

sept 2016



the monitor

dear reader,

You are amazing! Thank you for picking up a copy of this wonderful little thing we made! I hope you feel fulfilled and purposeful after reading all of its beautiful content! It was put together through the power of community and collective unconscious! And you were such a part of that!

If you are interested in having some of YOUR artwork featured in a future issue of *the monitor*, please don't hesitate to send us an email at trumanmonitor@gmail.com! We accept everything that we can and pride ourselves on our outstanding submission rate! So no matter how abstract you might think your submission is, send it in and we'll find a way!

Once you're done perusing our pages, please feel free to share this copy with a friend, leave it in a tree, sacrifice it to the void, or whatever other bizarre thing your little mind can think of. We don't judge!

the monitor may seem like a simple publication, but what you hold in your hands is a vessel for an artistic, valuable movement to occur! A paper soapbox! *the monitor* is the voice of the community and anyone can be a part of it if they're willing to! You are important and valuable, fabulous and fierce, and you can impact the society you live in by never ceasing to create and push for individuality. This is what we at *the monitor* stand for and we hope to see you again soon!

Love,

Your friend despite it all, *the monitor* staff

meet the staff,

“describe yourself as an inanimate object”

jacob st. omer : my Macbook

allison masbry : Heelies

blake buthod : I would be inanimate

ben wallis : harambe

ivan morrell : a mirror

will chaney : A ben hurr dvd

natalie welch : a sewing machine

taylor sanders : crumbling infrastructure

rebecca comas : A blanket

grayson bledsoe : a library

trista sullivan : A monitor

lewie : a clock with IIII instead of IV

ollie ganim : confused bead bracelet in a thrift store: 50¢ :^)

submit

Words

We encourage submissions of original articles, essays, prose, and opinion. Due to space limitations, please limit pieces to 2,000 words. If you would like to publish something longer, please submit it and we'll try to accommodate your piece. For formatting reasons, please submit all text as an email attachment. Please include a short one or two sentence bio with your submission.

Poems

Let us know if you have any specific printing or formatting requests. For formatting reasons, please submit all text as an email attachment. Please include your name (real, pseudonym, or anonymous).

Visuals

We encourage submissions of original art, comics, and photography. Due to publication limitations, our art and photography is printed relatively small and in black-and-white (except in the online version). Keep this in mind when submitting your piece. If we like your piece enough, it may end up on the cover! Let us know if you don't want that.

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Dear Mars

More and more, the lines between gender roles and gender identities are dissolving, especially among millennials. However,

these institutions still hold a powerful place in our society. Gender can have a profound formative effect on people's identity, and many feel lost without a solid foundation in their gender identity. Male identity specifically is losing the fixed, defined (dominant) position it had in America. One reaction to this has been severe right-wing conservatism, embodied in the ultra-macho identity of Donald Trump. What space is there for developing a contemporary masculine identity that is feminist, built on equality, rather than patriarchy? What male figures serve as role models for "the new man"? Should gender as a guide for identity be abandoned entirely? Should we focus not on being good men, good women, good fathers or good mothers, but merely good parents and children, good people? Thanks,

Startup Dude

Dear Startup Dude,

Building the foundation of your identity on gender is like carrying rocks in a tissue. It just won't hold. That sense of feeling lost without gender roles is a good thing, though it can be uncomfortable. It means that you, and, I believe, America at large, are in the process of questioning these roles and whether they even need to exist. When you feel lost, think about how you would define yourself if you had never heard of gender--through your actions and attributes, and your relationships to the people around you. Times when you feel lost are great opportunities for growth. Unfortunately, sometimes people's fear restricts them from challenging their beliefs and growing during these times, like Donald Trump. It's important to remember that blustering macho figures like him are coming from a place of fear. You can use this knowledge in an attempt to forgive him-- or just to capitalize on his weaknesses. As you wish.

When it comes to role models, you are called to fill that role, as we all are. If you live as an example that you can be confident and successful without clinging to the shriveled husk of masculinity, you will inspire others to do the same.

As you suggested at the end of your letter, yes, we should focus first and foremost on being good people. This is not to say that I think everyone should wear grey jumpsuits and have identical chin-length haircuts and pretend gender never happened. (though that might be fun to try.) Gender can be a tool for self-exploration, just don't let it restrain you. The trappings of gender can make nice accessories, but it's important not to trick yourself into thinking a necklace is a body part. Or that a body part means you should or shouldn't wear necklaces.

Basically, it's like Nietzsche's three metamorphoses. You don't want to be a camel, who blindly follows rules. You don't want to be a lion, who blindly rebels against the rules. You want to be a baby. Babies make their own rules.

**Love,
Mars**



Upcycling Tutorial

by Natalie Welch



The dilemma: You have a shirt with a kickass design, but it's too small/worn out/is a misshapen pastel yellow polo. (See above.) AND/



OR: You have a sweatshirt (or jacket, or hoodie, etc.) that you like, but the design on the front is nonexistent/out of style/makes you look like a lifeguard, but you can barely swim. (See right.) You can probably guess where this is going.

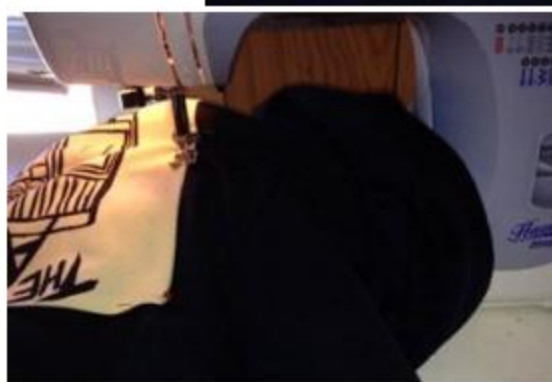
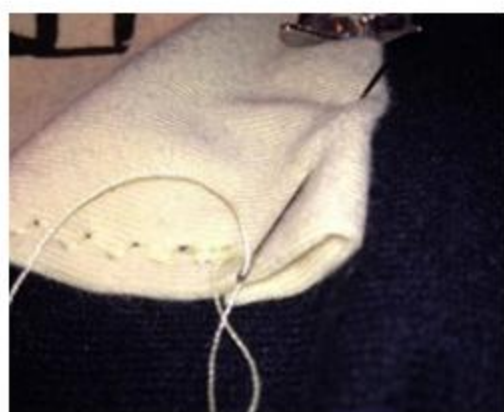
The solution: Attach one to the other. Save the Earth a little.



Measure the sweatshirt design, add an inch or so to each side, and make sure you cut the shirt design out so that it'll cover it.



Use those extra inches by ironing the edges down. Believe me, it's important. Pin the square to the sweatshirt.



Hand stitch, fabric glue, or machine sew the shape down.



Add all the random crap you want to put on it. Fabric glue and studs. Embroidery. Fabric paint (cheap af, easy to use, lasts a long time.) The list goes on. Happy upcycling! That's one more sweatshirt that will be on your body instead of in a landfill.



Questions? Suggestions for the next upcycling tutorial?
Email [new6684 @ truman.edu](mailto:new6684@truman.edu).

Weekend

by Walter Fremont

My boy Niko started his rounds with the texts asking about Boys Night and I tell him I'm always up for Boys Night and Who's coming? and he's quiet for a bit but sends me the names and this is when I know it's going to be a night:

- **Licky Lou** was chief among us and all of our best friend and certainly the most open with us.
- **Liquid Nelly** was the biggest of us all and probably the closest thing we all had to a father. For he was protector and keeper of us all in the worst of times and in our own personal struggles which we couldn't bring to the whole group we brought to Nelly cause he'd care for you and keep you warm and he was two years older than Lou who was otherwise senior.

Here I stopped in for some coffee and to see my lovely lady **Rebekah** who was beyond delicious: gentle and loving and passionate and wonderful with a waffle iron. Just to say Hi! and See you tomorrow? cause we were going out with her friends and maybe a few folks who ran with Liberace back in those days...

But tonight was Boys Night! and I see on my phone Niko's saying that

- **Boy Georgie's** coming, which is great because I know we're starting the night at Niko's where lives with him the most glorious pair of pectoritas and the owner thereof (one of the most shy, rock-hard bodies) was earnestly asking Niko a few weeks back What's it like, hanging with you guys? knowing full well what it's like and so this is important because Boy Georgie loves the shy and hesitant and uninitiated and has probably the highest pull-rate of any of us for bringing in something new and yummy to join the festivities.

And I also saw our boy **Dano** would show and **Mikey** and **Chris** were coming home so of course they wouldn't miss it but with them also meant drinking insane and probably Lucie or Emma which are both fun but hard.

And so we're at home, drinking. The liquid sloshing in our heads when he with the pectoritas walked in: beard (trimmed), glasses so kind-looking that we all called him 'honey,' and a tight cotton shirt squeezing his pectoritas not unlike how I would if given a chance...

And so out! All of us we went together with his pectoritas into the loaded town with our own dice loaded: this was the night which we looked squarely in the eye and asked if it could, please, turn gently around so we could have our animal way

and be like those in the bush, but rather in the back.

And after what was O God one of the most debauched intervals of weekend-passion we squared up and settled.

“That was the longest I’ve ever seen any of you ladies go just then it was” said Licky Lou, perched up on the counter with just pants on and he with the pectoritas glistened moist and kind of sad and confused said “Listen I don’t know how we got *to this* but I don’t know if—” and wow did that get Boy Georgie going cause he’s up and to Mr. Pectorius with power below and ready to go and shuts him up with one of the most tender touches of the lippers any of us had seen ever. This *very real* intimacy of course started us all up and the fervor that had died came roaring back and before the sun rose we had all been friends and frankly it was one of the best nights with the boys since last year when Lou brought home the Ladyboys and mescalito.

Untitled

by Taylor Sanders

I’ve never been very skilled socially, but since I moved into my own apartment, I find every human interaction I have all the more terrifying. It seemed like a good idea. I can live alone and never have to make a mistake in front of another person again.

Is this too personal? I’m sorry if it is. I really want you to like me or at least sympathize with me. I’ll be whatever you want so that I can feel like I have value in the eyes of another person because god knows I can’t see value in myself. Is this too self-indulgent? I’m so sorry. Is this inappropriate? I’m so sorry. Is it gauche? Probably. I’m gauche as hell.

I’m really panicky. It really sucks that everyone will find out that I’m not smart or cool or otherwise interesting in any way. I’m not even sure if I’m a sympathetic character. The sheer terror of existing is almost too much to bear. I could turn this into a song or a novel or a film. But I can’t. I can barely squeak this disorganized, scattered, self-indulgent shit out.

And then what? What’s the best possible outcome of this? It gets published and then some people read about how mentally unwell I am? I guess then it’s out there. For the record, I don’t want to be this unbearable narcissistic disaster.

This isn’t funny or compelling. I’m uncomfortable reading this. Maybe I won’t submit this. What if I submit it and it doesn’t get published? What if it only gets published because I’ve openly expressed my concerns about it getting rejected? What if I don’t submit it? What if I do?

A skilled writer would write a novel with a sympathetic protagonist, but did they ever think of just screaming that they want people to sympathize with them?

I’m so sorry. I’m so embarrassed. I feel so gross about all of this. At least I was honest

The rate of profit is falling!

by Will Chaney

“He used up my labor,
he used up my time
He plundered my body
and squandered my mind
Then he gave me a pension,
some handouts and wine
And told me I’m all used up”
— Utah Phillips, “All Used Up”

#2016 and life is great. The candidates up for election are respectable and will certainly improve our country when elected; the Paris Climate Summit slayed Global Warming Dragon; police officially stopped killing innocent people every single week; and the rate of profit has returned to healthy levels seen before 2008. It’s a party in the USA.

To avoid getting prosecuted later, I must admit that none of these statements are true in #2016. As all *Monitor* readers are informed citizens, I also won’t repeat information you’ve heard about this awful election, the state of climate change, or unrelenting police brutality. However, the last bit on the list {THE RATE OF PROFIT IS FALLING!!!} is something ignored almost entirely by economists, news outlets, and general discourse about our society. The rate of profit, how much money a company “makes” versus how much it spends, is simply very important in capitalism. When the rate of profit sinks low enough, as it has today, the entire capitalist system becomes unstable and its flaws start to surface. This article aims to explain how the rate of profit has fallen, how it can be restored, and why full luxury communism is necessary for the survival of humanity.

You won’t find mention of the trend in profitability to decrease over time in any of our enlightened bourgeois textbooks — this is because it is an observation of

the dangerous-yet-ignored school of Marxian economics. However, the argument is very straightforward. First, to avoid an old debate that will take up too much of your precious time today, we will assume that value is created by human labor. Furthermore, a human being can produce more value than the amount it takes to keep him/her/them alive, which as we will see is the source of profit. {For naysayers, the simple reason for this is that Marx viewed society as a system of social relations instead of as a collection of isolated individuals or institutions. This value theory is different from mainstream political economy, which sees value only as a relationship between an isolated individual and the commodity he/she/they is buying, measured in prices}.

In a capitalist enterprise, the employees who do the company’s work and create its products are only given part of the value they create in the form of their wages. The rest of what they make (“surplus” or profits) becomes the property of their employer/capitalist, which he/she gets to spend. When capitalists compete against each other, they must figure out how to increase profits or will go out of business. They can make their employees work more hours, or work harder, or pay them less, but eventually people get upset and these methods hit a limit. *If I can’t increase the workers’ hours, intensity, or lower their pay, how can I keep my company’s profit rate high?* our capitalist asks herself while staring blankly into the eyes of her oversized Hillary Clinton poster. *Aha! I shall invest in technology and production methods that increase the productivity of each individual worker!*

Through competition, capitalists are forced to use part of their profits to research and develop new ways of

producing whatever commodity they make. These innovations almost always *decrease the amount of labor relative to other non-labor inputs*. Here's an example — let's say a capitalist has a capital of \$100, with \$30 for wages and \$70 for all of the non-value producing inputs (buildings, machines, equipment, raw materials, etc.). She is able to sell the product for \$130 and pay her workers for half of what they produce, so her surplus or profit is \$30. This capitalist then finds a new production method that requires half as many workers, and her capital outlay falls from \$100 (\$30 wages plus \$70 non-labor inputs) to \$85 (\$15 wages plus \$70 non-labor inputs). She can still sell the product for \$130, or for \$128.99 to lure in more customers, since that's still the product's average social value while raking in an extra \$15 in profit. Where does the extra \$15 come from? It is "stolen" from other capitalists who have not yet introduced this production method and are less "efficient." The capitalist is happy and all seems well.

But all is not well. The other capitalists, who see our friend making an extra \$15, will soon adopt this new production method and cut their workforce in half — or go out of business. Human labor then becomes a smaller part of the entire industry's capital, and since it is the source of surplus value/profits, profits overall fall. All capitalists in all industries are constantly trying to increase their individual "efficiency" and raise their own profits, so they will spend less on the source of profit: human labor. Society's rate of profit then decreases, unless it is offset temporarily by other factors.

When profit rates are lower, capitalists have less flexibility in what they can spend it on. They are less able to treat workers well, pay higher taxes, respond to unexpected events, pay off their debt, build a new fountain, and so on. If profit rates sink low enough, capitalists may

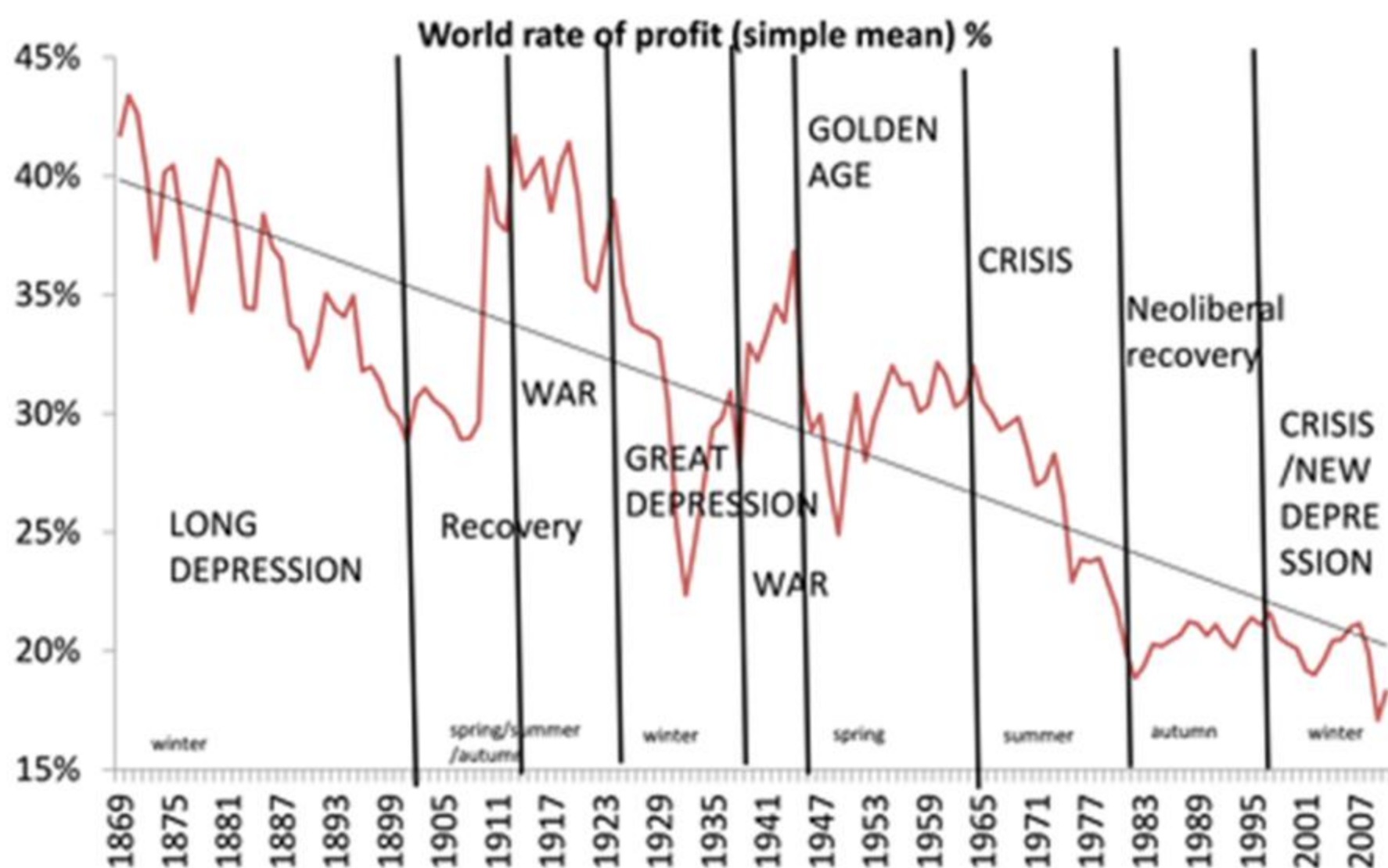
even decide to hold their capital in a bank or send it through a crazy financial scheme that can still earn the rate of return they're used to. These measures further destabilize the system, and because all capitalists see their profit rates fall around the same time, desperate actions are increasingly undertaken the closer we get to collapse.

The final part of Marx's theory is how to restore profitability. For profit rates to rise back to healthy levels, society must experience "destruction of capital," or the non-labor inputs must lose their value so the non-labor to labor ratio falls (what Marx calls the "organic composition of capital"). The destruction of capital can be as simple as a paper devaluation in buildings, equipment, raw materials, etc. or by actually destroying capital — firebombing, grenades, artillery, and other Call of Duty 5 type stuff. The more capital destroyed, the higher the profit rate becomes when it is reset.

Does the "law of the tendency of the rate of profit to fall" line up with reality? Generally yes. Here's a graph to prove it!

There are different ways to measure profit between contending theoretical lenses, but Marxian measurements (which also differ LOL) generally show a decrease in profitability before each crisis begin. These differences aren't all that important for this article, but come from things like geography, inflation adjustments, how capital should be valued, and so on. {The graph above comes from Esteban Maito, a respected Argentinian Marxist; the rest of the figures come from Andrew Kliman's most excellent book *The Failure of Capitalist Production* and Michael Roberts' quite fantastic book *The Long Depression*.}

There have been three points in capitalism's history when the rate of profit fell low enough to induce a crisis — the late 1800s, the Great Depression, and today. At the end of the Long Depression of the late 1800s, capital was



mostly devalued on paper. At the end of the Great Depression, the world was firebombed and capital was devalued back into the ground. Both of these restored profitability, which immediately began a slow slide back to crisis levels.

After World War II, the United States' profit rate was about 23% by conservative estimates, fell below 13% by 1970, then hovered around 8-10% from the 1980s to 2007. Other measurements show the profit rate as low as 5-6% during this time. Maito's research shows that "core countries," those where capitalism developed first and most completely, had a profit rate of about 22.5% after World War II, which fell to 16% in the mid 1970s, and ended hovering around 12-13% throughout the 1980s to today. "Periphery countries," those where capitalism is relatively new and whose labor costs are typically lower, decreased from 42% in the 1950s to 25% in the 2000s. Periphery countries typically have a lower organic composition of capital, meaning more capital is spent on labor relative to non-labor inputs and thus more profits can be

extracted out of workers. Overall, the general world trend is falling profit rates, which is not surprising given how integrated the world economy is becoming.

If you watch the mainstream news, you've probably heard the phrase "economic recovery" thrown around casually by anchors, politicians, and economists alike. The reality is the government policies that were supposed to create a "recovery" failed to do so, because they haven't restored the long-term rate of profit. Instead, our economy is propped up in the short run on accumulating debt, increasing the money supply, and taxing the working class to pay for capitalists' bailouts. No mainstream presidential candidate has even consciously acknowledged the falling rate of profit, let alone come up with a plan to fix it. A Hillary victory will probably continue the slow and painful slide we experienced under Obama, and a Trump victory could end in capital destroying war. Even the Green and Libertarian Parties don't address this issue, despite other appealing features

of their platforms.

The falling rate of profit is an *inherent feature of capitalism*. If we don't want to suffer the reoccurring crisis that low profitability brings, with the poverty, unemployment, violence, and other issues that come with it, we must transition to a different economic system. Marx's solution is communism, a fundamentally different economic system where (1) workers in businesses democratically make all major economic decisions, especially what to do with the profits, and (2) we produce things to use them instead of to make profits at the end of the production process. A communist society will have a "rate of profit," but it will be consciously determined by human beings instead of being

subject to capitalism's abstract law of value.

I wish I was exaggerating when I claim that the fate of humanity depends on the overthrow of capitalism, but the realities of global warming, violence, and inequality say otherwise. Whether or not we consciously recognize it, the low and declining rate of profit in capitalism will continue to make itself felt by all members of society. The next few years will be critical to human history, and the growing opposition to capitalism must be strengthened, even if our potential allies are voting for Mr. Trump this November.

film.



cinematography: truman fritz
director: emilia smart-denson
editor: tristan jackson
charlie brown: tristan jackson
linus: morgan fay
sally: victoria baccar varla
curated by: jillian danto



Alan Rickman: An extended Memoriam Piece for a quintessential cognitive European actor, a crafted yet “feminist man,” with universal appeal to our Intellects, foremostly!: Part 1

by Larry Iles

Alan Rickman, as I ended my last semester piece for *The Monitor*, is gone, prematurely cut-off at 69, from his yearned for 70th year of life by cancer's onslaught just at the beginning of 2016. One cannot, either, guarantee outside this *Monitor* contribution that he is going to be much book or non-celluloid furthermore remembered. In one respect, he is a problem status galore for either kind of insular mentalité biographer, be it the emotion-loving quirky UK biographer or the more pretentious US academic PhD thesis-stressing counterpart. This is due to two fuller reasons that might cause unjustifiable neglect by those two establishment-dominant kind of professionals.

They can rationalize their likely neglect by these two unjust criterion. First, Rickman's own film acting output was hugely prodigious which means that they as biographers would painstakingly have to task an uncharacteristic amount of research on his roles, very particularly in intensity, as he did portrayals of unfamiliar history periods for our time's preferred instant gratification attack deficit disorderliness. For example, his “breakthrough” English actor's recognition BBC2/ US PBS was as the loathsome fawning Reverend Obadiah Slope, in *Barchester Chronicles*. To appreciate his craft, one has to undergo intense self-immersion in the career connivance details of a pampered nineteenth century state Anglican (in US, called Episcopalian) male-only church, which only just this century started to become more women and truly liberal orientated, in ways that might themselves have made conservative Liberal would-be Whiggish MP novelist author Anthony Trollope, “uncomfortable” in recoil against.

Secondly, to my own research surprise in compilation of this compensatorily vital *Monitor* appreciation piece, a lot of the Rickman talented thespian traits which I would normally myself have lazily passed off as “eccentricity” of the sheer naturalistic sort, I praised in my “Biography since 1960” entry in the 1999 *Routledge Encyclopedia of British Contemporary Culture* and turn out to have been the non-spontaneous reverse from the time Rickman was a schoolboy resolving on being an accepted RADA actor and not taking the easier path of being an Oxbridge-bound English study undergraduate.

Rather like our own forgotten Kirksville-reared and daughter of an AP Still University professor Broadway actress Geraldine Page (“The Trip to Bountiful,” etc), Rickman was clearly a cognitive method actor, a self-directorial hard product, summoning even glacial cold attributes up to appear spontaneous. It's this very disciplined selfhood that perhaps explains why his co-star in the epic tearful “Truly Madly Deeply” film, Juliet Stevenson became so near-reticent when she was expected to be “gushy” and “tell-all” by a BBC 2 NEWSNIGHT interviewess, shortly after coming from Rickman's deathbed. Like yourself reader after a brilliant apparently natural classroom TSU presentation, you were and are not likely to give away in inappropriateness the tricks of your trade, even if Rickman rightly in life boasted that “Truly Madly Deeply” is now used in grief-handling therapy classes by psychiatrists.

Fortunately, with the recklessness of outspoken youth on her side, another co-star of Rickman at-the-movies, Emily Watson of the vast output of “Harry

Potter” movies, has proven less protective, less cautiously reticent in a way that provokes further thought for those of us searching retrieval of the essential tick qualities of Rickman. Igniting thereby a veritable storm of controversy in such papers as the Murdoch right-wing Australian owned (also owner of SKY UK Channel 103 and Fox USA) *London Times*, Watson said Rickman would want himself to be assessed as a proudly “feminist man.” Immediately the internet male trolls accused her of insulting their preferred imagery of a purely lightweight comic man and dragging in “politics,” irrelevantly! She has since shot back with verve that Rickman “the feminist man” had in this respect taught her as an ex-child actress both the seriousness of her burgeoningly frank sexuality and her own actor craft insights alike.

“Hermione” is crucially right! Even in jest there was such intended feminist bite in even Rickman’s acting counsel when it came to the sauciest feminism and in interviews given where he plainly preferred a highly intellectual female to a crass male jock one. For instance he once quipped when another one of his young actress protégés, Kate Winslet, no less, had been given to bemoaning “the corset” uncomfortableness she and director Emma Thompson had been thespian obliged to costume attire for the racy version of Jane Austen’s “Sense And Sensibility” film with Rickman. He had, pleadingly, told them to bear it all as an exquisite if painful confinement obligation explicable in suffering in a “feminist mystique” sense(a play on Betty Friedan’s classic feminist lament of corset-kitchen confinement in her superb work of the 1950s, *The Feminist Mystique*).

Moreover, Rickman’s commitment to politics went way beyond feminism into a moderate but definite socialist perspective incorporating historical perspectives outside the Anglo-American noncultural-

ist box. Last spring 2015 he gave a remarkably detailed interview to Jane Hutcheon of the Australian Broadcasting Corporations TV series “One On One,” still available on the internet ABC such titled archives. What was supposed to be a routine promotion tour for his directorial debut film “A Little Chaos,” starring Kate Winslet, turned into a ‘pièce de pensée divine.’ Clearly flabbergasted by how well researched and prepared for him was his female interlocutor, Alan Rickman, nevertheless, got calmly retortive about a number of professional and lifestyle areas of the interview. These were particularly areas where, arguably, Rickman considered he had been misrepresented and underestimated in allegations that his work choices constituted betrayal of both his feminist and politics integrity alike.

So Alan Rickman conceded Hutch-eon’s and certain historians’ point that “A Little Chaos” is “historically inaccurate” in that there never existed Winstlet’s chief female gardener pioneering of the creation of today’s still well-kept French Versailles palace landscaped garden, to his own acted foil of her seventeenth century patron, King Louis XIV. But he contended that the female character of the film’s forceful conceit had nonetheless been recreatively right for all time. As she, Winslet had wanted to tirelessly illustrate how untapped women’s creativity, if permitted, can bring order to men’s otherwise disordered muddy wilderness.

Rickman also emphasized a point he was to later make at the end of the year to US PBS Tavis Smiley about the film “A Little Chaos.” This was that, despite being, in reality, the film’s often “foul-mouthed” director, if he had refused such regal casting for himself in the role of Louis XIV, the finance boys would all chauvinistically have unfunded the whole project, with a Dutch male star only altogether.

poetry.

**Sometimes I disappear in between
the soundwaves Ben Gibbard uses
to create his Brand New Colony**

by Sam Andrzejewski

I'm a quarter sliding through the slot
rolling like skates on a Friday night
I feel my ridges on the concrete
picking up speed nothing but
a silhouette as my body leaves
I'm tired of sleeping in
this recycled air isn't so stale
anymore maybe because
I'm not breathing anymore
trying to smile through
crooked and cracked teeth
be wary of marching bands
in the streets of Manhattan
I swerved to avoid snare drums
shouting different words meaning
the same thing as fuck
waking up beeping peaks
start sinking—
I'm struggling to remember
what Sarah said

I Wrote This Using Voice-to-Text

by Lewie Dunham

Is this how I use this feature done press
done typing stop typing clothes app no tap
tab backspace backspace enter return return
3.14159269223846260238327028849716
between then and three some 51 actually
this is kind of poetry anyway it's going to be
3186.28318 thanks

**writing from the campus of
Missouri Southern State University**
by Jason Yarber

*Greetings from MSSU
It's much warmer here
And people are Lions
Instead of Bulldogs
And everything is different
And everything is different
And nothing is the same*

*I've traveled to a different planet
(again)
And felt the touch of a new society
(again)
One whose face I can't recognize
And whose feelings I can't feel
Whose dreams are just stories to me
A place where everything
Is inconsequential*

*Where all of my life events
Are just a slideshow in front of me
Where, finally, I feel insignificant enough
To just kick back and relax.*

(u((aby
*by Sebastián
Maldonado-Vélez*

the sign
in my dream
said bees were
our eyes at one
time and all
i can do is
believe

Road Rage

by Brian Behrens

Today I stopped at a STOP sign.
The meaning was clear
White on red
Ingrained in my head
If memory serves, I could read as far
back as I remember
Starting to remember, like a-
STOP
Too complicated
Keep it simple
Sugar-coated similes swim through
my soliloquys
Symbolizing succinct scenarios when
I can simply say:
SORRY
I made a mistake.
Yesterday, I rolled a stop sign
Her meaning was clear
Red on white
A harrowing sight
If memory serves, growing up with
three younger sisters and traditional
parents
Meant constant reminders to treat
women
Right.
But yesterday, I was in a rush
I had somewhere to be.
It didn't matter how desperately her
eyes pleaded with me to
STOP

Tears in her eyes melting the fea-
tures on my face into
Blurred Lines
Man, FUCK that song
I know you want it to
STOP
There are no maybes about yester-
day
The greatest differences between us
and animals
Are morals and self-control
"It's only natural for boys to act this
way"
NO
I threw it away
That rulebook on how to be a human
being
So many reasons why or things to
blame
Outside of me
It's the patriarchy
Society
She didn't specifically say
STOP
Please.
I've learned to read between
These so-called
Blurred Lines
They might as well be black and
white
And red all over
So why did I keep going
That's the root
Cause I'm a man, woman
I'll never be as strong as you.

My Biggest Regrets

by Lewie Dunham

1. Not challenging the spelling bee judges when I spelled a word right and they didn't hear the last letter
2. Some other things, but that's the big one.

by alex wannerberg

i can tell that one day you'll be a hero too!

by Kristin Geiman

Reliving the memory of rain
 In ecstasy for hours
 Like an overdue wedding celebration
 I am so ADD
 Dropping hints of where
 I should walk
 Dancing to the pitter-patter
 of their memories
 Leftover refreshments never suited me
 well
 But sunlight dances with the leaves
 I follow suit
 Nervously discarding my distaste
 for silver clouds
 Forget about lining
 Start living
 I tell myself
 I am a tree.

by Sam Andrzejewski

headlights couldn't wait—
shoulder it now
stop staring at the door
escape
blank frames far apart—
staring at the floor
hoping to start

From "Satellites" by Invalids

**I'M SORRY BUT THERE IS
ABSOLUTELY NOTHING I
REPEAT ABSOLUTELY NOTHING
THAT I CAN DO**

by alex wannerberg

mmm, mmmhm. yes, ach...
eh

well yes this is quite a quite
miserable
situation

indeed
indeed

gonna be all cards on the table up
front about this:
i'm not very good at these things

A POEM WITH NO NAME

by Peter Chauvin and Will the Communist

(A note from the writers to the readers.
Analyze this poem and send your best
analysis to pxc8847@truman.edu We will
pick the winner and they will win a 5\$ sub-
way gift card.)

A boy walks along railroad tracks,
all the while bombs fall around.
I walk on eggshells, all day long.
And listen to the sound.
A woman walks into the living room,
This was in the afternoon,
And sees herself reflected in the plasma,
LCD 72" HD TV.
These mountains don't walk or talk at all.
Yet goats can walk
even on the mountain,
which train tracks traverse,
where bombs fall all around.

Gunshot
by Kristin Geiman

Boom!
Boom,
boom!

Had to kill him
So you say

He was hiding a gun
Look, right there.
He was too big for a tazer

How do you know?
We don't, really
But we don't really want
to get shot.

Really?
What about the golden rule?
Maybe
Just maybe
He didn't want to get shot, either.
Maybe he
didn't have the chance
to say goodbye to his mother, his dog
his kids
his friends
His potential or innocence
judged with a glance.

Well now
He's dead.
And that's your fault
Not his.

mic ro po em 6
by ~olli sure~

escapism is a genre that was
invented because a bunch of
guys wanted to say "genre" more
the odds are in my favor
i love u

Adair County on a Dare

by James D'Agostino

I don't know where the sky
scored all this baby aspirin
but I bet somewhere right
now fever spikes in an angel.

Problem isn't the sky's falling
it's how you plan to get your
muddy footprints off it. One
day dawn does quick pink

bear trap trip and snap, and
there's your creation myth.
Another goes blackberry
blow torch sealing sky

to horizon so it's the same
old dome we'll die in, fireflies
in a fruit jar still labeled
preserves, still turning

purple. Light September
morning late. Already I have
watched a leaf's long fall
from no tree near. Like a kiss

in which gum switches mouths,
apple trees in the orchard
try on each other's shadow.
Squat quatrain clouds

graze the terrain from
the west, read left to right,
as I'm facing home. Your
right. My home.

one week in haiku (tonally inconsistent)

by jessica tiller

sunday - our father
that steeple looks like
it might be compensating
for something. amen

monday - the intellectual
i like short poems
more than long ones, which sometimes
make me feel sleepy

tuesday - first world
when the earth caves in,
blame it on the neighbors. we
don't walk soft like you

wednesday - introduction to astronomy
apparently stars
are also allowed to die,
which only seems fair

thursday - i'm not staring
your head bobbing to
the music in your headphones
feels to me like, wow

friday - automuse, or sad motherfucker
that boy wrote love songs.
they were about no body
in particular

**saturday - a haiku written on a hike is
called a hike-u**
the grid is not the
reason you hate yourself. but
unplug anyway



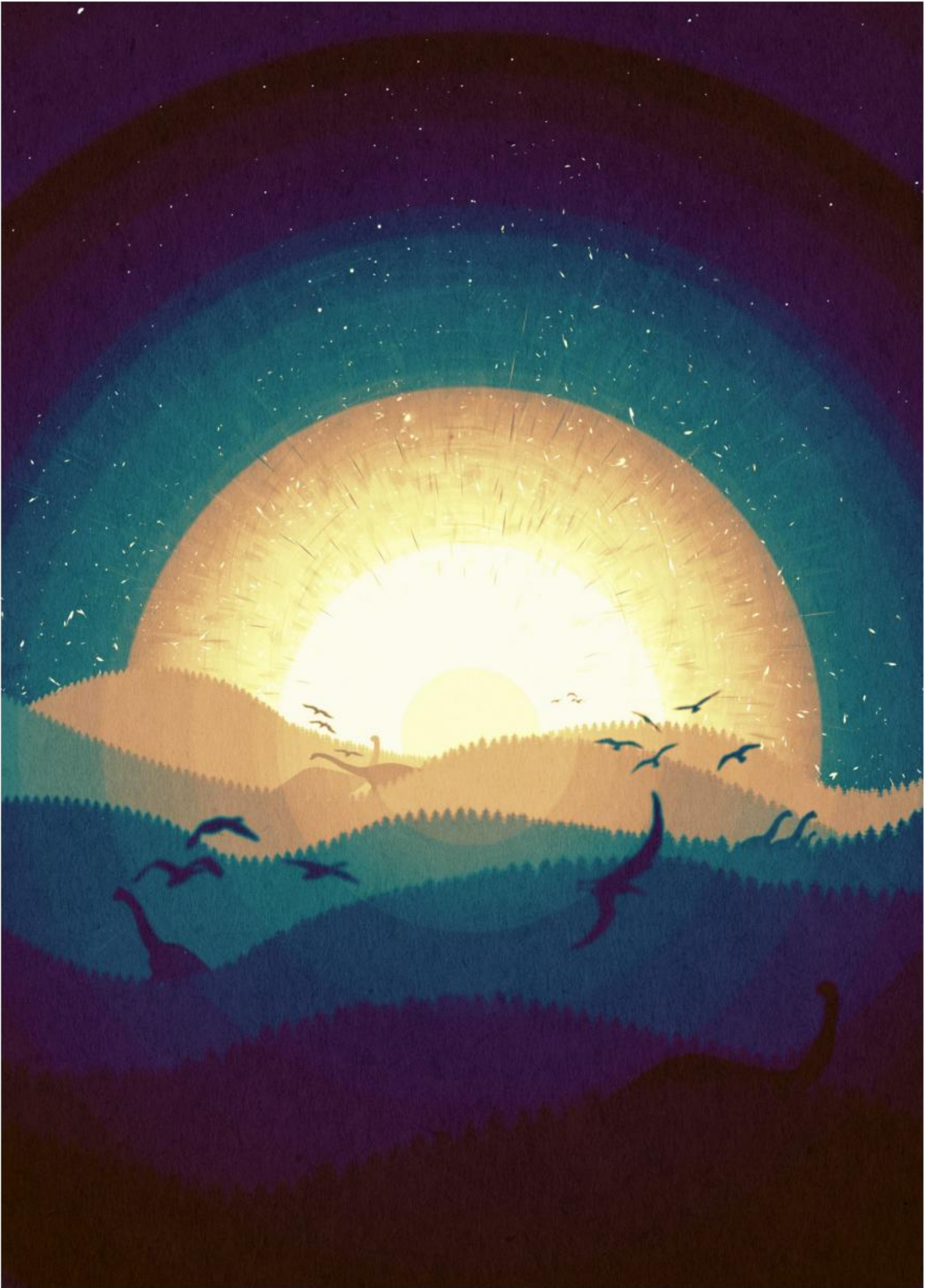
The Pessimist by Allison Marbry



by Blake Buthod



by Lewie Dunham



by Dennis Baker



Wake for a Squirrel by Korbin Keller

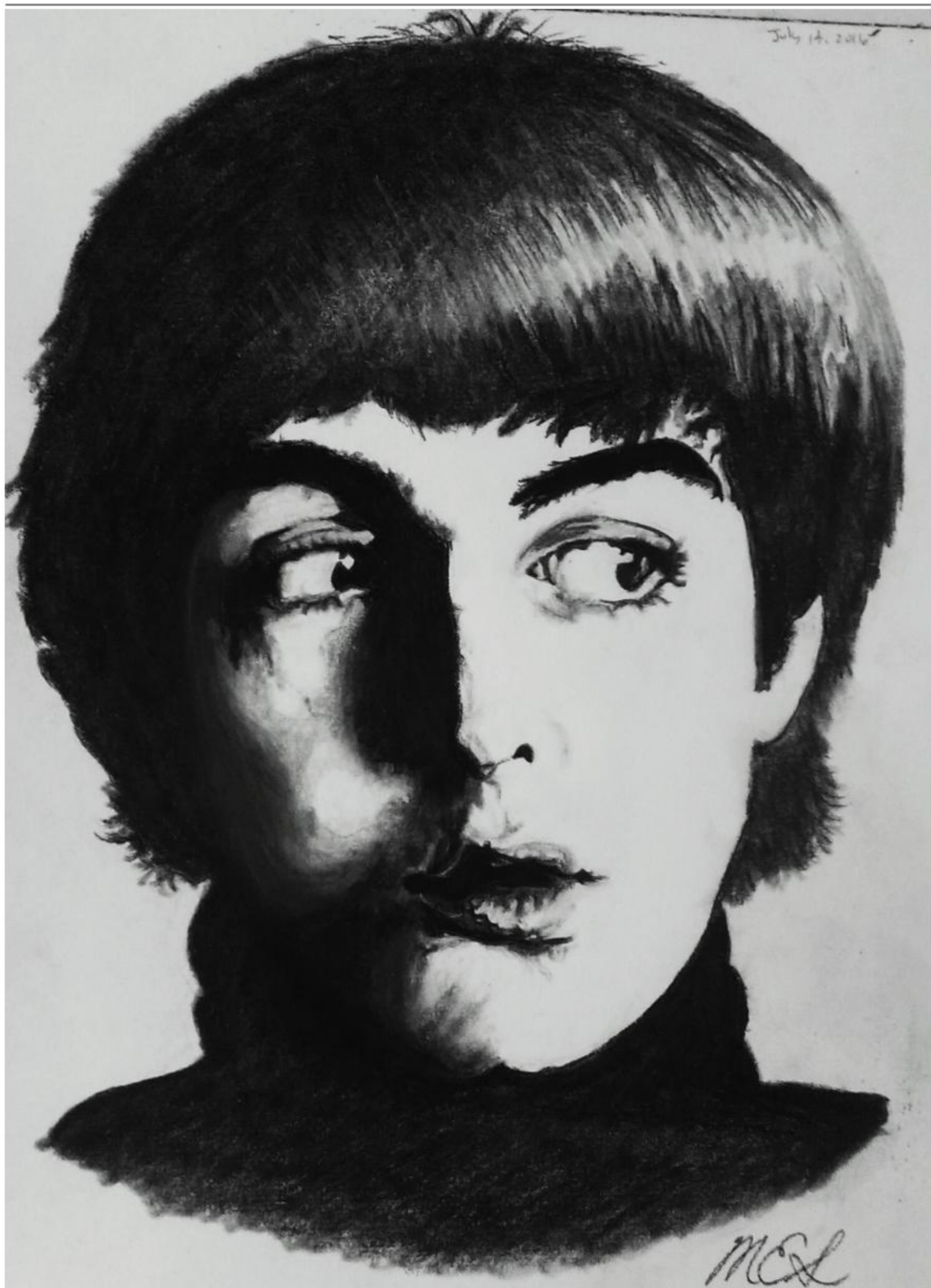
The Tomb is Empty by Korbin Keller



POCKET VINYL



Sunday
Oct. 16 @ The Aquadome 8 PM



by Micaela Saathoff

Against Clintonism, Against Capitalism

by Ben Wallis

“It’s time to start thinking of Iraq as a business opportunity.” —Hillary Clinton, June 2011 (1)

In 2002, Hillary Clinton voted as a US Senator to authorize the use of military force in Iraq. This alone does not distinguish her from her colleagues; 58 percent of Senate Democrats voted the same. She was, however, distinguished by her enthusiasm. In her testimony on the Senate floor she echoed propaganda from the Bush administration, stating that Saddam Hussein “[had] given aid, comfort, and sanctuary to terrorists, including al-Qaida members” (2). No other Democrat went so far as to make this (wildly inaccurate) claim. She later admitted to not having read the National Intelligence Estimate before voting. Four years on, a 2006 study numbered the casualties of the Iraq War at approximately 650,000 (3).

Today, Clinton has wisely distanced herself from the Iraq War, and is running (again) for the Presidency. She is the ostensible “progressive” alternative to Donald Trump, the primary speculation about whom seems to be whether or not he is a fascist. As such, Clinton’s 2016 campaign strategy has been: 1) to deemphasize her own political record as much as possible, and 2) to remind the electorate that she is running against Trump. Voters are alerted of their civic duty and the upcoming Presidential Election is framed as a moral crusade against a racist authoritarian populism. The event, we are told, is one of exceptional importance.

Against this interpretation, I will argue that Hillary Clinton does not represent a viable alternative to Trump, much less a “progressive” one. Furthermore, this election is not exceptional for having Trump in it and the emergence of a candidate like him was predictable

enough—one that draws support from a disaffected, downwardly-mobile white middle class. Trump, or, more accurately, Trumpism, is a symptom of Clintonism—a consistent ideology composed of neoliberal capitalism at home and U.S. imperialism abroad. The dominant narrative promoted by the Democratic Party confuses the reality of the situation we are in. The choice is not between Clinton and Trump, but between capitalism’s crisis and an exit from capitalism.

Neoliberal Capitalism at Home

In 1992, one of the central promises of Bill Clinton’s presidential campaign was to reduce the country’s deficit, which had grown precipitously over the previous decade. The root of the problem he was responding to was much older. Beginning in the 1960s, high and rising rates of inflation compounded with stuttering economic growth to threaten creditors and holders of financial assets across the developed Western world. In response, the Reagan administration hiked interest rates in 1979, successfully managing to drive down inflation. The trade-off was a sharp rise in unemployment. The 1980s saw the U.S.’s public debt grow to accommodate low taxation rates that followed and to provide for those driven out of work (4). Then, as now, the issue of public debt was a flashpoint of political argument. An increasing amount of state revenue had to be dedicated to debt-servicing, and the threat of slowing growth troubled all sections of the capitalist class. The first Clinton President won in part on his promises to remedy these problems.

The policies that were used to accomplish this goal are colloquially referred to as “neoliberal.” They involved the deregulation of finance (e.g. the repeal of Glass-Steagall), the freezing

out of social-welfare programs, and the undermining of unions. An example of this broad orientation was Clinton's infamous "welfare reform" (policies largely assembled under the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996), which stringently tightened eligibility requirements for state assistance. A 2014 analysis found that, as a consequence of the reform, the value of many welfare benefits had eroded to a point where beneficiaries could no longer meet their basic needs (5). Single mothers and communities of color were among those most impacted. In her biography *Living History* Clinton remarks that she was particularly proud of the accomplishments of welfare reform: "a plan that would motivate and equip women to obtain a better life for themselves." Bill Clinton's solution to a crisis of public debt was therefore to foster an explosion of private debt and to accelerate financialization. During her time as First Lady Hillary also touted the merits of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA wound up seriously undercutting the bargaining power of U.S. unions, resulting in the loss of some 700,000 jobs. Inequality grew steadily during Bill Clinton's two terms as President, and Hillary in most all cases endorsed the policies that facilitated this movement of wealth, if not their effects.

In retrospect, the crisis of 2008 owes much of its origin to the financial deregulation of the 1990s. The policies pursued by Bill Clinton fostered an expansion of unsustainable private debt which only managed to paper over stagnant real wages and increasing economic inequality. Nor has Hillary ever indicated a credible departure from the views she expressed as first lady: in 2003 as Senator she voted for "bankruptcy reform," making it more difficult for low income individuals to have their credit-card debt forgiven. The brand of neoliberalism offered by Clinton, in short,

is one that wholly favors finance and punishes the working class. Significantly, many members of the white middle class, battered by the recession, are those most likely to vote for Trump. The middle quintile of workers (by income) has experienced virtually no job growth since the crisis, and according to the Brookings Institute, the average male worker earned less in 2014 than in 1973 (6) (7). The Clintons' attachment to finance capital—come hell or high water—is perhaps best summed up by Hillary herself, in 2015 noting: "I represented Wall Street as a Senator from New York."

Clinton can hardly be blamed for the crises of the capitalist system. However, her solutions to the problems posed by its breakdown have been uniform in practice: she prefers to cut assistance to the most vulnerable rather than challenge the maximum profitability of capital. The anti-establishment rhetoric of Trump can find mass appeal among those who have legitimate grievances against this kind of "managerial politics," and it does. Conversely, it is doubtful whether the rallying-cry Clinton has chosen for her campaign—that America is already great—can find resonance with those trapped in its doldrums.

Imperialism Abroad

Hillary Clinton's international activities—whether as Senator or Secretary of State—spring from the same fundamental viewpoint as her domestic ones. That is, a firm belief that the role of the U.S. government is to fashion a political and economic environment suitable to maintaining the maximum level of profitability for U.S. capital. In practice, a foreign policy of this type involves the promotion of "free markets" and strong (private) property rights worldwide, as well as ensuring the accessibility of critical resources for the operation and expansion of U.S. corporations. The U.S.'s immense economy is used as a tool to extract profits abroad, bolstering its international

influence. These views, when drawn together, form an ideology of “free-trade imperialism.” The popularity and continuity of this outlook among U.S. political elites is supported by a comprehensive 2012 study of U.S. foreign policy networks by van Apeldoorn and De Graaf, surveying the Clinton, Bush, and Obama administrations (8). Hillary Clinton falls squarely within this tradition.

Today’s imperialism is carried out by predominantly economic means, in contrast to the political colonial bureaucracies of the 19th and 20th centuries. However, as Ellen Meiksins Wood points out, the U.S. is unable to maintain maximally profitable conditions for capital by itself. It requires the cooperation of other subordinate nations which each have their own local sources of power and legitimacy to discipline and direct labor. When so-called “rogue nations” fail to accomplish this task, extra-economic (i.e. military) coercion is required to reimpose the conditions favorable to capital accumulation (9). The United States, as the world’s sole superpower, has assumed the responsibility for meting out this discipline. Notably, Hillary Clinton is widely recognized as being more prone to use military force than many of her colleagues. As foreign policy is a realm of decision-making in which U.S. presidents traditionally enjoy substantial autonomy, her position here would likely increase the scale and scope of U.S. interventions across the world.

An examination of her record supports this claim. To take only one region, Clinton’s experience in the Middle East and North Africa has been devastating. Despite calling her vote for the Iraq War “a mistake,” she supported the 2009 surge of some 33,000 troops in Afghanistan. During her tenure as Secretary of State, nearly 300 extrajudicial drone strikes were carried out in Pakistan alone (10). Perhaps most egregiously, in 2011 Clinton pushed illegal regime change in Libya, a clear violation of the limits set by

the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1973’s “Responsibility to Protect” mission. Against the Libyan government’s repeated attempts to negotiate with the U.S., Clinton instructed the Joints Chiefs of Staff to ignore such overtures. Approximately 40,000 people were displaced, and opponents of the Qaddafi government—backed by the C.I.A.—conducted widespread massacres of black Africans (11). Now, in 2016, Libya is attempting to expel ISIS militias from its northern region near Sirte: no doubt an unintended side effect of the U.S.’s “humanitarianism.”

The geostrategic importance of the Middle East and North Africa to the U.S. is well known—oil, if not a total explanation for intervention in these countries, is too powerful a factor to ignore. Once again, Clinton is not alone in regarding the overthrow of sovereign states as sound policy. Her willingness to use military force as a guarantor of the U.S.’s economic interests would likely only amplify a basic predisposition towards war. Nonetheless, the relative autonomy of the U.S. President in conducting foreign policy all but guarantees that Clinton will outdo Obama in terms of destabilizing “disobedient” nations. The question is by how much.

Clintonism and Capitalism

In sketching an outline of Clintonism and its deleterious effects on global society, the intent has not been to indict Hillary Clinton per se. Clinton is by most measures a competent administrator of the U.S. government—far more so than her alleged opponent. But any responsible manager of the capitalist state is and *must* be in conflict with the aspirations of the working class. This is determined not by the individual personality of any one candidate, but by the requirements of the system itself. Clintonism is best understood as a specific strategy to maintain the general profitability of U.S. capital. This entails the exercise of neoliberal policy at home and free-trade imperialism

abroad, enforced by periodic projections of military strength.

These policies cannot be successful in anything but the short-term, and the reason for this can be found within the essential nature of capitalism itself. Briefly, capitalism as a social system is based on the exploitation of living labor—the physical and mental exertion of workers—which is the single source of economic value. However, as the system matures it tends to integrate a steadily increasing amount of technology into the production process. This much is intuitive and empirically obvious. The adoption of work-saving technology gives individual capitalists temporary advantage over their competitors—as they are able to produce a greater number of commodities at old prices. Eventually, however, such technology diffuses and is adopted by other, rival capitalists, undermining the very basis of the first capitalist's advantage. Meanwhile, workers have been let go, and less labor is being used to produce goods—the source of value, and therefore profit. This general trend was discovered by Marx, which he called “the tendency of the rate of profit to fall.”

All capitalist states have grappled with this problem. Indeed, the falling rate of profit has led the U.S. capitalist class to engage in a series of grand projects since the 1970s intended to buoy profits by any means necessary. One of these projects was the expansion of public debt in the 1980s, mentioned above. When this undertaking became unstable it gave way to a new project: the expansion of private debt under Bill Clinton—not solving, but merely delaying the ultimate crisis. The deregulation and growth of the financial sector, which resulted in the crisis of 2008, was concomitant with the undermining of unions and the gutting of welfare. Now, in 2016, as employment and real wages for the working and middle class stagnates, traditional sources of relief—collective bargaining and state aid—appear severely dimin-

ished and ineffective. The popular anger emanating from downwardly-mobile white workers finds an answer in the Republican Party's decades-long promotion of racism and Trump's particular brand of authoritarian populism.

The relationship between Clintonism and Trumpism is co-constitutive. A deepening of neoliberal policies cannot sustain the profit rate indefinitely. Meanwhile, the concrete effects of such policies stoke an increasingly desperate right-wing backlash, one which misperceives the source of America's misery in immigrants and people of color. Similarly, imperial projects designed to secure key resources and open markets for U.S. capital have proven and will continue to prove disastrous: violence returns to the homeland, one way or another. We appear at an impasse. Are these really the alternatives?

The Politics of Exit

The left is weak in the U.S. today. The candidacy of Bernie Sanders excited a great deal of mobilization around “socialist” ideals for younger generations, but there is an order of magnitude's difference between building a presidential campaign and building class power. Moreover, the decision to operate within the Democratic Party constrained Sanders' campaign from the outset. Whatever its redistributive inclinations, the Democratic Party has always been flexible enough to adjust to the demands of the political conjuncture. Bill Clinton's presidency demonstrates the Democrats' essential disconnect from the working class, manifested in rafts of anti-union and anti-welfare legislation. In 2008 Goldman Sachs gave three-quarters of its campaign funding to Democrats (12). It strains credulity to suggest that an institution so wedded to capital could be the vehicle of a successful socialist insurgency.

This makes the work ahead appear all the more daunting. As the Democrats

shift ever-rightwards in order to formulate “bipartisan” policies with the lunatic fringes of the Tea Party, establishing social bases of political power must become the primary task of the anticapitalist left. The current “alternative” options in the 2016 election—the Green Party, the Socialist Party USA, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, etc.—are inadequate to the task at hand and are further weakened by their disunity. Voting for them may serve as a transitional strategy, signaling dissatisfaction with an unresponsive Democratic Party, but it cannot replace the real organizational work that must attempt to reunite the working class with a truly radical and socialistic political movement. The political power of a militant labor force—armed with the capacity to carry out mass strikes and workplace occupations—is far greater than any party that competes exclusively through elections.

A vote for Hillary Clinton cannot abolish the social forces that have given rise to Trump. This is because they are fundamentally products of capitalism’s tendency towards crisis—which in all cases is realized in an assault on the working class. Come November, the choice that will be offered is no choice at all. A vote for Clinton—while disastrous in and of itself—can only lead in the short or medium-term to the powerful reaction it claims to forestall. Knowing this, we must refuse the terms of the contest itself. A genuinely viable strategy for the U.S. left should look beyond the four-year election cycle best suited to maintaining the capitalist state. In rejecting the two-candidate dilemma, by subverting the question through whatever means necessary, we reject a form of politics that prevents us from confronting capitalism as a fact of everyday life. The real choice is what it has always been: a politics that is content to remain within capitalism—maintaining its health by managing its crises—or a politics of exit. And while the latter invites greater

uncertainty and more work, looking around with no illusions: how can we stay?

Notes:

- (1) David Sirota and Andrew Perez, “Campaign 2016: Hillary Clinton pitched Iraq as ‘a business opportunity’ for US corporations,” *International Business Times*, September 30, 2015.
- (2) *Congressional Record*, 107th Congress, October 10 2002, p. S10288
- (3) Gilbert Burnham, et al, “Mortality after the 2003 invasion of Iraq: a cross-sectional cluster sample survey,” *The Lancet* 368.9545 (2006).
- (4) Wolfgang Streeck, “The Crisis of Democratic Capitalism” *New Left Review* 71, 2011.
- (5) Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Chart Book: TANF at 18.”
- (6) Lee Sustar, “Marxism and Right Wing Populism,” *New Labor Forum* 22(1), 2013.
- (7) David Wessel, “The typical male U.S. worker earned less in 2014 than in 1973,” *The Brookings Institute*, September 18, 2015.
- (8) Bastian van Apeldoorn and Nana de Graaf, “Corporate Elite Networks and US post-Cold War Grand Strategy from Clinton to Obama,” *European Journal of International Relations* 20(1), 2012.
- (9) Ellen Meiksins Wood, “Infinite War,” *Historical Materialism* 10(1), 2002.
- (10) Micah Zenko, “Hillary the Hawk: A History,” *Foreign Policy*, July 27, 2016.
- (11) David Mizner, “Worse than Benghazi,” *Jacobin*, July 17, 2015.
- (12) Perry Anderson, “Homeland,” *New Left Review* 81, 2013.

Experience from the Hell to Heaven

by Xiao Ning

—Her big dark gray eyes were full of tears, “Ma, I’m hungry, I’m just hungry, if there is another chance, I want some homemade mac n cheese”

— “Mama, I want to go home.”

Part I

It seems for a while that C has been addicted in meth.

C “was” the patient my doc sister used to have. She is not there any longer.

C used to be as same as the other puberty girls, looked everything in disrespectful way; also with acnes on her face and dust on her hair. Oh no, she was not kicked out of the school, she was homeschooled. Alcoholic, fire temper, drama queen, self-centered, all of these can made a highly qualified mom, and it explained why C looked like that at youth. You might ask what’s C’s mom occupation, God damn know. My sister is not a cop. Based on the information they provided, C has been being addicted into cocaine for 11 years. Gladly she was still alive. Cocaine is expensive, C has to find other substitutes to fill up the eager body. So her blood run full of trashy chemicals. Bad health situation was not the reason C came to hospital: C was about to deliver a baby, at the age of 29.

“See, here comes the problem,” my sister said. “No department wants her. As a result of being a 11-year drugster, there is no good place on her skin, not a single one. Her body is covered by numerous of holes she has done the injections before, festers and infections make her temperature high. Her veins work functionally like a steel pipe, hard and no resilience at all. She has RTI and all kinds of complications, ironically no department can take her since she even has the transfusion problem.”

“Thanks God anyway, C finally gave birth to the boy, ahhhh.....” My sister paused for a second, and continued, “You know the tragedy can be foreseen. The boy didn’t even cry as a normal baby, he was pale and he trembled all the time. His veins functionally work like a 45 year- old person. The boy is a born drugster: he needs to take something like Methadone—a kind of milder drug, to make him feel better. He has a lifelong ban of drugs, otherwise he will never have the chance to quit. That poor baby, his mom will be sent to jail soon. Maybe even die in there.”

“Then who will take care of the baby? His grandma?”

“Good question. I don’t know. C doesn’t even know who is the baby’s dad. C’s mom had moved to a different place after C went to jail. All her contact info was invalid. You didn’t see her, she was beautiful and talented. I assume she used to have long wavy hazel hair with gray eyes, she is really tall, and maybe in good shape. She has a habit of writing diaries; when she was clear, she read me part of her old diaries. Awww... if only she didn’t touch drugs, she might have the chance of being a successful writer...”

I thought I just heard a tragedy that night.

Part II

—She closed her eyes for a second under a sunny afternoon. The merciful sunshine made her gray hair shine like gold. At that moment, it seemed like C was in the heaven.

C was dying on a rotten patient bed, all her past interesting adventures flashed back in her mind. Her worn-out diary book was open; some broken pages fell on the floor.

"Mom, my kitty likes 7-up, she drank all the can today."

"Vehicles were running on the highway like farting all the way."

"Since I have never seen my dad, maybe you guys are all wrong. There is a possibility that my dad is here; rich and handsome. He will look for me one day."

"- I don't know who you are, but I can tell you suck my money like a lich. Get out of my house!! I don't have a daughter like you!!" "-You are such a loser."

"The world has twisted into a way I don't understand, like a twined toffee candy."

Is this the reality?"

"-Hey baby, How much? 1000 euros?" "- Fuck off."

"Oh~~~this is the best thing I've ever experienced in my life, fuck those families and love and good lives, I don't need them anymore"

"Will the Bible save my soul?"

"The nurse told me I just delivered a baby boy, but if there is a chance, I'd rather never have him. I don't want him follow my old path."

"Hey, finally I become the person I used to hate most."

"Have a try."



by Xiao
Ning

The League of Revolutionary Black Workers

by Marc Becker

Factory workers in automobile plants in Detroit launched the League of Revolutionary Black Workers in the 1960s to defend their rights. Almost half a century later, members of the League are making a documentary and writing a book to record their voices and to reflect on the lessons of their experiences for today's social movements.

League members gathered at the World Social Forum (WSF) in Montreal at the beginning of August to preview their documentary and discuss the history of the organization.

From its origins in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2001, the WSF has grown into a global mobilization of civil society against the domination of society by wealthy capitalists. A goal is to organize a broad, inclusive, popular movement that focuses on social concerns as a counterpart to the exclusionary World Economic Forum (WEF) that advances corporate concerns.

In Montreal in 2016, Jerome Scott recounted to the WSF how the League of Revolutionary Black Workers learned about the power of workers. Because of racial unrest in the 1960s, Detroit was under lockdown, but yet workers were allowed to travel to their job sites because capitalists needed their labor. That observation taught League members how important workers are at the point of production. If they refused to work, capitalism would start to shut down.

The workers learned the importance of political education through their experience in the plants and the community. They did theoretical study to learn about the big picture and how that influenced their day-to-day work. Scott stressed the need to understand the world as it is now and how it is changing.

In order to understand capitalism, League members organized a study group to read Karl Marx's monumental

book *Capital*. Scott noted that it was not an easy read, and that it was difficult to understand. One cannot start studying *Capital* without dedication, he said. Through Marx, League members came to understand the relationship between history, politics, and culture. Workers need to be attuned to changes in capitalism. Scott observed that the current change from industry to electronics is as important as the change from agriculture to industry was in Marx's time.

League members recognized that they needed a better grasp of the political economy to understand the changes that result from technological developments that allow factories produce more commodities with less labor. As workers, they reflected on Marx and applied it to their local realities. Scott emphasized the need for a solid base in theory, and the importance of relating that theory to practice in order to survive. The most important thing was to figure out examples in their own lives.

Based on the lessons they learned from Marx, workers organized the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement (DRUM) and later the Ford Revolutionary Union Movement (FRUM). These plant organizations were later unified into the League of Revolutionary Black Workers.

League member Marian Kramer stressed the importance of print propaganda, and how the League formed Black Star Printing to advance this goal. League members collaboratively wrote flyers and newsletters, and did so in their own language and based on their own experiences. Scott noted the importance of approaching people from where they are at rather than from the perspective of how an activist understands the world. Members distributed their publications to workers as they entered and left the plants. Kramer observed that their

newsletters were great organizing tools. Workers would look for their publications, and surreptitiously pass them around the plant.

The newsletters highlighted the poor conditions in the factories and violations of workers' rights. They focused in particular on health and safety conditions, because Black workers had the most dangerous jobs. Kramer noted that workers did not have to go Vietnam where the United States was trapped in a bloody war to be killed. That could happen right on the factory floor.

The League also organized in local schools in Detroit. They set up a committee of women to talk to people in the community to explain what they were doing. They emphasized the importance of factories setting up nurseries so that women could work. Part of the struggle was to fight male supremacy. League members

raised their families while carrying on their struggles. Kramer emphasized that the League was not the work of one person, but drew on the energy of many peoples' participation.

One of the lessons that the League learned was the importance of working collectively and drawing on communal strengths. The League built new leaders through those collective efforts. Kramer cautioned against looking for a superstar to lead an organization. No one is indispensable. "We are all leaders,"

Kramer declared. If a worker did not know how to read, they learned in the collective. The same was true with writing.

The FBI famously had infiltrated and collapsed the Black Panther Party, and League members recognized that the problem of infiltrators was inevitable. The FBI, for example, mailed letters to League members designed to seed distrust and destroy each other. The League dealt with the problem of infiltration by requiring members to participate actively in the organization. A member could not throw out an idea and then not follow through on its implemen-



Jerome Scott, Marian Kramer, and Rose Brewer discuss their experiences with the League of Revolutionary Black Workers

tation. Leaders had to earn their rights rather than stepping directly into leadership roles. League members never accused people of being agents, but by holding each other accountable they were able to hold off the damaging effects of infiltration and build an effective organization.

Scott noted that some League members came out of Black nationalist ideological currents, but through a study of Marx they came to reject that position. "We were not trying to become part of

society,” Scott said. The workers knew that they were being exploited. But how does Black nationalism end exploitation, Scott asked, if it only advocates incorporation into an exploitative capitalist system? League members asked what was their vision, and where they were going with their movements. If a proposed vision for the future does not eliminate exploitation, they needed to move on to another one.

Although rooted in local struggles in Detroit, the League also understood the importance of internationalism. Members had maintained contact with Palestinian struggles since the 1960s. The League understood their base and concentrated on those concerns, but they also worked out from those issues so as to be as broad as possible in their message.

In the session at the WSF, sociologist Rose Brewer reflected on the League’s inspiring message. She emphasized the need to know about these histories of

struggle, because otherwise they will disappear. She also underscored the importance of political education. The plant workers were studying *Capital* and other dense theories, and others should do so as well. Rose stressed that activists need to push themselves, both in terms of theory and action. She acknowledged that it is a challenge to put in the time and energy necessary to understand these struggles. It is a long haul and involves sacrifices. The rewards are not instant. Rose underscored the importance of building institutions and basing struggles in community efforts.

For more information on the League of Revolutionary Black Workers, and to preview the documentary that they are making and to contribute to their efforts, visit revolutionaryblackworkers.org.



STUDENTS FOR a DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY

A RADICAL STUDENT ACTIVIST ORGANIZATION

“SOCIALISM AFTER SANDERS” FORUM:

-SEPT. 28TH 7:30 MG 1000

“MOCK PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE”

-TBA

ONGOING ACTIONS: CONCEALED CARRY, DIVESTING FROM FOSSIL FUELS, and FINDING a SODEXO ALTERNATIVE

shop DIY and Dye!

hand-altered appliquéd eco-conscious clothing & more

<https://www.etsy.com/shop/diyanddye>

or email owner Natalie Welch: new6684@truman.edu





+ other good
events !!!
wow !!!

the 'dome !!!

aquadome meetings: sundays @ 1:30pm @ the dome !!!

open mic nights !!!: oct 5, 19, nov 2, 16 !!! @7PM

october 9: POTLUCK SHOW - feat. Real Live Tigers / Bob Bucko Jr. / Two Headed Cow @7PM

october 16: NOT ANOTHER POTLUCK!! feat. Pocket Vinyl / Jason Boyd / more bands TBA @5PM

october 22: ALUMNI SHOW!!!! (big bands TBA) @6PM

oct 28:HALLOWEEN SHOW: Jack Lion / Kelly Howerton@7

nov 4:Chew Toy / Lesbian Poetry / Seen from Space!!!@7PM

november 11: Upchuckles!!! Stand-up Comedy hahaha @8

november 18: Dana T / Anthony !!! @7PM

@120 S MAIN ST - theaquadome@gmail.com

other good events zoo wee mama !!!

october 2: wind symphony I & II concert !!! @2PM@OP

sept 28:socialism after sanders forum !!! @7:30@ MG1000

september 29: relay for life kick off !!! @5PM@rotary park

september 29: TruSlam poetry @ train bridge !!! @9PM

Cut this out and bring it to the
Oct. 16, 2016 show to get a
**FREE POCKET VINYL
ALBUM!**

It'll be in the form of a digital download card,
and we've got 4 to choose from.
They are all very good albums.