# Cap K

The affirmative's call for *medical* transformation as liberation normalizes the exclusion and discrimination of the healthcare system—that legitimizes the continued exclusion of undocumented immigrants and poor people who can't afford basic coverage, let alone access [abortion]. This reinforces the capitalist underpinnings that enabled the healthcare system.

#### Lyng[[1]](#footnote-1)

This perspective suggests that the crucial macro-level relation involved in the historical evolution of professional monopoly was the support provided to the professional, medical scientific model by sources within the corporate domain. In a broader application of the argument I presented in an earlier section. Brown posits that certain key managers of corporate foundations (primarily the Rockefeller and Carnegie foundations) joined forces with elite practitioners and academic physicians to promote medical educational reform, which they understood would advance the medical scientific model as well as professional control over diagnosis and treatment. This coalition was forged by the recognition that medical scientific hegemony and professional monopoly would some the interests of all three parties. Hence, the Marxist perspective differs from other approaches by emphasizing the identity of interests between the capitalist class and the medical profession while dismissing conflict or opposition between these two parties as a factor in the development of the health care system. What is not fully explained by this model is why capitalists would wish to lend their support to a system of professional control over the means of health production. The specific capitalist interest served by promoting the medical scientific paradigm is easily identified: by defining health and illness in reductionist terms, medical science functions to direct attention away from the socioeconomic determinants of biological function. However, the medical scientific perspective could be employed just as easily by health care workers controlled by corporate management as it could by professional practitioners who control the conditions of their own work. With the steady expansion of capitalist control over economic production in the twentieth century, workers in most craft and professional occupations have been transformed into wage laborers. In the same way that capitalist interests were advanced by establishing control over these workers, it has always been in their interest to control the labor of medical practitioners as well. Brown's emphasis on the common interests between capitalists and the medical profession diverts attention from this important source of conflict between the two groups. A crucial chapter in the story is missing from Brown's analysis, an account of the way in which this inherent contradiction between the corporate and professional models has been mediated.

**And,** the call for trans hormones plays in the capitalist system, which exploits the bodily insecurity of trans people for the interests of capital. Expanding trans people's access to hormones isn't freedom, but capitalist enslavement; they are pressured into purchasing medical products to fit into marketable tropes of femininity and masculinity. Gender fluidity is unattainable if the capitalist system is left in place.

#### Siebler 12[[2]](#footnote-2)

Digital space, films and television shows serve to teach transqueers what the current standards are for being trans in this world. These texts codify just one version of trans identity that transqueers must manifest to be accepted. Angela McRobbie and Janice Winship analyzed the discourses in women’s magazines and how a highly restrictive femininity is constructed, centering on romance, domesticity, and caring (2004). As a result, females of all ages in the culture internalize that restrictive femininity and aspire to it by dieting, buying beauty products, and dressing to accommodate. To an even larger degree, this is true of trans people who feel they have to be uber-feminine or hyper-masculine to prove their identity as “real” or true females/males. The standards of beauty and the standards of body are hooked into the capitalistic culture of consumption: consuming undergarments [are] made specifically for trans “passing,” consuming clothing, makeup, and beauty products, consuming various types of surgeries. Without this consumption mandate, would there be these rigid gender standards of how to be trans? Most media theorists argue that the capitalist culture creates the need for body modification or body insecurity. If there were no body insecurity, there would be no need for the products. Therefore, it is the goal of the marketers to make the viewing public feel insecure enough to buy. We trust our screens to inform us how we should be, perceiving it as “real.” Zizek writes, “The postmodern universe is the universe of naive trust in the screen which makes the very quest for what lies behind it irrelevant” (Plague, p. 134). The technology of this postmodern moment creates both disillusionment and creates the idea that technology is reality; objective reality and technology become blurred. What technology delivers to us, we believe to be real; the virtual reality of the computer screen is confused with the physical world in which we live. Therefore, the information, language, and representations encountered in that virtual world are seen as truth. The ramifications of new media reinforcing the rigidity of the sex/gender systems results in the demand for more hormones and more surgeries. Zizek believes the virtual world inside the screen “jeopardizes our most elementary perceptions of our own bodies. It cripples our own phenomenological attitudes toward the bodies of others. We suspend our knowledge of what actually exists and conceive of that surface (the computer interface) as directly expressing the soul” (1997, p. 137). Yet we believe we are not affected by the cyber-texts we consume. In research conducted by Bryson et al., regarding queerness and digital texts, they found people were in denial about how much they folded the digital world into their own. Bryson et al. write, “It was relatively common for participants to describe daily practices of living as highly mediated by a range of Internet technologies and spaces, and their lives as relatively insulated from any cybercultural ‘effects’ or ‘affects”’ (Bryson et al., 2006, p. 798). Websites, films, and television are making gender more rigid. New media may support[s] alternative genders, but only those alternative genders that require the assistance of hormones and surgery. Carroll and Gilroy (2002) wrote about treatment approaches for transgender people. Rather than counseling patients to assume either a male or female role, counselors are more likely to encourage patients to explore other identities and options even as the screen-mediated world sends the opposite message. Carroll and Gilroy challenge counseling educators and counselors to embrace a “trans positive” approach, affirming various gender identities. These counselors will have little chance of success against the digital onslaught of gender/sex binaries. The Internet feeds trans people [are fed] the notion that gender means capitalist consumption with images, banner ads on web pages, and websites that exist only to sell products to transqueers. The website Susan’s Place Transgender Resources is an example of a hybrid site that initially purports to provide “resources,” but getting products to help one pass is the dominant function of the site. The name suggests that there may be some support groups listed or organizations that advocate for trans people. And there are, but there are also various links to surgeons, places to buy clothing, where to shop, what kind of surgery is available, and where to buy prostheses. The “academic” link is empty. The Transgender Care website is one that focuses on surgery, hormones, and hair removal; the “care” advertised has a cost, both literally and figuratively. If only one argument or way of being transgender is presented, there is no choice but to capitulate. Judith Butler (1990) writes that gender is a “regulatory fiction.” Teresa de Lauretis (1989) argued that gender is the product of various social technologies, including film and media. We now must add the Internet to that list. The Internet and the representations of transgender people add another level to both Butler’s and de Lauretis’ theories. The “fiction” portrayed with reality/talk shows and YouTube becomes all too real to the people who are viewing them. While a viewer may dismiss sitcoms and Hollywood films as fiction, aspects of new media are consumed as “reality.” Gender is not only a product of these social technologies but also created by them. Transgender people are caught within the gender-web, trying to create a body that matches what is presented as the authentically male/female and masculine/feminine. The one thing that prevents people from capitulating, it seems, is money. The class divide between those who can afford new bodies and those who cannot looms large here. In the documentary Boy I Am (Feder & Hollar, 2006), Nicco has a benefit in the queer bar he works for in order to raise money for top surgery. He talks about the politics of asking people for money for surgery that some view as elective. To Nicco the surgery is not elective; it is a mandate. He can’t be who he believes he is without the removal of his small breasts. Transqueer representations of buff, tattooed muscles in tank tops or push-up bra cleavage are declaring the same phenomena: “gaze upon my body proof of my socially-sanctioned gender.” Buck Angel, a muscular, tattooed, bald man who harkens back to Mr. Clean, has a well-known body that matters in the digital space. Angel is not afraid to queer his image by letting us know that he does not have a penis. The line Angel is most known for is, “It isn’t what is between your legs that makes your gender” (Buck Angel Entertainment, 2010). Angel resists the mandate of being fully female or male, although Angel has had top surgery and presumably is taking hormones. Angel has a web site devoted to his own brand of queer politics and his “Public Cervix Announcement” is popular on YouTube (2010). Angel’s website Buck Angel Entertainment’s (http://buckangelentertainment.com/) tag line promises “Agency, Advocacy, Lectures, Workshops and Media Projects.” His public service announcement (PSA) about cervical cancer screenings advises transmen to continue to get annual pap and pelvic exams. Responses posted by viewers are overwhelmingly hostile, calling Angel a “monster” and a “synthetic male” (among other things). He also has a YouTube PSA on transgendered women getting prostate exams. Buck Angel’s website, as well as websites such as Transgender Law and Policy Center, Transgender Forum Community Center, and National Association of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Centers, offer essential information on where a transgender person can go to find community, information, and support. There are more websites peddling products, surgery, and testimonials of the one “true” trans way. The Internet offers a singular and unified pedagogy of transgender identity: be who you are, but you need to spend money to align your body with who you really are; your natural state is one that is unnatural and needs remediation. As transgender people race down the road of body aesthetics at the peril of their own health, what else are they losing? Certainly, they are losing significant hunks of money. Breast augmentation surgeries, both taking them off and putting them on, range from $3,000–8,000; bottom surgeries cost $20,000–30,000, but some are much higher. The Hudson’s Guide to FTM Surgeries website states that “phalloplasty procedures also tend to be very expensive (between $50,000 and $150,000) and are often not covered by insurance” explaining why fewer FTM transgender people are getting bottom surgery, but most aspire to top surgery (“Hudson’s,” 2004). In addition to loss of money, transqueers of the 21st century are being denied queer representations and ways of being that defy the gender/sex/sexuality binaries. The digital world has opened up communities for transgender people where none have existed before. There is less isolation and perhaps less struggle because of the resources, social networks, and virtual communities provided on the Internet. However, these virtual communities and forums also serve to create a codified version of limited ways of being transgender. A transgender norm becomes established so that even transgender people are no longer queering gender in the way that Dr. Frank-n-Furter did in the 1970s. The Transgender Warrior that Leslie Feinberg describes is being co-opted by the capitalist culture so that a buck—and a Buck Angel—can be made. This commodification of queerness is not exclusive to transgender people, but this group seems the most vulnerable because the “products” they are persuaded to purchase are not new wardrobes or cars. Instead, the capitalist culture has successfully convinced transgender people that they must purchase surgeries and hormones, body parts or the removal of them, to embody their “true” identity. In a culture where consumption is a way of life, a way to validate one’s existence, a way to display one’s status and worth, queerness has been co-opted. The Digital Age has obliterated the transqueers who embrace the borderlands of gender fluidity and replaced it with “gender as consumption.”

Only an uncompromising rejection of capitalism solves – the alternative is to seize onto movements against capitalism that are developing now.

#### Williams[[3]](#footnote-3)

I would argue that to expect this system to solve the crisis that it manufactured is utopian. The only rational way out of this crisis is to get rid of the system, and this slogan—“system change, not climate change”—has resonance all across the world; it originated in Copenhagen in 2009 as a way of expressing the fact that whether you’re anticapitalist or not you recognize, particularly after 2008, and the ongoing economic crisis that there are deep, structural, fundamental problems about this economic system, which are not just destroying our lives individually, but (and) destroying the entire planet on which we ultimately depend. This is something that evades completely the thought processes of mainstream economists. I picked this up just the other day, wasted some money, but the National Review—the cover of the National Review —is “Wonderland: The Miracle of Canada’s tar sands.” It’s not a joke. Where do you go with that? Because clearly the power of the oceans, the power of tides, the power of scientific rationality is not enough to get capitalism to change course. In fact, you can bury one of the most iconic cities in the world under a thirteen-foot wall of water, and you still don’t get the problem mentioned by the two people running for president. In other words, Hurricane Sandy does not get mentioned, climate change does not get mentioned, even though New York City was under several feet of water, people were homeless, there’s no running water, there’s no transportation system, but we can carry on. We can continue to extract fossil fuels, etc. The distortions that go on under capitalism are so obscene it’s hard to wrap your head around it sometimes, on a micro level as well as a macro level. I was riding on the subway and I took a couple of trains and I was looking at the ads. The average American sees about 3,000 ads a day. One ad was for a credit card, and this is the slogan for the credit card—“Less plastic, more human—Discover it is human.” Discover is the card that they were advertising. In other words, you can actually be more human by having this type of credit card. Another ad, and this gets to the quality of life, that I pass by was about online delivery of food—how you can order online instead of having to phone somebody—and the ad read, “You’ve perfected the odds of getting to third base faster. Food delivery date night.” The obscenity and depravity of capitalism knows no depths to which it will not plumb. This is something that Karl Marx talked about quite a bit. He was speaking at the anniversary of the People’s Paper in 1856, and I think this resonates far more with us now than it did even in his time. On the one hand, there have started into life industrial and scientific forces, which no epoch of the former human history had ever suspected. On the other hand, there exist symptoms of decay, far surpassing the horrors recorded of the latter times of the Roman Empire. That kind of sense of decay [that] pervades our world as it is currently structured. He goes on: In our days, everything seems pregnant with its contrary: Machinery, gifted with the wonderful power of shortening and fructifying human labor, we behold starving and overworking it; The newfangled sources of wealth, by some strange weird spell, are turned into sources of want; The victories of art seem bought by the loss of character. At the same pace that mankind masters nature, man seems to become enslaved to other men or to his own infamy. Even the pure light of science seems unable to shine but on the dark background of ignorance. All our invention and progress seem to result in endowing material forces with intellectual life, and in stultifying human life into a material force. This antagonism between modern science and industry on the one hand, and social misery and disillusion on the other hand is the epoch that we are currently living through. Actually there’s a debate going on that has been going on for a little while among scientists and geologists about whether we have entered a new geological epoch. This will take a while to resolve, but scientists are starting to lean towards the idea that the answer is yes. This is a big decision for science, because a geological epoch is measured in tens of thousands of years. You have to have a way of measuring the impact of human society over not just a few hundred years, but hundreds of thousands of years. What would be the impact on that kind of scale? Civilization collapses, all the buildings disappear under sand and dirt and erosion and whatever else, and what’s left? We are currently living in the Holocene, or have been since the last ice age. It is being argued that we are now entering a new epoch of the Anthropocene—the age of man—because we cause such a level of disruption to the environment. How are we going to measure where we start the Anthropocene? Geologists and scientists congregate around the year 1945, because that’s when the atom bombs dropped and the testing started and we will be able to measure the difference in the isotopic fractionation of the atmosphere for tens of thousands of years. So the most long-lived legacy of this so-called civilization might be the irradiation of the atmosphere. How despicable is that as a testament to the human race. Clearly we have to have a real alternative. Can you guess who the only ones planning for climate change in this country are? The Pentagon. The Pentagon is actively planning for climate change and they’ve got answers. Major General Michael Lehnert, who was part of the Marine Corps and who operated on a few different bases (he has worked at Guantánamo—he must be a nice guy), he says, “A country worth defending is a country worth preserving. Environmentalists need large open expanses of space where endangered species can recover and thrive. The military needs large open expanses of space so they can train.” What can possibly go wrong having a nature reserve that’s also a bombing range? Of course they could coexist. Why is the navy in particular—which is about to sail a so-called great green fleet on the basis of bio-fueled and nuclear-powered warships—why are they so invested in it? Where are naval bases? On the coastline. They know they are going to be under water, so they’ve got to take evasive action, as it were. The navy, along with the army, is taking this very seriously. The navy’s new slogan is “A global force for good.” They found out through some research that trying to sign young people up to “What do you want to do with your life—go kill people in large numbers” was not a good selling point, so they changed it to “A global force for good.” We need to ask ourselves much broader questions. To quote Carolyn Merchant about how consumer capitalism envisions nature and the environment: The twentieth-century Garden of Eden is the enclosed shopping mall decorated with trees, flowers, and fountains in which people can shop for nature at the Nature Company, purchase “natural” clothing at Esprit, sample organic foods and rainforest crunch in kitchen gardens, buy twenty-first-century products at Sharper Image, and play virtual reality games in which SimEve is reinvented in Cyberspace. . . . The mall, enclosed by the desert of the parking lots surrounding it, is covered by glass domes reaching to heaven, accessed by spiral staircases and escalators affording a vista over the whole garden of shops. . . . With their engineered spaces and commodity fetishes, they epitomize consumer capitalism’s vision of the recovery from the Fall. We need a much bigger vision. To quote James Baldwin—he had an argument in the 1950s with William Faulkner about whether they should go slow and be patient on the question of civil rights. He wrote an essay from which I’ll quote: Any real change implies the breakup of the world as one has always known it, the loss of all that gave one an identity, the end of safety. And at such a moment, unable to see and not daring to imagine what the future will now bring forth, one clings to what one knew, or dreamed that one possessed. Yet, it is only when a man is able, without bitterness or self-pity, to surrender a dream he has long cherished or a privilege he has long possessed that he is set free—he has set himself free—for higher dreams, for greater privileges. We need to fight on every front available to us. We are engaged in a struggle to stop the Keystone XL. It’s not like we haven’t won some things with regard to that fight. If we hadn’t already been fighting the Keystone XL in Canada and here, it would already have been approved. We’ve already delayed that decision, and the demonstration in Washington, DC was another way of delaying it further. Obama is trying to get his ducks in a row to make sure they can sell the sellout to enough liberal organizations to get them to hum and hah, and I think that’s where we need to go as a real left wing and argue that we are going to call a demonstration immediately if he approves it, and organize to build it as widely as possible and march on the White House.The divestment campaign—is it everything we want? Obviously not. But it’s a campaign and we should join it and be involved to the fullest extent that we can. Because, as I mentioned in another workshop, and as people are probably well aware, we need to win some victories to buy ourselves some time. We also need to win some victories to gain confidence that we can win more things and build our organizations. Because if it’s the one thing that we lack, it’s the question of organization and how do we strengthen the networks—in this city, between cities, between countries—to build a better future. One way of seeing capitalism—apart from insane—is as a global simplification project. What works best for capitalism is massive economies of scale, a huge concentration of wealth, and ever-larger multinational and transnational corporations, to the extent that biodiversity is viewed as an impediment to capital accumulation. It’s much better if they have monocultures vast acres of monocultures. It’s much better for capitalists if we live off four animals or four grains or four fish. It’s much more efficient from a capitalist perspective, and efficiency for capitalism means only the fastest accumulation of money possible. What is the alternative? There was a recent article in Scientific American by Mark Jacobson, a professor at Stanford, which cited a report saying by 2030 we could have the whole world powered by wind, water, and solar power. He has come up with a new plan for New York State for how we can do the same thing by 2030. We would be reducing energy consumption by 37 percent, because it is more efficient to use renewable than fossil fuels. There would be 4,000 fewer mortalities in New York State in a year, because we wouldn’t be breathing the stuff we are currently breathing. There would be more people at work, and we would save $33-billion a year. He was asked in a recent interview what the main obstacles are for achieving this. He says, “I’m not an advocate, I’m a scientist, this is what I do.” But he said the main obstacles are political and social—getting politicians on board. There are always local zoning issues. I am sure there will be a big push by the gas lobby and the oil lobby against this. If society is going to do it, at least we know it’s technically and economically feasible. Whether it actually happens depends on the political will. I don’t know whether people saw it, there was a recent article in Time magazine titled "The revenge of Marx." They keep announcing him dead and somehow he keeps magically coming back. The article starts off, and this is in the business world finance section of Time, “Karl Marx was supposed to be dead and buried.” That’s how it begins. But then it goes on: “From the floor of the U.S. Congress to the streets of Athens to the assembly lines of Southern China, political and economic events are being shaped by escalating tensions between capital and labor to a degree unseen since the communist revolutions of the twentieth century. How this struggle plays out will influence the direction of global economic policy, the future of the welfare state, political stability in China, and who governs from Washington to Rome.” That’s Time magazine a couple of weeks ago. They quote a couple of different Chinese workers, one of whom says, “The way the rich get money is through exploiting the workers. Communism is what we are looking forward to.” Another worker says, “Workers will organize more. All the workers should be united.” There is clearly a new mood in the world, and I think we’re heading into a new period. We have really been in one since 2011 with the Arab Spring and Wisconsin and Occupy, and all the things that we’ve been fighting for, in particular since 2009. There is clearly a new era that we’re into, which is an era of revolt, rebellion, and revolution. What is it that we really want to fight for? Going back to that study that I quoted on how New York State could be wind, water, and solar powered in 20 years time. The author takes everything that currently exists and assumes that it will still exist and he still thinks it’s possible. In other words, the transportation will still remain based on private transportation and not public transportation. We won’t be taking any other measures; we will be just changing one form of supplying energy for a less polluting form of supplying energy. I think we need a much ,much bigger vision. Because as one of the speakers in the food panel mentioned, what it means to put wind turbines in Mexico is an increase in poverty, because they kick people off the land in order to put in the wind turbines. So we have to talk about not just changing energy systems, but about changing the social and political power in this country and around the world. We’re not going to get positive ecological change without some positive social change, which means putting front and center questions of fighting racism, fighting sexism, and fighting homophobia, along with rearranging the social and political policies. The pendulum of power has swung so far to one side that we need to urgently form a movement to pull it back, and ultimately get rid of the entire pendulum, if that analogy really works. Marx had quite a lot to say about the lack of time, and about the concept of ownership. The concept of yours versus mine is one of the most distorting and alienating concepts that we currently have to live with—the possession and ownership of things and the way we see our basic human fulfillment through the prism of ownership of things. I can feel more fulfilled if I can only buy more stuff and get the next generation of iPhone or whatever it is, and I would be feeling more human than I did before once I’ve acquired this. If you have the ability to do that, you very quickly find yourself unfulfilled, empty. As J. K. Galbraith said, capitalism is the production of manufactured discontent. We are continually unhappy in our distorted lives, and we obviously have no idea what it means to be fully human in any real sense. This is really a 10,000-year struggle the culmination of which is to privatize the entire planet. That’s really what it’s about—to the extent that they have now managed to privatize even words. McDonald’s has a patent on 114 different words and phrases in the English language. Or think about patenting genes and all the rest of it. One of the first things they privatized 10,000 years or so ago at the beginning of civilization, class society, was the female body. So how do we go back and via revolution open up such questions of sexuality, gender, our relationships to each other, and our relationship to nature? These are questions I think, very large questions, that we need to address. What we really are talking about is changing our relationship to each other and the planet. We’re not talking about in relationship to things, which is deeply alienating, we’re talking about our relationship to each other and the planet, and how we form a movement that would be for those things. So it’s not just a question of energy; it’s not just a question of public ownership or public transportation—although we want all those things. It’s a question of what Marx talked about—overcoming the metabolic rift where we’re completely separated off from nature. In fact there are three real separations, because capitalism has put animals in one place, crops and plants in another, humans somewhere else, and then created this insanely energy-intensive, water- intensive pollution system which is entirely linear: waste comes out at every point. And as far as the capitalists are concerned, that doesn’t really matter. Do we really need to own anything? I think this is one of the limitations of talking about how we change our consumption patterns, because it’s clearly not about changing just our consumption. If we see ourselves as just buying different things, then we actually fall into the trap laid by capitalism, because we start to see ourselves as consumers as opposed to producers, as opposed to valuable human beings. You have to own your own individual washing machine, dryer, any number of other things—that could all be socialized and, as Joel Koval was saying, held in common. Because the future is about holding things together, in common, and producing things for what we need, not for what makes money. In fact, expanding on that, we don’t even need money. You don’t actually need money. In a society based on cooperation and real democracy, and producing things that you need, then you can cooperate and coordinate in order to exchange those things without the need for money, without the constant expansion that is inherent to capitalism. How can we just make the things that we need so that everybody is satisfied, and we are not working every God-given hour in order to do so? We are actually reversing the equation that is capitalism—replacing people with machines—and thinking about how we can have a much more meaningful way of living by working a lot, lot less. Why do you need lines on maps called countries? Ultimately why aren’t we living in a world where there are no nation states, in fact there are no states as such? Why can’t we organize cooperatively and collectively to solve the problems that are bequeathed to us by capitalism, and move forward in a way that is truly human and worthy of the kind of immense,­ amazing cultural things that we’ve managed to do even under capitalism or under feudalism, and other forms of class society? How can we take deep ecological insights of indigenous cultures around the world and connect those to some of the technological know-how that we’ve accumulated at the same time, and take the best from both worlds in order to make sure that we can have ecological farming on a human scale, that is putting our species and other species at the forefront of everything that we do? This was a concept that Martin Luther King, Jr was coming to towards the end of his life. Having won political rights, the next question for him was, what about economic rights? The right to vote obviously is important, and people died just to get the right to vote. But once we’d won the right to vote, where do we go from there? And this is what he said in 1967 in his speech, “Where Do We Go From Here?”: We must honestly face the fact that the movement must address itself to the question of restructuring the whole of American society. There are 40-million poor people here [now that’s 50-million], and one day we must ask the question: why are there 40-million poor people in America? And when you ask that question you are raising a question about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth. When you ask that question, you begin to question the capitalistic economy. And you see my friends, when you deal with this, you begin to ask the question: who owns the oil? You begin to ask the question: who owns the iron ore? You begin to ask the question: why is it that people have to pay water bills in a world that’s two-thirds water? Marx talked a lot about how ownership distorts us. He also talked a lot about time, and how one of the major aspects of living in a truly human society—one based on cooperation, real democracy, and production for need—is the immense amounts of time we will have to develop ourselves spiritually, intellectually, and culturally. The word “spirit” from the Latin means to breathe. If we are going to really breathe on this planet, we are going to need every kind of awakening possible in order to fight for a movement, because there’s no sense in which they are going to turn around, the 1%. Warfare is endemic to capitalism; racism is endemic to capitalism; and so is sexism. If we are going to live in a completely different world without those things, we need to get rid of capitalism. We need to fight for reforms right now, but we also need a vision of a completely different world, where we’re living in equality and freedom, and we have the time and the energy to replant our crops, rethink how we live, reimagine what food is and our relationships, not in terms of the things that we can accumulate, but the ways in which we can accumulate friends, relationships, and investigate nature. Capitalism posits that there is a fundamental separation between humans and the environment. That’s why they use the word “environment,” because it sees the environment as somewhere else and we are humans. If you talk about ecology, then you talk about what humans really are. We are as much a part of nature as anything else is, and our investigation of nature is about uncovering something about ourselves. Our ability to investigate and find things out shouldn’t be just based on, as it primarily is under capitalism: What can we use it for? What is it good for? How much money can I make from it? But purely for the sense of serene beauty that we get from knowing the universe better because by knowing the universe in nature better we actually know ourselves better. That is the dialect of nature. And to follow off from Epicurus, the kind of age, or epoch, that I would like to go into is the Oikeiotocene, which doesn’t sound too sexy, and is a little difficult to pronounce. It is the “age of conformity to nature,” and that is the age that I think we urgently need to fight for. I’m very, very happy to be part of a movement that is growing, and that there is an emerging left wing as part of it, and I think we can go on to win some victories and slow down the capitalist death train that is leading us over the carbon cliff, to ultimately derail it, and get rid of the idea that we need to be hurtling towards oblivion at a faster and faster place, accumulating more and more stuff. Then we can start to find out years and generations post-revolution how we can recognize and live as fully human beings in a world that we are not exterminating, but of which we see ourselves as beneficiaries, as bona pater familias, tenders of the household, as Marx called it, for future generations. And I think that is the kind of vision that we need in order to go forward

1. Stephen Lyng. “Holistic Health and Biomedical Medicine: A Countersystem Analysis” [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Siebler, Kay. "Transgender transitions: Sex/gender binaries in the digital age." Journal of Gay and Lesbian Mental Health 16.1 (2012): 74-99. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Chris Williams, 5/13/13, “What is ecosocialism and how do we get there?”, International Socialist Review Issue #89: Features. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)