to Defeat Enemies \(https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/\)](https://redsails.org/on-dialectics/). I mean it's linked in my "[why did I name the site Air and Steel](/posts/air-and-steel)" post (</posts/air-and-steel>).

In a quantitative then qualitative fashion, your understanding will gain shape (ie. definition) as you tackle more of these works. And like any good work, it's rewarding seeing your abilities grow. Good results require serious engineering, that means [organization \(/posts/on-organizing\)](/posts/on-organizing) and [learning \(/posts/on-learning\)](/posts/on-learning).

Linguistics

On the topics of dialectics and the state, all the new terms I learn and then try to teach people. Well, linguistics is involved here.

Nia's [On Jargon \(https://redsails.org/on-jargon/\)](https://redsails.org/on-jargon/) is a quick 4 paragraphs and explains well why the terminology has come into existence:

Marxist jargon is jargony because it's rigorous, rigorous because it's debated, and debated because it's democratic[...] Marxist jargon is polished by use, not preserved under glass. It's brought out to facilitate communication, increase bandwidth[...] The point is efficiency.

She also speaks well to why we can't ditch the labels or terminology in [Marketing Socialism \(https://redsails.org/marketing-socialism/\)](https://redsails.org/marketing-socialism/) (2019).

Frantz Fanon speaks well to language in a colonial context in [Black Skin, White Masks \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/274392.Black_Skin_White_Masks\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/274392.Black_Skin_White_Masks). [Stalin \(/posts/on-stalin\)](/posts/on-stalin) gives some good insight in [Marxism and Problems of Linguistics \(https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1950/jun/20.htm\)](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/stalin/works/1950/jun/20.htm) (1950). Gretchen McCulloch provides a scientific view into modern changes in linguistics related to the advent of internet communications in [Because Internet \(https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/36739320-because-internet\)](https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/36739320-because-internet) (2019).

Media

Roderic and Nia have both shaped my own thoughts [on media \(/posts/on-media\)](/posts/on-media). They may actually be my largest modern influences, although [Michael Parenti \(/posts/on-parenti\)](/posts/on-parenti)'s *Inventing Reality* did a great deal to loosen the pickle jar.

Nia's [The Swerve \(https://redsails.org/the-swerve/\)](https://redsails.org/the-swerve/) (2021) and [Two Cthulhus \(https://redsails.org/two-cthulhus/\)](https://redsails.org/two-cthulhus/) (2021) are both hard to describe. It's the type of reading that blows your hair back, the type of reading you don't realize exists until your head can process the words and you realize what's being said.

Roderic's "[Brainwashing](https://redsails.org/brainwashing/)" (<https://redsails.org/brainwashing/>) (2021) lives in similar pockets of my brain, having fundamentally changed my views on information propagation.

Marxism–Leninism

I suppose back when I came upon RedSails, I'm not sure I yet self-identified as a Marxist–Leninist. I was still rapidly getting caught up on history, philosophy, nature, change, what all the new ideological labels meant (especially re: how they varied in practice).

Nia's "[Tankies](https://redsails.org/tankies/)" (<https://redsails.org/tankies/>) (2020) did well here helping me understand some of the pejoratives slung around on twitter. As did Mao: [To be attacked by the enemy is not a bad thing but a good thing](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_32.htm) (https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/selected-works/volume-6/mswv6_32.htm) (1939).

Anti–Imperialism

Here again, there are a lot of fundamental authors. Lots of people suffering under ruthless imperialism, lots of whom shout their voices beautifully clear against the enemy.

Roderic's [Self-interested Anti-imperialism](https://redsails.org/self-interested-anti-imperialism/) (<https://redsails.org/self-interested-anti-imperialism/>) (2022) does a good job fighting against opportunism within the imperial core.

Putting everything together

This article has rapidly gotten long. It got long easily, there's much praise to be said for the RedSails effort in my opinion.

How do all of these things come together? Why should anyone care? My own history has been tainted by its share of nihilism, I avoided many important topics I deemed "lesser" while pursuing my coveted STEM education. As I admit in my post [on North America](/posts/on-north-america/) (</posts/on-north-america/>),

Well. I hated history class growing up.

Roderic tackles that question too, in "[Potato Sack](https://redsails.org/potato-sack-history/)" History (<https://redsails.org/potato-sack-history/>) (2022). He outlines why I started caring.

If the goal is emancipation, there's no alternative to relentless, impeccable, fact- and trajectory-focused historical education. We all need to become decent students and able teachers of history.

I care about the future of the earth; I care about all the people who suffer under the systems of today. Ergo, here we are. I'm sharpening my understanding of the world (in every relevant arena) so that I can make my best efforts from my vantage.

While there is a lower class, I am in it (thanks [Debs](https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/while-there-is-a-lower-class-i-am-in-it-eugene-debs-sedition-centennial/) (<https://www.peoplesworld.org/article/while-there-is-a-lower-class-i-am-in-it-eugene-debs-sedition-centennial/>)). My name is Aaron and I speak for the children, the trees, the pigeons, the women, the exploited workers, the minorities, the mountains, the air; I speak for the people of the world and all the things they hold dear (thanks [Lorax](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lorax) (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Lorax)).

Full disclosure: as I recall, I (initially) cared about why I kept getting teargassed on my block. I cared about that before I cared about the environment or the women or the children or the workers. But, well, we're all raised individualists in Capitalist Amerika – I hope you'll forgive me. Growing up, my individualist ambitions were meager; I hoped for security, stability, maybe family.

The expanse for which I care has grown, and with it my ambitions have as well. I'm no longer working towards a merely acceptable life for myself. We have an entire world to win – I'm fighting for that.

The oppressed peoples of the world will find a compañero in me forevermore.

Thanks, always, to the RedSails team.

index tags: @RodericDay, Roderic Day, @RedSails, Red Sails, @NiaFrome, Nia Frome, North America, America, Montreal, Canada, Communists, LGBTQ+, Health(care), Reading Lists, Technology, China, AES, State, Dialectics, Media, Linguistics, Anti-Imperialism, Marxism-Leninism, The Virtual Factory, Cults and Miracles, On Crypto, China Good, China Has Billionaires, The Xinjiang Atrocity Propaganda Blitz, Anticommunism & Wonderland, Blackshirts and Reds, Michael Parenti, Deng Xiaoping, Xi Jinping, Vladimir Lenin, State and Revolution, Che Guevara, On the Abolition/Preservation of the State, The Path Which Led Me To Leninism, Hồ Chí Minh, Mao Zedong, Friedrich Engels, Vihart, On Dialectics: or How to Defeat Enemies, On Jargon, Marketing Socialism, Black Skin White Masks, Frantz Fanon, Marxism and Problems of Linguistics, Joseph Stalin, Because Internet, Gretchen McCulloch, The Swerve, Two Cthulhus, Brainwashing, Tankies, To be attacked by the enemy is not a bad thing but a good thing, Self-interested Anti-imperialism, Potato Sack History, Eugene Debs, Lorax

---# On All Power Books

2022-12-20

"and LASD Gangs, and @tankiepilled aka @whatsantifa aka coffeenpedagogy"

All Power Books

[All Power Books \(https://allpowerbooks.org/\)](https://allpowerbooks.org/) (@allpowerbooks <https://twitter.com/allpowerbooks>) is a space for the people! It's a Volunteer-run Bookshop + Co-Working + Event Space for the comrades, located at 4874 W Adams Blvd. in Los Angeles, CA, USA.

They're currently open 2PM-7PM WED-FRI & SUN and 12PM-7PM SAT. They're closed MON & TUES.

They have a great [list of resources \(https://allpowerbooks.org/pages/resources\)](https://allpowerbooks.org/pages/resources) that covers California Tenant Resources, Workers' Rights Resources, Free Texts, Local Organizations, and On Campus Organizations (mostly focused on the California and specifically LA area).

They also run programs where you can [buy a comrade a book \(https://allpowerbooks.org/products/buy-a-comrade-a-book\)](https://allpowerbooks.org/products/buy-a-comrade-a-book) or [request a free book \(https://forms.gle/a6c8yaGqJ5Eay66u9\)](https://forms.gle/a6c8yaGqJ5Eay66u9). To help support them, you can [donate on ko-fi \(https://ko-fi.com/allpower\)](https://ko-fi.com/allpower) or [sign up for a monthly subscription \(https://allpowerbooks.org/products/60-subscription-1\)](https://allpowerbooks.org/products/60-subscription-1).

LASD Gangs

The comrade who introduced me to All Power Books also introduced me to the following reading resource.

[A Tradition of Violence: The History of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department](https://knock-la.com/tradition-of-violence-lasd-gang-history/) (<https://knock-la.com/tradition-of-violence-lasd-gang-history/>) is a 15-part investigative series by [Cerise Castle](https://knock-la.com/author/cerisecastle/) (<https://knock-la.com/author/cerisecastle/>).

It links [the LASD Gang Affiliate Database](https://lasdgangs.knock-la.com/) (<https://lasdgangs.knock-la.com/>), the first-ever public, searchable database of gang-affiliated LASD employees.

The series starts with [The Protected Class](https://knock-la.com/lasd-gangs-little-devils-wayside-whities-cavemen-vikings/) (<https://knock-la.com/lasd-gangs-little-devils-wayside-whities-cavemen-vikings/>): An examination of the first documented gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

Tankiepilled

[@TANKIEPILLED](https://twitter.com/TANKIEPILLED) (<https://twitter.com/TANKIEPILLED>) is a comrade working at All Power Books who introduced me to their efforts. They led me to the LASD story when their twitter display name was "READ LASD GANGS" so s/o for that.

Here's a link to their [@whatsantifa linktree](https://linktr.ee/whatsantifa) (<https://linktr.ee/whatsantifa>). It links to their [twitter](https://twitter.com/TANKIEPILLED) ([TANKIEPILLED](https://twitter.com/TANKIEPILLED)) (<https://twitter.com/TANKIEPILLED>)/[insta](https://instagram.com/coffeenpedagogy) ([coffeenpedagogy](https://instagram.com/coffeenpedagogy)) (<https://instagram.com/coffeenpedagogy>)/[tiktok](https://tiktok.com/@whatsantifa) ([whatsantifa](https://tiktok.com/@whatsantifa)) (<https://tiktok.com/@whatsantifa>), as well as resources such as a [Marxism-Leninism 101 Guide](https://soyouwanttorevolution.carrd.co/) (<https://soyouwanttorevolution.carrd.co/>), a [Viet Nam War Guide](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nC6ZjKwN3NicV6z1PXcKoS6p-01rhEBQyJSynPtb6IE/) (<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1nC6ZjKwN3NicV6z1PXcKoS6p-01rhEBQyJSynPtb6IE/>), [Hồ Chí Minh on Black Liberation](https://www.workers.org/2018/02/35459/) (<https://www.workers.org/2018/02/35459/>), [Hồ Chí Minh Primary Sources on marxists.org](https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/ho-chi-minh/index.htm) (<https://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/ho-chi-minh/index.htm>), and the [youtube link for "Gaza Fights for Freedom"](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnZSaKYmP2s&ab_channel=EmpireFiles) (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HnZSaKYmP2s&ab_channel=EmpireFiles).

Kudos on the good work comrade; keep it up :4)

index tags: All Power Books, @allpowerbooks, LASD Gangs, A Tradition of Violence: The History of Deputy Gangs in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, Cerise Castle, LASD Gang Affiliate Database, @TANKIEPILLED, coffeenpedagogy, whatsantifa, North America, America, Los Angeles, California, Communists, LGBTQ+, Health(care), Reading Lists, Resource lists, Hồ Chí Minh, Black Liberation, Vietnam

---# On Red Prints Publishing

2022-12-21

"and Marxist-Leninist Reading Hub, and Mount Tai Press, and Comrade Duck aka @DengistDuck"

Red Prints Publishing

[Red Prints Publishing \(https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing\)](https://www.lulu.com/spotlight/redprintspublishing) is an online bookstore dedicated to making revolutionary theory accessible at affordable prices. ([@RedPrintsPub](https://twitter.com/RedPrintsPub) (<https://twitter.com/RedPrintsPub>))

Marxist–Leninist Reading Hub

[Marxist–Leninist Reading Hub \(https://www.mlreadinghub.org/\)](https://www.mlreadinghub.org/) is a group of Marxist–Leninists dedicated to communist education. ([linktree for @MLReadingHub](https://linktr.ee/MLReadingHub) (<https://linktr.ee/MLReadingHub>) – this will lead you to their discord, social media, and other important links)

Mount Tai Press

[Mount Tai Press \(https://www.mounttai.press/\)](https://www.mounttai.press/) is a publication unaffiliated and unassociated with any political party or organization with the purpose of education and agitation of Marxist–Leninists and others interested, via the continued development and application of scientific socialism to current conditions, with a specific importance placed on revolutionary professionalism, discipline, and principled pragmatism by way of dialectical and material analysis. ([@MountTaiPress](https://twitter.com/MountTaiPress) (<https://twitter.com/MountTaiPress>))

I was introduced to all of these efforts via twitter. Comrade Duck ([@DengistDuck](https://twitter.com/DengistDuck) (<https://twitter.com/DengistDuck>)), a [CPUSA \(cpusa.org/join\)](https://cpusa.org/join) member based in Laos who helped with the creation of MLRH and RPP; the reason I know about all the good work being done in the first place! Keep it up, comrade.

index tags: Red Prints Publishing, @RedPrintsPub, Marxist–Leninist Reading Hub, @MLReadingHub, Mount Tai Press, @MountTaiPress, @DengistDuck, CPUSA

---# On Unity–Struggle–Unity

2022–12–22

"and The Red Clarion, and @primarycatdad"

Unity–Struggle–Unity

[Unity–Struggle–Unity \(https://unity-struggle-unity.org/\)](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/) is "a Marxist–Leninist press publishing the Red Clarion, Crucible, and the Unity Journal". ([@USUMLP](https://twitter.com/USUMLP) (<https://twitter.com/USUMLP>))

Although I've just been introduced to the effort and I haven't (yet) read much of the Red Clarion, I do want to share the site already.

I think their [Contributor's Guide \(https://unity-struggle-unity.org/submissions/contributors-guide-the-red-clarion\)](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/submissions/contributors-guide-the-red-clarion) is a great read, and it's helped me focus the scope/audience of my own site as I build it out. I highly recommend reading it if you have your own stories to tell; it may lend useful perspective from fellow authors who share a goal and mindset.

Along with that, they provide a helpful [Glossary of Marxism-Leninism \(https://unity-struggle-unity.org/glossary-of-marxism-leninism/\)](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/glossary-of-marxism-leninism/) that may come in handy, especially for newer comrades.

The Red Clarion

The Red Clarion itself is available [here \(https://unity-struggle-unity.org/clarion/\)](https://unity-struggle-unity.org/clarion/). There's a variety of content, from news and analysis to book reviews and poetry.

Thanks to [@primarycatdad \(https://twitter.com/primarycatdad\)](https://twitter.com/primarycatdad) for leading me to these resources and for contributing as an editorial board member for USU

index tags: Unity-Struggle-Unity, @USUMLPress, Glossary of Marxism-Leninism, Contributor's Guide, Red Clarion, @primarycatdad

---# On The Fall of Twitter

2022-12-23

"aka all my bookmarks"

Huh?

Well. It's November 4th. Twitter has just gone through a major round of layoffs, as have a few other companies while they can escape scrutiny.

As [@Foone \(https://twitter.com/Foone\)](https://twitter.com/Foone) says [here \(https://twitter.com/Foone/status/1588429889107296256?t=r5XrHQb2-Hn5GMwpZo2vPw&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/Foone/status/1588429889107296256?t=r5XrHQb2-Hn5GMwpZo2vPw&s=19):

As a former SRE, I'd just like to say:

This site isn't going to burn down. That's way too calm and organized a death for a site this big which apparently just fired most of the on-call staff.

That's more like it.

It's going to evaporate, not like a puddle on a hot day, but like a couple tons of steel that's just met an atomic shockwave

We're going to need high speed cameras to even see the blast as anything more than a single frame of white and then devastation as far as the eye can see.

This site is going to melt.

It's actually funny in retrospect how people have been talking about how the changes to verification and unbanning certain people is going to drive people off Twitter as they lose trust in the platform...

It's not going to last long enough for that to even matter!

This is a great example of what's going to happen. It's not going to get hacked or have servers catch fire, but something small and unexpected is going to take it down and they'll be unable to find someone to unfuck it:

Right now a disk is filling up on a server somewhere in some data center that a person who has just been laid off has been manually clearing every few days and when that disk fills up Twitter will go down.

So I'm trying to get all my useful info and links off of there before they're lost forever. Why does it always feel like I'm racing against time trying to build as things crumble? Anyway.

TODO: sort these into the relevant articles, tags, everything, organize, organize, organize all the resources

To start, this maybe isn't related specifically to twitter, but I feel it's relevant. From Dan Waterfield (@danwaterfield (<https://twitter.com/danwaterfield>)) [here](https://twitter.com/danwaterfield/status/1587900573055082497?t=VxaVVQkBABheS2w9kwjQyg&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/danwaterfield/status/1587900573055082497?t=VxaVVQkBABheS2w9kwjQyg&s=19>):

I would argue that this is what state collapse looks like btw. A slow inability to build new things, to look after the populace, to repair infrastructure. Essentials get more expensive. The elite retreat to enclaves and gated communities.

State becomes less and less able to respond to natural disasters.

I think that's applicable enough to the twitter situation, though I'm not sure that's what Dan was originally referencing. If/when twitter falls, there is no recourse. Under private ownership, with a lack of regulation or accountability, we can lose millions of hours of community time, thought, and effort. Just because the richest guy around wanted to meme around and buy a website, wreak havoc on the workers for a little good time.

We (see: [On Uniting \(/posts/on-uniting\)](#)) need to be building and maintaining our own infrastructure, in order to prevent it from being destroyed at the whim of those at the top.

For right now I'm being a bit of a modern librarian on my silly little site. I am trying to salvage and reclaim, in this moment. But we need to build systems for the people, and we need to have been building em 20 years ago. The only time is now.

z-lib

In the vein of failing infrastructure, I also just heard of the fall of z-lib. From [@juwugoslavija](#) (<https://twitter.com/juwugoslavija>) [here](https://twitter.com/juwugoslavija/status/1588486265301008384?t=2VUfnbXV5yoW5ovbd2OqXw&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/juwugoslavija/status/1588486265301008384?t=2VUfnbXV5yoW5ovbd2OqXw&s=19>)

z library being gone is literally the worst day ever why am i abt to cry at jfk international airport

From [@postcardofexile](#) (<https://twitter.com/postcardofexile>) on [this](#) (<https://twitter.com/postcardofexile/status/1588516388137709569?t=21y8G7pUrmCtF8wDE9PLXw&s=19>) post:

Zlibrary died today, it was shut down by the gatekeepers in the global north. This cruel gatekeeping of sources of knowledge and learning enrages me. So many of us do not have access to libraries (digital and physical) and it was our only source to write books and articles.

Whenever books are not available at my local stores, I had turned to Zlib. I understand as a writer we need royalties and payments, but the joy of hearing someone say that a writing made them feel something, I would take that over anything. I would rather be read and read.

knowledge production should not be limited to those with ivy league and oxbridge degrees, and the libraries these schools give access to. this enrages me because curiosity to learn and question critically is then shut down. Narratives will narrow down and voices limited.

There are so many books that I couldn't have read while writing this novel, and were only available on these libraries. How do they expect anyone in the global south to compete with novelists who have art grants, access to residencies, and libraries, mentors and archives.

and as many have said, including [@mshadimas](#) (<https://twitter.com/mshadimas>) [here](https://twitter.com/mshadimas/status/1588417930630684672) (<https://twitter.com/mshadimas/status/1588417930630684672>):

zlib going down is like the modern day burning of the library of alexandria

Again, may we collect our materials and rebuild our resources. There's so much work to be done.

Alec Karakatsanis

[@equalityAlec](https://twitter.com/equalityAlec) (<https://twitter.com/equalityAlec>), bio [here](https://civilrightscorps.org/alec-karakatsanis-founder-executive-director/) (<https://civilrightscorps.org/alec-karakatsanis-founder-executive-director/>) on his site Civil Rights Corp.

He's had a few good threads, so I'm keeping this as a tracker to remember his writing and work.

THREAD (https://twitter.com/equalityAlec/status/158457022274842624?t=tcRyT7W_xpx1pp5fZF4wpg&s=19). This weekend, the New York Times published misinformation it knew to be false. Because the stakes are so high, I try my best to explain what the paper did why it is so dangerous.

THREAD (<https://twitter.com/equalityAlec/status/1588210962867314689?t=ap1BwHhUCvqQoNg4pRBtbw&s=19>). Two Harvard professors published an academic article calling for 500,000 more armed cops, who they say will arrest 7.8 million more people per year. The article reveals alarming flaws in elite academia at a time of rising fascism. This is one of my most important posts.

Alec writes on Substack [here](https://equalityalec.substack.com/) (<https://equalityalec.substack.com/>), to get his writing in full if twitter is no longer accessible.

Community and Uniting

This is just a thought I like to consider, from rafael diaz ([@goodfriendraf](https://twitter.com/goodfriendraf)) (<https://twitter.com/goodfriendraf>)

can't help but feel more and more convinced that we're so alienated from one another that we need to take on serious efforts just to rebuild community itself before we're able to get much out of trying to organize it

Laos

Lao news in English at kps.gov.la ([kpl.gov.la/En/Default.aspx](https://kps.gov.la))

The Lao People's newspaper at pasaxon.org.la (pasaxon.org.la)

The Lao Party's website at pccob.gov.la (pccob.gov.la)

And a thread:

The Secret War: US Terror in Laos [THREAD](https://twitter.com/MLReadingHub/status/1583820492707811328?t=WGucsolce0MGG9CWIRbEYQ&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/MLReadingHub/status/1583820492707811328?t=WGucsolce0MGG9CWIRbEYQ&s=19>)

In late 1964 the United States unleashed hell upon the people of Laos — the most heavily bombed country in human history.

Full article at MountTaiPress [here \(https://www.mounttai.press/articles/the-secret-war-us-terror-in-laos\)](https://www.mounttai.press/articles/the-secret-war-us-terror-in-laos) if the thread is no longer accessible.

Unions

Starbucks

Just a couple days ago, on November 1st 2022, Starbucks Workers United ([@SBWorkersUnited](https://twitter.com/SBWorkersUnited)) posted updates [here \(https://twitter.com/SBWorkersUnited/status/1587530037443678210?t=8uPVCxl-kUTL7tvmn7kfqQ&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/SBWorkersUnited/status/1587530037443678210?t=8uPVCxl-kUTL7tvmn7kfqQ&s=19):

UNION WINS THREAD ALERT: Less than a year ago, there were ZERO unionized Starbucks stores in the US. Today, there are 258! Let's take a look at some of the incredible things workers have fought for and WON over the past year...

One of our first public demands was fighting for seniority pay for baristas. How did Starbucks respond? By implementing the first seniority pay in the company's 50 year history.

Union workers raised the issue of inadequate and failing equipment. What were we able to pressure the company into doing? Store renovations ACROSS the country, including new ovens.

After working through a global pandemic, our campaign demanded that workers get paid a living wage. Starbucks acquiesced to our demands and implemented a \$15 minimum wage across the country.

Stores that have been closed, that have unionized, are able to bargain with the company to ensure that partners are transferred to a preferred location and are able to keep their guaranteed hours.

One of the first proposals that unionized Starbucks workers in Elmwood brought to the company was a policy on a more tolerant dress code. Soon after this proposal was presented, Starbucks implemented our ideas at stores nation-wide.

Another one of our proposals that Starbucks has implemented across the country is faster sick time accrual, which is something that unionized workers have been advocating for since the very beginning of our campaign.

Our campaign is responsible for the removal of Kevin Johnson as CEO of Starbucks and ushering in almost an entirely new C-Suite of Starbucks executives. Union-busters like Rossann Williams & John Culver have both left (or are leaving) the company.

Not only did our campaign pressure Starbucks to implement long overdue changes, but we continue to make the company concede to our demands by striking and other actions.

For example, the campaign's action have resulted in bad managers being removed from stores, the purchasing of new equipment, and acceptance of workers' availability.

And these are all things that we accomplished even without a contract! Union partners continue the fight for everything from adequate staffing to better benefits to health and safety at work.

Starbucks doesn't want us to organize because they know that when we organize, we win.

Despite Starbucks trying to do everything to stop us from organizing, partners continue to stand up, fight back, and organize. If this is all that we won less than a year into our campaign, just imagine the possibilities of what is to come.

Great work to the workers of Starbucks! Here's the Starbucks Workers United [bit.ly](https://bit.ly/m/sbworkersunited) (<https://bit.ly/m/sbworkersunited>) with links to their site and resources.

Starbucks: externalities

Though we can see workers gaining power at these Starbucks, that didn't come easy. As we see from an ex-Starbucks employee in Ithaca, NY ([@valleyboyboy](https://twitter.com/valleyboyboy) (<https://twitter.com/valleyboyboy>)):

My life is terrible since Starbucks fired me. I can't get a job despite filling out every app I can. I have no money. My internet is out bc non payment. It has caused irreparable damage to my mental health. All because I started a union.

This company is evil. I have no backup plan. No family to help. I have lived off gofundme money until understandably people couldn't give anymore.

I have nobody. No friends. Every day is bad. I can't even watch movies. My one refuge. I have to cancel all my services now.

I am losing my stability. I will have no home. All because I took a chance to make my workplace better for myself and my coworkers.

Starbucks doesn't care. None of the management that pretended to be my family for years reached out in any way.

Now I'm rotting in poverty.

Fuck you @Starbucks

I'm sorry to hear these stories (and worse) constantly as I see workers try to fight for their rights across the US and the world. The callous treatment demonstrates, *clearly*, the necessity of unions and stronger worker protections. It should not be possible for corporations to inflict poverty upon workers who are struggling to survive!

re: twitter

As Anne V Clark ([@annevclark](https://twitter.com/annevclark) (<https://twitter.com/annevclark>)) says [here](https://twitter.com/annevclark/status/1587815235469066241?t=il1B3ulwTNVOLhZAWBujMw&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/annevclark/status/1587815235469066241?t=il1B3ulwTNVOLhZAWBujMw&s=19>):

The reason unions are badass is if a billionaire walks into your office and starts demanding you work 12 hours a day 7 days a week to prove to him you deserve your job, you and your coworkers can legally make that one of the worst days of his life.

Make Elon write all the code! From what I understand he's some kind of genius who never sleeps! Should be easy for him!

Employer: we don't think we need you!

Employees: okay (goes home)

Employer: no wait

COUGH COUGH <https://code-cwa.org> (<https://code-cwa.org>)

Thanks Anne, for the good points, and sorry to all the workers who have been crawling through the mud at twitter to keep the site running through what I understand to have been a hellish year. Your work is appreciated, as are you. Maybe not from above, but from some guy writing his little website. Thanks, really.

Bail and Criminalization

Bail

From Arielle Ivy (@ArielleIvy (<https://twitter.com/ArielleIvy>)) on her thread [here](https://twitter.com/ArielleIvy/status/1584677755484094467?t=9w45M6pLSoumbWJOHI-TQQ&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/ArielleIvy/status/1584677755484094467?t=9w45M6pLSoumbWJOHI-TQQ&s=19>):

Today I watched a judge get upset b/c an attorney said during a bail application that the family had not been able to save enough money to buy their loved one's freedom. She didn't like that characterization of bail. Which leads me to ask, what do judges think bail is?

Bail is LITERALLY a sum required to be paid for a person's freedom. Is the bench so high folks lose touch with reality once they ascend to it?

Let's all you and me remember what bail is as well; it can be easy to forget, if you don't often interact with it personally.

Criminalization Culture

From Roderic Day (@RodericDay (<https://twitter.com/RodericDay>)) on his thread [here](https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1584373120924004355?t=GrErICpYhKu9bPMdOfdbaq&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1584373120924004355?t=GrErICpYhKu9bPMdOfdbaq&s=19>):

Disagreements about habits are so suffused in terror of criminalization that Westies can't have chill discussions about them without panicking.

"Watching this movie is bad for your self-esteem."

"YOU WANT TO BAN ART!?"

"Weed makes you sluggish."

"YOU WANT TO JAIL ME!?"

I consider being able to work out a disagreement with a good friend an *essential* life skill.

And I mean reaching a satisfying resolution that settles the dispute, not deferring it forever with a lazy "agree to disagree" non-conclusion.

It's the main driver of growth.

Dealing with unjust authority is the most embittering thing in the world.

But the salve that America offers its victims is just childish metaphysical egoism.

"Be yourself!" it insists, flattering you into ignoring whether your habits contribute to your predicament.

Old lady on the NY Metro – Oct 25, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/FelipeDLH/status/1584887584307961862\)](https://twitter.com/FelipeDLH/status/1584887584307961862))

From Felipe De La Hoz ([@FelipeDLH \(https://twitter.com/FelipeDLH\)](https://twitter.com/FelipeDLH)) who covers immigration news on substack at [Border/Lines \(https://borderlines.substack.com/\)](https://borderlines.substack.com/):

On a train where a small older woman was muttering incoherently to herself. To be crystal clear, she was standing still, not harassing or even addressing anyone in particular. Doors open, two cops board and remove her, apparently at the direction of the conductor

They don't give her a reason or anything, just "black jacket? Come with us ma'am, you can take the next train, come on," which seems like an obvious lie. A few people mutter about it, the doors close, train leaves

No one was being hurt, but I guess just having some issues quietly to yourself is now grounds for removal. It's clear that the flooding of cops into the subways has little to do with public safety, and much to do with public perception of disorder

Climate and Energy

Climate Collapse – Oct 22, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/MarxistHeathen/status/1583924752921468929\)](https://twitter.com/MarxistHeathen/status/1583924752921468929))

A thread made by HeathenCommunist ([@MarxistHeathen \(https://twitter.com/MarxistHeathen\)](https://twitter.com/MarxistHeathen)), a CPUSA member in Arizona:

Climate collapse is not one issue among many or another social ill that we need to defeat capitalism before dealing with. Before anything and everything else: it's deadline.

Shifting our focus to it isn't about making it the most important "issue". It's not an "issue".

It's a material condition that *MUST* shape the *entirety* of our strategy like a frame. That doesn't mean we talk about it more than anything else. It just means it's always on our mind when strategizing, even if we don't say it.

What does revolution mean when it's not just a matter of liberation but total survival?

What do scientific socialism and experimentation mean when we no longer have the time to "try again"?

What does it mean for internal contradictions among our enemy when *they* know this and *they* know that working with us to actually defeat the other camp be defeated by us would be their death sentence?

What does it mean for revolutionary strategy when asking the question of "how can we accomplish this" is an obsolete question, replaced by "how can we accomplish this in time"?

What does it mean when we can't afford another setback? When we can't afford another century of struggle?

What does it mean when believing revolution won't happen in our lifetime stops being the planting of trees whose shade we will never sit under & is now accepting that our grandchildren will have no shade to sit in?

Historical socialist strategy was premised on laying the groundwork for future struggle when it could not find a way to achieve its aims.

How do we cope with the fact that we *are* that future generation that groundwork was laid for? That, if we can't find a way to achieve our aims, that our only option is to keep looking until we find it?

Nuclear Power

[Spent Fuel: The risky resurgence of nuclear power \(https://harpers.org/archive/2022/01/spent-fuel-the-risky-resurgence-of-nuclear-power/\)](https://harpers.org/archive/2022/01/spent-fuel-the-risky-resurgence-of-nuclear-power/) by [Andrew Cockburn \(https://harpers.org/author/andrewcockburn/\)](https://harpers.org/author/andrewcockburn/)

Writing

Originally by inkskinned on tumblr

Every day I handle more money than I will ever make. Every day.

At the start of my employment, my boss showed me videos of people stealing, and we both had a chuckle about it. How silly they were! There was a camera overhead. and it's not to watch the shoppers. See, we can't actually stop shoplifters. They get away with it maybe nine out of ten times. But we, who are all watched and tallied and witnessed? We are always caught.

At first it was hard to hold one hundred dollar bills. An amount I had never seen before. An amount that didn't exist in my household. It's normal now. Here is something that is not for me.

'What the hell, I'll take another,' says the man, pondering out 200 dollar watches. What the hell. Total comes to 580 and not even a flinch in his face. I have been working for 11 hours today and made only 110 dollars. It will go to my rent. Today I work for free, it feels. When I get my check, I will have 35 dollars left for food and saving.

The six hundreds he hands me go into the cash register. For a moment, I imagine having money. Then I put it away, counting out his change.

I know for a fact we sell out products for double what they are worth. That I could be making commission. That they could hand me those 580 dollars and change my life and not even mark the difference in their checkbooks. He's not the only sale they make today, but I am the reason they made it. He's not the only one spending 600 dollars, but if I hadn't spent two hours with him telling me about his life, he wouldn't have spent any. I go home. I don't own a watch.

I have watched and rewatched a video on how to make salmon four ways. My shopping list is always the same. Pasta. Rice. Tuna. If I can afford butter it was a good week. I dream of the world I will never walk in, where I can throw the best fish fillet in the cart with a shrug. I hold hundreds in my hand and look up at the camera. I put them under the cash drawer.

I go to work. I scrap together my savings. I eat my bowl of rice slowly. My manager takes a paid week off from work just for this birthday. He owns a yacht.

I'm not worth the cost of a watch.

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On Trans Rights

2022-12-24

"== Human Rights"

As I work through my twitter bookmarks, I'm making new pages to clean up the page.

I've touched on trans rights in [On Feminism \(/posts/on-feminism\)](#) and I think a really great article to get started is [The Woman Question \(https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/\)](https://redsails.org/the-woman-question/) (2016) by Lori Watson.

Trans Tweets

desistence therapy

From Elaine Scattermoon's (@scattermoon (<https://twitter.com/scattermoon>))'s thread [here \(https://twitter.com/scattermoon/status/1584116431255638016?t=MM2HI67O23NqC_4KTDF-Ng&s=19\)](https://twitter.com/scattermoon/status/1584116431255638016?t=MM2HI67O23NqC_4KTDF-Ng&s=19):

OK Twitter, I need to talk to you about the harmful version of conversion therapy I went through a teen – something called 'desistence therapy', which was basically gaslighting of a young teen into not only not transitioning but believing that not transitioning was their idea.

What's worse is that this was done to me not by a shady illicit private business but by a NHS Gender Clinic. They forced me to undergo the wrong puberty, with me begging them to prevent it, and tried to convince me that it was what I really wanted all along, and it broke me.

I've been wanting to make this thread for a while but every time I went to write it, I froze up, because it still has such a lasting impact on me even two decades later. I've been scared to talk about it, the effect it had on me, what it did to me. It's genuinely traumatic.

But I've learned that nobody seems to know it even happened here in the UK. I've met nobody who went through the same thing – at least this side of the Atlantic – and I feel that there needs to be some record of it, a testimony from someone who went through it in the UK in 2000s.

Not just as a personal record – finally putting this out there to get it out of my head – but also so that there's awareness that it happened, what it does to young people, and why it must NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN anywhere. Why 'desistence' is so incredibly harmful and outright abusive

I've always met trans people my age – mid-30s now – who tell me they wish they'd known they were trans earlier in their lives, before puberty did its damage, and I have to stop myself snapping at them in response, because I did, and it only led me into denial and gaslighting.

I realised I was trans very early for someone my age. I won't give you the full backstory but I was a nerdy kid who did her research and I was able to piece things together from various Internet resources and medical records around 2001. I was in my early teens still then.

Eventually I plucked up the courage to speak to my GP. Who didn't know what to do with me and had to look it up. Mostly it involved in him examining my teenage genitals – I know – and referring me on to a GIC. Given my age it should have been the Tavistock in London. It wasn't.

Instead I was referred to my local GIC, which I won't name here. Waiting lists back then were nowhere near where they were now, but they were still in the terms of many months, with something like half a year between appointments. This will become very important.

At that point, I was still very lucky. I'd barely had any effects of puberty yet, and I felt there was a good chance I could avoid it altogether, get the right puberty for me with the changes I wanted, rather than the male ones I dreaded and deeply feared.

I knew puberty blockers were a thing – despite what media now may claim, they're not new, and even back then they were in use for trans teens in the Netherlands. I thought maybe I could convince the doctors to save me. That maybe I'd saved myself.

I was very wrong.

When I finally saw the GIC, what I got wasn't that help, but persistent stonewalling, through a facade of concern. They interrogated me about my school life, my family, my sexuality, my mental health, the sexual assault I'd suffered as a kid, and they used all of it against me.

Everything they could find to justify making me wait a little longer – it was always 'the next appointment' when they'd discuss puberty blockers or hormones. And remember this was with 5–8 months between appointments, so each delay was costly, esp with puberty on the horizon.

But they always told me that I simply wasn't ready. Not even due to their call – they insisted that it was me. That what I was telling them suggested I wasn't really trans, that I wasn't sure, that I needed to give it more time before they could decide anything.

One time I remember very clearly was as I was approaching my 17th birthday. They told me that people who go to university experience a great deal of life changes and that I needed to wait until university before making any kind of call. Uni was still over a year away then.

All the while, I was encouraged to try other approaches than transition. Perhaps I should just spend more time with 'other boys'. I could try getting a girlfriend, having sex. Or maybe I was just gay. I should simply try not being trans. After all 'that's what I was telling them'

I was 16. I trusted them because I had to trust them, they were my doctors, I had nowhere else to turn, especially with no support from my Catholic school, my parents, or any local trans people. I was dependent on them and they let me down badly and abused that trust.

In hindsight, it was very clear they were never going to actually treat me in any sense. It was all a stalling exercise and their excuses were made up – using anything they could get – just to keep me in that endless holding pattern. Even when I cried begging them to help.

Except the holding pattern was designed to be indefinite. Even when I did go to university, as in the example above, they still spun new reasons at me. At age 19, I was no closer to any treatment at all than I was at age 14. And I'd hit puberty by

then.

Unless you're trans yourself, you probably can't fully appreciate what going through the wrong puberty is like – especially with full awareness of its wrongness, that it was fully preventable, and that those who could do that were simply not (and were saying it was your fault)

It's pure pure body horror. Everything goes the wrong way, in ways that make you feel sick, that just don't feel like *you*, in ways that are permanent or at least very costly to undo. It's like feeling yourself slip away with you powerless to do anything about it. It's HELL.

Your own body betrays you. It no longer feels yours. Even your voice is stolen from you. And it feels wrong on such a basic primal level you can't even articulate to anyone who doesn't know that world-shattering pain. And you're still a child then.

For me at that age, after having been told by other (much older) trans people on the net that I was so lucky to be doing things so young – it felt like game over. That that was it, I'd never be able to be myself anymore, that I'd lost my sole chance at a happy life.

When I reached my second year of university, much of puberty over, and I was *still* being told the same things – that I didn't seem actually trans, that I needed to give it more time, that I should enjoy being a man more, that perhaps I just needed a girlfriend – I broke.

I gave up. Stopped attending any more appointments because it was clear it wasn't going to achieve anything, and I felt like there was nothing to achieve anymore anyway, as I said, it felt like game over. I just wanted to die. Wanted any excuse to die. There was no point.

The only reason I didn't die is that I was too concerned with upsetting those around me, so I carried on with uni, but I was a shell. I didn't look after myself in any way, I stopped being as outgoing and active, my lively online presence dwindled away to nothing. I was empty.

That thing where you wish something would kill you so you could have oblivion without the guilt it would cause those around you if you took your own life. I deliberately don't look crossing the road. I never expected to live long. What was the point? I was gone. I was denied.

You can still see it in my old livejournal posts – going from a bubbly and poetic girl flirting, discussing anime, writing stories, being emotional and naive in all those teenage ways – to just doing my uni assignments, disappearing into video games, no longer writing anything.

I was fortunate to have a year abroad as part of my degree, and living by myself in a German forest with new friends, I slowly began to start to rebuild myself as much as I could, using the money I made teaching out there to fund private hormones and transition upon return to UK

And that's how I eventually got to where I am today. But it'd be a lie to say everything just fixed itself. I'd not be writing this otherwise. I still recall all the trauma of being forced through the wrong puberty, being constantly delayed, told

it was what was best for me.

I've since learned what was happening. I can't be entirely sure as I don't have any notes from that time, any records. I was a teen after all, and it was still the early 2000s before things were all done electronically.

Further, my parents were absolutely not supportive, they told me it was God's will that I was born a boy and that I shouldn't change that, I had to go behind their backs the whole time, and the few times they found any GIC letters they threw them away. I have no records.

And I feel like I can't trust my own memories because that's what gaslighting does. I have my old private diary entries, which are deeply painful to read, but I just remember being made to feel like I was saying the wrong things, that I wasn't trying enough options, etc.

But what I recall very much matches the methodology of a Canadian psych called Kenneth Zucker and his 'desistence therapy', a technique designed to make trans children 'desist' from being trans, through the idea that they'll grow out of it – that you can make them grow out of it.

Rather than the standard NHS practice of waiting until trans kids turned 18 before beginning treatment – something the Tavistock was doing at the time, and which a similar aged friend of mine who saw the Tavistock at the same time ended up doing – they tried to desist me.

I don't know why. I assume they didn't know what to do with a trans child when their other patients were adults so followed Zucker's methodology, which was medically uncontroversial at the time.

All the smiley, 'supportive' meetings I'd had with psychs at the GIC were attempts to get me to stop with this whole trans thing. That they could convince me that I didn't really want that, through trying to get me to be a boy, through saying it was the fault of my assault, etc.

(do you have any idea how much it hurts to be told that something traumatic you had done to you, like the assault I had when I was 11, is the reason why you're having further trauma inflicted on you? Like it was my own fault and I was paying the price)

Told it was a sexual thing that I could solve through fucking somebody. That it was a mental health thing and I just needed to be happier. That it was an idle fancy I'd drop in the real world of uni. And that this was what I really wanted. Of course that I wasn't genuinely trans"

I struggle to say all this because – while I know I am trans and have for a long time – I still feel like it was actually my fault that I never got treatment then. That I'd said the wrong things, presented the wrong way, that I should have made more an effort, that I should etc.

Rationally, I know there was nothing I could have done, that what I said or did was irrelevant, because that's how desistence therapy works, the whole idea is to get the child to stop being trans after all. But still, it's hard not to blame myself. I do, in my darker moments.

Part of what made me realise this was desistence therapy was speaking to a friend (who I won't name publicly here, she can come forward if she wants) who went through the same thing at Zucker's clinic in Toronto. Our experiences tallied almost exactly despite the different places

Zucker's medically discredited now, though the anti-trans campaigners still love him (even though he's also extremely creepy towards the kids who see him). However when he was struck off, the very psychs I'd seen at the UK gender clinic signed a letter defending him. A red flag.

Desistence therapy assumes that you can stop trans children from being trans by forcing them to grow out of it – one way or another. In practice, this means leaving them broken, depressed, and suicidal, believing that they did this to themselves. It's immensely cruel.

'Desisting' is of course a term used to describe criminal acts and that very much reflects how it views transness in young people as something going very wrong with them and that they can get away from it and live a 'clean life' if only they're held back like it's a life of crime

I used the term 'conversion therapy' at the beginning of this thread because that's what it is. Doing trans healthcare is never the goal, the entire aim is to stop a trans kid being trans, you just do it by keeping them waiting endlessly rather than directly forcing them.

These are children and you're gaslighting them that not only are they not what they say they are, but that they know they're not and that this is the outcome they themselves desired. This is immensely abusive and deeply shattering to the psyche. Trust me, I know.

I have had a lot of traumas in my past – many which I've never gone into publicly and which I have no intention of doing so – my life, especially my early life, is a mess – but this is one I've struggled to talk about the most because it's still so upsetting. I live with it.

The fact that I am who I am today wouldn't have been possible without a lot of self-reflection (obviously going through male puberty wasn't actually 'game over' for me) and therapy but I still have the signs of PTSD from the whole experience across the latter half of my teens.

In some ways I feel I have survivors' guilt. That I made it through this, so the responsibility in dealing with it rests solely on my shoulders. Heck, this is why I'm making this extremely long thread today. But I don't know of anyone else who went through this in the UK.

Whether anyone else did, I don't know. As I said, I was meant to be referred to the Tavistock. The GIC I ended up at clearly didn't know what to do with me and looked to Zucker's (deeply abusive) methodology. But there might have been others who were likewise broken. Or killed.

It was *very hard* to be actively trans as a young teen c.2002. Thanks to Section 28 there were very few resources, so you had to be good at research to even know it was a thing beyond the sensationalist occasional lurid glossy mag stories. So maybe it was just me. I don't know.

Part of why I decided to keep living and try life after all was a desire to ensure this never happened again to anyone in the UK. But I was never in a position to help ensure that. I wasn't able to raise the alarm as a teen – Mermaids wouldn't help me then – I was powerless.

While trans youth healthcare in the UK since then has still been pretty awful and not remotely sufficient, I've at least not heard of active desistance therapy techniques being used (though I know horrifyingly trans kids are still effectively forced through wrong puberties).

However recently with the upswing in anti-trans activism and the increasing moral panic about trans kids, I've seen the ideas of desistance therapy coming back into the public eye. It's what the anti-trans orgs campaign for, I've read their documentation.

And whenever I see anyone advocating for 'desistance', I cannot think straight, because what happened to me comes flooding back, and all I can think is that it must not happen to any other child. I don't want anyone to ever have to suffer like that ever again. You can't imagine.

Those who don't believe trans is *really* a thing, or that it's some kind of adulthood perversion, or a social contagion akin to the dancing plague, they all believe that trans kids cannot be, and that you can somehow stop them if you just hold them back, tell them you're helping

that desistance therapy is a 'kindness' because it 'allows' the child to stop being trans through making them think it's their own idea, that you can keep them away from it long enough it will stop, that it's not as brutal as straight-up conversion therapy.

THIS. IS. BULLSHIT. Take it from me who actually lived it, not from some columnist who thinks transness was invented in 2010, or some parent who thinks they can un-trans their child, or some anti-trans activist who spins webs of concern trolling, or Kenneth fucking Zucker.

Desistance isn't "letting kids stop being trans", it's *forcing* them to not be, it's *disallowing* transness, it's even right there in the word itself. It doesn't work through changing the child's mind, it works through making the child eventually give up. Conversion therapy.

It's imperative that desistance therapy be seen and regarded as a variant of conversion therapy. Don't let its gaslighting nature or the fact it never *directly* pushes conversion fool you. It is abusive, it is damaging, it is inhumane, and it leaves children with lifelong damage

Desistance therapy is sold as a kinda humane 'cure' for transness. Not beating transness out of the kid but encouraging them to drop it, to 'move on', to 'learn to be a boy/girl instead'. This is all equivocation, it makes no difference in terms of harm done to the child. I know.

And on top of that, you leave the child blaming themselves, for the rest of their lives. Any parent who truly cares for their kid should rightfully view that as abhorrent, but current discourse is selling it as a panacea instead. I'm deeply deeply afraid for current trans kids.

Again, I'm the only one I'm aware of who underwent this particular kind of treatment as a child in the UK (I know plenty who had the just as harmful more traditional kind of conversion therapy, unfortunately). There may well be more.

But it means I know what it does, first-hand.

I don't want to spill my traumas quite so openly on this platform – I'm making myself very vulnerable here, opening myself up like this – but as I said, I feel a kind of responsibility to explain what happened to me, to leave a record, and to plead that it never be allowed again

I've long wondered what, if any, purpose my trauma had. There's no karmic reward for the suffering I went through. What doesn't kill you just leaves you wounded. But if I can somehow stop what happened to me happening to even one other person, I'd give my all to do that.

Hence this thread. Sorry it's been so raw. I could have made it longer but I worried about its length as it is. I just felt I needed to get it out there, especially with recent developments. I needed people to know what happened, what desistence therapy is, what it does.

I'd really appreciate it if you could spread the word, let people know, pass on my testimony, promote this thread, have this all mean something in at least some way. In some ways it feels like one of the most important things I've ever written. That people know what this is.

It's such a fucked-up thing to do a kid and I recall it every time I look in a mirror even now in my mid-30s. I'm both my current self, angry about what this does, what it did to me, and my teen self, scared, doubting every aspect of herself, feeling like her life was stolen.

Please help me stop this ever happening again.

This was deeply scary to write and share and I've been putting it off for a long time, but I felt that I had to say something, at long last.

Thank you so much for reading.

Elaine Scattermoon

PS: It seems desistence therapy is now being called 'gender exploratory therapy', but it's still the exact same thing under a different name. Don't let the phrasing fool you, it's not about exploration but rather trying to push acceptance of birth gender.

You might also see desistence therapy called 'watchful waiting' esp in UK, though they won't tell the young patients themselves that. These euphemisms all imply a lack of harm but that's deliberately misleading: remember we're often *begging* for *urgent* help at these points.

'Doing nothing' is *not* the neutral option because it's actually 'forcing kids through wrong puberty' which is deeply traumatic body horror. Blockers on the other hand are neutral: they hold off that puberty and give the option of continuing with it later if so desired.

PS2: I went over my own diary entries from the time again and recalled that the

clinicians kept trying to tell me how very masculine I was, how masculine my voice sounded, how manly I looked. None of that was true – I was actually bullied a lot for being so girly as a kid/teen.

"You're such a manly boy, look how handsome you are, hear how deep your voice is, you could easily get a girlfriend, you'll feel so much better, you've basically told us yourself"

meanwhile I'm getting thrown into the mud at school (& worse) on a regular for being a girly gay.

Thank you for writing and sharing Elaine. I'm glad you're alive, and I'm glad I got to hear your perspective. ~AS

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On Indigenous Resources

2022-12-25

"Books and Threads"

TODO: this shouldn't be in December probably. Just putting it here to clean twitter dump.

Indigenous Threads

New Amauta resources

From New Amauta ([@AmautaNew](https://twitter.com/AmautaNew) (<https://twitter.com/AmautaNew>)):

In honor of Indigenous Heritage Month, I'm doing a 5 part outlining Indigenous ideologies!

For part 1, we'll look at the ideology of Zapatismo from Mexico. A [THREAD](https://twitter.com/AmautaNew/status/1587654893908525056?t=tmtEfvI0I7KsyNoEQMGvVq&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/AmautaNew/status/1587654893908525056?t=tmtEfvI0I7KsyNoEQMGvVq&s=19>)

Although I'm not posting the entire thread here, I'll post New Amauta's [linktree](https://linktr.ee/NewAmauta) (<https://linktr.ee/NewAmauta>) which has his links on "Everything you wanted to know about Indigenous America (North and South)"

Book Recs

From Indigenous Peoples Movement ([@IndigenousPpls](https://twitter.com/IndigenousPpls) (<https://twitter.com/IndigenousPpls>)) thread [here](https://twitter.com/IndigenousPpls/status/1583202802163032066?t=2H3-4uEh1iGDBQqA6V7GKw&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/IndigenousPpls/status/1583202802163032066?t=2H3-4uEh1iGDBQqA6V7GKw&s=19>):

What are books by Indigenous peoples that you think other Indigenous peoples should read? Let's educate each other

- Research Is Ceremony: Indigenous Research Methods by Shawn Wilson
- The Reconciliation Manifesto by Arthur Manuel
- Unsettling Canada by Arthur Manuel
- [Whose Land Is It Anyway? A Manual for Decolonization](https://fpse.ca/decolonization-manual-whose-land-is-it-anyway)
(<https://fpse.ca/decolonization-manual-whose-land-is-it-anyway>)
- Our History is the Future by Nick Estes
- Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer.
- The Things She's Seen by Ambelin Kwaymullina and Ezekiel Kwaymullina (her other books are great as well).
- There There by Tommy Orange
- Firekeeper's Daughter by Angeline Boulley.
- Ceremony by Leslie Marmon Silko
- Sabrina & Corina by Fajardo-Anstine Kali
- Mexican Gothic by Silvia Moreno-Garcia.
- The taste of sugar by Marisel Vera
- Clap When You Land from Elizabeth Acevedo
- Olga Dies Dreaming by Xochitl Gonzalez
- The Altar Within by Juliet Diaz

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On RedSails Twitter and MediaLists

2022-12-26

"Lots of stuff Nia and Roderic posted"

TODO: combine with RedSails page? Separate between Nia/Roderic? idk maybe do something.

Nia Frome

Buncha her tweets. I'll probably make a separate page, or maybe tack it onto the [RedSails one \(/posts/on-redsails\)](#).

**Marketing Socialism – Jan 31, 2019 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1091004191022202880)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1091004191022202880>))**

This eventually became an article on RedSails, [Marketing Socialism](https://redsails.org/marketing-socialism/)
(<https://redsails.org/marketing-socialism/>), but I saw it on twitter first.

when i was a kid i also believed 'communists should ditch that label, for PR reasons'. now i think you make more headway owning it than dishonestly disavowing it. not least because *someone will almost always bring up stalin no matter what you call yourself*

stalin is a powerful trope for normies. his name stands for the perverse emergence of injustice from the overzealous pursuit of justice. it's dramatic irony. it's a morality tale about how power corrupts.

that mythic trope stands as a barricade between normies and socialism *no matter what kind of spin you put on socialism*

what are the crimes normally attributed to stalin? the show trials, the purges, the gulag, forced collectivization... in other words state violence. the socialisms that define themselves in opposition to stalin therefore downplay state violence as much as they can.

but statehood IS (a monopoly on legitimate) violence. the question of who's doing violence to whom, and to what end, is the fundamental problem of politics. it's capitalism's answer to this question that makes us hate it so much.

"nobody does violence to anybody" sounds good, but it's not actually a political position. political positions require charting out a plausible path from where we are now into the glorious future ahead, and that path goes through socialist states.

the demonization of stalin is the demonization of socialist statehood itself. you will not convince a normie that the latter is false as long as they remain convinced that the former is true.

the ritual denunciation of stalin on "the left" 1) presents a utopia of socialism without antagonism 2) flatters first-worlders and academics 3) spares people the unpleasantness of interrogating how their ideas about the past were formed 4) makes a virtue of losing and waiting

if we decline to draw from the entire history of socialism-in-power in favor of utopian socialism or pragmatic liberalism, the range of results we can obtain will be limited to those achieved by utopian socialism (evanescent communes) and pragmatic liberalism (hellworld)

pretending our new thing is sui generis and doesn't have anything to do with bad stalinism *doesn't actually mean we'll face different problems or have better solutions*. stalin faced problems that were generic to socialism. socialism isn't just a label, it's a class project.

you don't actually transcend that project just by calling yourself something else, just like you don't transcend capitalism by calling yourself a post-capitalist.

**Why is Materialism Proletarian? – Jul 15, 2021 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1415685579430371328)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1415685579430371328>))**

why is materialism proletarian? because the objective world exerts a greater unifying force on the thinking of the proletariat than it does on the thinking of any other class. the bourgeoisie, a minority, can more easily wrap itself in myths and delusions of grandeur

i think that, in an important sense, proletarian standpoint epistemology = materialism

so wherever marxism becomes massive it becomes more materialist, more marxist

the material world is what we share, ineluctably. the urgency with which it presses itself upon our thoughts is inversely proportional to our insulation against it, insulation in the form of money/power/privilege

liberalism is a marvelous technology for sparing the bourgeoisie the unpleasantness of having to synthesize or hash out their various conflicting worldviews, it's a license for boundless subjectivism

because each bourgeois can be counted on to step forward when it counts, that is, to defend their class interest in maintaining exploitation, keeping their insulation nice and thick, there is no need to reach any higher agreement on an objective basis

the proletariat, which needs cooperation to survive, which is brutally exposed to the exigencies of life on this planet, can't afford to leave conflicts unresolved, it *needs* objectivity

the proletariat as a class has more sense organs and greater sensitivity to the material world than any other class in history

**Problems – Aug 2, 2021 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1422056559132258308)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1422056559132258308>))**

capitalism creates problems that only socialism can solve. socialism is inevitable only in the sense that a logical conclusion is inescapable, not in the historic sense—it is of course possible that humans won't solve their problems

Pessimism and Nostalgia – Oct 23, 2021

it's bizarre to see tankies accused of both pessimism and nostalgia when like... we're the ones who think socialism is winning

eschatological optimism is no optimism at all

and if you've had the misfortune of speaking to an anti-stalinist leftist for more than two seconds you know they're giant fucking nerds about what could have been, that's their bread and butter

similarly w/r/t the idea that we're only in it for the affective payoff of taboo-breaking, as if there were no affects associated with the anti-stalinist left (getting off at being smarter and more decent than everyone in history, potentially leading the "true" revolution, etc.)

evidently some important taboos need breaking, also

in general the psychologizing argument that paints your enemy as unwell, moved by pathological motives, can basically be turned against anyone, and is therefore abstract, empty. what matters is the *content* of the hope, the *content* of the nostalgia, *which* taboos get broken

iPhones – Nov 8, 2021 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1457783112444698624)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1457783112444698624>))

re: the "you're a communist with an iphone" thing

communists are the ones who believe that the incredible wealth of our society, though the product of heinous exploitation, should be made to serve the great masses, that capitalism has made unprecedented things possible

the WHOLE POINT is to detourn, hijack, repurpose, salvage, adapt these things that are the product of class society in order to bring about a classless one. you don't DO that by keeping your hands off all the dirty products of class society (i.e. basically everything)

furthermore:

the most ethical consumption would be to buy clothes handmade by versace himself

the contradiction between being a communist and having an iphone is the contradiction between use-value and value at the heart of the commodity itself

the law of value or abstract labor is a kind of monstrous drive to accumulate coupled with a monstrous indifference to concrete particulars. use-value, by contrast, is *all about* concrete particulars – if you want people to flourish, you want them to enjoy use-values.

the underlying problem is that we produce stuff in this anarchic, clumsy, uncoordinated way, that our labor is socialized only after the fact, and so the law of value runs roughshod over everybody's flourishing

making a socialist society means reasserting the sovereignty of conscious deliberation (the kind of thing iphones are very good at enabling btw) over and against the unconscious rule of blind economic forces

**Replacements – Nov 27, 2021 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1464721319426236426)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1464721319426236426>))**

whatever replaces capitalism has to be better than capitalism *at* doing stuff, not just better in an abstract/moral sense

protracted economic war

**Race – Dec 30, 2021 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1476604613717540870)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1476604613717540870>))**

it's a race between socialism and human extinction

**Anarchism or Socialism? – Jan 24, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1485680106844700672)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1485680106844700672>))**

there's definitely an asymmetry between MLs and anticommunist leftists: MLs can explain anticommunism as stemming from propaganda, ignorance, and social pressures, whereas anticommunists can only explain marxism-leninism by saying that a lot of people just choose evil

this has to do with the fact that we have more experience being them than they do being us

**Moving to the left – Feb 9, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1491470985626894342)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1491470985626894342>))**

you move to the left as you gain an awareness of crimes that are much worse than theft and murder: big, abstract crimes of using many people wrongly, squeezing them dry, denying them access to the means by which they might flourish, frittering away their lives on stupid nonsense

all the baby-brained rightists can do is dial up the made up death toll of communism because they haven't progressed beyond like stage 4 of moral development

i wasn't sure about this tweet because like, if you think about it, both the preconventional stages 1-2 and the conventional stages 3-4 are really just punishment avoidance, minor variations on what is essentially stage 1 thinking

**Markets – Apr 13, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1514323213047799818)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1514323213047799818>))**

the claim "markets are incompatible with socialism/communism" conflates two questions:

1. are markets a feature of communism? (no)
2. must markets disappear immediately in order for something to be recognizable as socialism? (no)

once again, by erasing any distinction between lower and higher, socialism and communism, ultras can revoke the socialism card of any society that has ever existed and render the term completely speculative, imaginary, philosophical, ideal

eschatological

**Consistency vs Completeness – Oct 22, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1583992142225022977)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1583992142225022977>))**

locality/consistency/non-contradiction

realism/completeness/holism

you gain the latter only by sacrificing the former, with which it's mutually exclusive

realism \approx holism because realism says there's only *one* objective world (that's what objectivity means, the oneness of it, there not being as many worlds as there are perspectives) and that means realism hinges on counting the whole world *as* one, i.e. holism

locality \approx non-contradiction because it has to do with a subjective narrowing of one's focus (*only* in the sense x, *only* meaning y) with the *goal* of attaining consistency, self-identity, for one's objects. the worst slur a dialectician knows is "partial, one-sided"

sorry to break it to you but the interdependence of all things got in there before your little controlled experimental setup and it ALWAYS WILL

**Imagining – Oct 31, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1587230560476340225)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1587230560476340225>))**

the correct form is the imperative: stop imagining the end of the world, start imagining the end of capitalism

**Understanding – Nov 1, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1587508187229573121)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1587508187229573121>))**

understanding stuff in a more proletarian way = understanding it better

this is because our *existing* understanding is so deeply biased by accumulated historical privileging of aristocratic and bourgeois perspectives

**Nov 3, 2022 ([src](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1588220817317453825)
(<https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1588220817317453825>))**

re: idealism vs. materialism, philosophy, the ivory tower, anti-intellectualism, kant vs. dogmatism, credentialism, communization of the epistemic, etc.

the basic question: "who has the right to truth?"

one answer with obvious appeal: "everyone!" but that can't be right, because people disagree. unless somehow our notion of truth could encompass those disagreements? but then it would no longer point in any particular direction, it wouldn't resemble *objective* truth at all.

there's going to have to be some kind of hierarchy, some axis by which we measure who's closer and who's farther away from the truth. perhaps multiple axes? that sounds nicely pluralist, but again it waters down our conception of truth to the point where it can't do what we want.

so you're gonna have to bite the bullet and admit that truth is unevenly distributed. the obvious next question is: who's got it?

oops, there's been some drift from the first tweet. "who has the right to [declare or discover] truth" has turned into "who's got truth?" before i was talking about inequalities in its production (permits), now i'm talking about inequalities in its possession (poverty/wealth)

so we could side with those who aren't allowed to declare or discover truth, or we could side with those who are richer in truth

the obvious dialectical temptation is to come up with some sort of reasoning to show that these are in fact the same people

oh wait i've already done that:

understanding stuff in a more proletarian way = understanding it better

this is because our *existing* understanding is so deeply biased by accumulated historical privileging of aristocratic and bourgeois perspectives

Her faves – Jun 29, 2020 ([src \(https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1277464974995206156\)](https://twitter.com/NiaFrome/status/1277464974995206156))

the miracle in milan (1951), heartwarming af
northern lights (1978)
heaven's gate (1980)
the working class goes to heaven (1971)
missing (1982)
state of siege (1972)
salt of the earth (1954)
the strategy of the snail (1993)
the wind that shakes the barley (2006)
the battle of algiers (1966)
i am cuba (1964)
burn! (1969)
romero (1989)
rome, open city (1945)
born in flames (1983)
the act of killing (2012)
the gospel according to st. matthew (1964)
if.... (1968)
the rest that occur to me are well-known enough that i won't bother repeating them, but ultimately jodi dean is right:

Every movie is about class struggle.

RedSails

The general orientation from when Nia Frome and I [Roderic Day] started [RedSails](https://redsails.org/) (<https://redsails.org/>) remains unchanged:

- Read "Flight From History?" by Domenico Losurdo
 - Read Assata Shakur's Autobiography
 - Read "Marx's Inferno" by William C. Roberts
 - Watch "Black Sails"
-

Roderic Day

"Modern" Tendencies – Jul 30, 2022 ([src \(https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1553578289230487552\)](https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1553578289230487552))

An interesting thing about studying theory instead of just being born again every Thursday is that you can see how, far from fresh, many of these "modern" tendencies are just remakes:

- Maoists are Proudhonists
- PatSocs are Dühringites
- SocDems are Kautskyites

MediaList – Mar 2, 2021 ([src \(https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1366960353205231617\)](https://twitter.com/RodericDay/status/1366960353205231617))

I'm always ranting about how bad most media is, how bad politics cannot be isolated since they corrode theme and plot and aesthetics, making most stuff unwatchable.

So I'm gonna just list media I enjoyed. Some may be mega-hits everyone's heard of, some not.

search kw: MediaList

Kundo: Age of the Rampant (2014) – Korean film about revolutionary bandits.

The Wind that Shakes the Barley (2006) – Irish film about revolutionary independence guerrillas.

The Motorcycle Diaries (2004) – Origin story of famous revolutionary Che Guevara.

Rang De Basanti (2006) – Story of a group of friends in India changing as a result of preparing to play the part of revolutionaries in a documentary.

Bacurau (2019) – Incredibly interesting story about a town in Brazil.

Black Sails (2014–2017) – An allegory of the Russian Revolution set in the Pirate Republic of Nassau.

Sing Street (2016) – Nice story about a bunch of Irish kids starting a band.

Mangal Pandey: The Rising (2005) – A local leader in India leads the 1857 mutiny against British rule.

Spartacus (2010–2013) – About the slave revolt in Rome.

Snowpiercer (2013) – A very metaphorical take of a revolution from the back to the front of a train.

Cambridge Spies (2003) – Dramatization of the story of Cambridge rich kids who used their elite status to deeply infiltrate US/UK institutions on behalf of the USSR.

The Battle of Algiers (1966) – Rebels resist the French occupation of Algeria.

Virunga (2014) – A documentary set in Congo about people resisting and exposing a disgusting UK-based oil and gas company Pharos Energy/SOCO International.

Ping Pong: The Animation (2014) – A bunch of kids in Japan contemplate the meaning of life via ping-pong.

Let The Bullets Fly (2010) – A rogue bandit, a weasel imposter, and a crook mobster collide in 1920s China.

A World Without Thieves (2004) – A bunch of master thieves wage a secret competition aboard a packed train in eastern China.

True Blood (2008–2014) – Very uneven, but I still really like it. Supernatural camp in Louisiana, featuring violent anti-vampire mobs chanting "Make America Human Again" in... 2012?!

Your Name (2016) – This movie cycles through a lot of genres, and may seem out of place here, but it's got one vignette in particular about Doing The Right Thing that works on me every time.

Great Teacher Onizuka (1998) – Bike gang leader tries to fulfill dream of being a teacher, but it's a challenge.

Anne with an E (2017–2019) – A girl gets adopted in Canada, and has to either learn to fit in or transform things around her to fit in with her.

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On Prole Academy

2022–12–27

"Briefings and Book Reviews for working people in a hurry"

Prole Academy

[Prole Academy \(https://www.proleacademy.com/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/) is a "radical book blog for working people in a hurry" – they outline Marxist theory in order to give workers quick overviews of books and concepts, to help them start their education.

Although I found them on twitter, I won't link their threads since they're image heavy – the same content can be found on their website.

Their site has [briefings \(https://www.proleacademy.com/reviews/series/briefings/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/reviews/series/briefings/) – in-depth looks at a concept, event, or person that matters, designed to be read with as much or as little time as you have. You can find their first briefing series at [Marxism 101 \(https://www.proleacademy.com/reviews/series/marxism-101/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/reviews/series/marxism-101/).

They also have [book reviews \(https://www.proleacademy.com/latest-posts/review/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/latest-posts/review/) on leftist works. From classics like [State and Rev \(https://www.proleacademy.com/review/the-state-and-revolution-vladimir-lenin/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/review/the-state-and-revolution-vladimir-lenin/) to modern works like David Graeber's [Bullshit Jobs \(https://www.proleacademy.com/review/bullshit-jobs-david-graeber/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/review/bullshit-jobs-david-graeber/), they provide quick one-pagers and highlights to get caught up in brief. Although I always recommend referencing the originals (as you should with anything you read on my site), summaries and articles can be a great place to start. So, thanks to Benjamin Walker and the folks at Prole Academy for trying to make theory more accessible to the masses!

They also have a [bookshelf \(https://www.proleacademy.com/bookshelf/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/bookshelf/), [courses \(https://www.proleacademy.com/course-listing/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/course-listing/), a [blog \(https://www.proleacademy.com/blog/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/blog/), some [about info \(https://www.proleacademy.com/about-us/\)](https://www.proleacademy.com/about-us/), and a [buymeacoffee \(https://www.buymeacoffee.com/ProleAcademy\)](https://www.buymeacoffee.com/ProleAcademy) if you want to support their efforts.

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On Eugene Debs

2022-12-28

"and US Socialism in early 20th century, and the IWW"

On Debs

This'll be a (real) page at some point, with more info about Debs and that era of history. But for now, just some quotes off twitter.

The capitalists are combined against you. They are reducing wages. They have control of the courts. They are doing everything they can to destroy your power. You have got to follow their example. You have got to unify your forces.

Your grandfather made a pair of shoes, and they were his own. You make a thousand pairs of shoes where he made one. You do not own a single one of them. You can produce wealth in fabulous abundance, but you have not got it. Why not?

index tags: Twitter, Backup

---# On Homelessness and Homeless Resources

2022-12-29

"This is an important topic and I want to convey the seriousness with which I care about it, but also I'm moving really fast to get stuff done. I'll come back later"

TODO: Should also link resources

TODO: not in december probably

Homelessness Tweets

Shelters

From Piper (@yourfriendpiper (<https://twitter.com/yourfriendpiper>)) on her thread [here](https://twitter.com/yourfriendpiper/status/1588239681954582529?t=sTWYBKEwmbpBUJOuBemh4q&s=19) (<https://twitter.com/yourfriendpiper/status/1588239681954582529?t=sTWYBKEwmbpBUJOuBemh4q&s=19>):

Once again repeating: if large numbers of people would prefer to sleep outside in 40 degrees and raining over the shelter offered, the problem is with what you're offering.

(Not an actual policy suggestion) Everyone who supports "shelter enforcement" should be forced at the hands of armed state agents to live in a shelter for a week.

How to get off the streets

Comrade Red, @IronProle (<https://twitter.com/IronProle>), gave this response to the question "If you woke up homeless, hungry, with \$20 to your name, and had none of the connections you have now, how would you get off the streets?"

Id buy some dope and trade it up til i could get a hotel room. Might take me like three or four days, but id find some under the table work and slide into a low credit "apartment" in a few weeks. Id have a real apartment in a few months, with like 22 roommates.

Ive done it a couple times. Long hours sitting in the QFC common space, buying something occasionally so i don't get booted.

But the reality for most people is that they dont. And the longer they stay homeless, statistically.

Statistically the longer one stays homeless the more likely you are to remain that way. The loss of a mailing address is often and insurmountable barrier among other pitfalls you cannot possibly predict.

The fact is that in King County, HALF of houseless people work one or more jobs despite their lack of housing.

This fact is why many houseless people are "service resistant" because all too often sleeping in a shelter conflicts with work.

Strict entry times for shelters make sense logistically but human wise, its an awful policy that drives people working hard to better their conditions choose to sleep in a ditch.

Not to mention the safety, security and hygiene concerns of non profit shelters and their temporary, underpaid staff who are given nothing abd expected to work miracles. It leads to unsafe and unsanitary conditions that people are correct in rejecting.

The hyper policing and vigilante "justice" from housed people increases the chances of becoming caught up in the legal system. They get you once and then they keep coming for you. You never really leave the carceral system.

So now you have no address, you are working under the table. You have a police record that follows you everywhere.

The barriers continue to mount and you learn to cope. Housed life becomes a far off memory.

At least youve still got some income until you fall off the roof of a house at work. No workers comp for you.

You go to the emergency room and they treat you like an animal and discharge you with aspirin.

You cant sleep. Your old boss doesnt answer your calls or texts. There is no work and it hurts to breath anyhow. You couldnt do labor if you wanted to.

Your cash drains away and youve lost the last the last of the belongings you had from home. Your clothes are all moldy or destroyed.

You ate hungry but the nearest store is 3 miles away uphill.

Someone else in the jungle offers you a pain pill. You have no way of knowing what it is but the pain is unbearable. This is a bittersweet moment of mercy.

It works. You can move or breath but the next 5 years is a blur of increasing pain and disability. Youve overdosed on pressed pills, your fellow campers saving your life.

Nobody recognizes you on the street. Youve become a corporeal ghost.

You have days of full on psychosis. You get thrown out of stores. The local non profits have written you off, since you have so little chance of improving their city stats to get funding. You are gristle.

You go in and out of county lockup for eating stolen food in the store. The employees beat you up regularly but you have no recourse.

One winter you die unceremoniously.

There is a meager display setup where you perished but houses kids light it on fire in a few days.

This could be anyone.

Weve met houseless mathematicians, ex doctors, engineers and sooooo many blue collar folks.

You are not in full control of your health or circumstances.

Anyone can lose it all overnight for no reason, for no fault.

Read more of Red's thoughts in [On IronProle \(/posts/on-ironprole\)](/posts/on-ironprole)

index tags: Twitter, Backup
