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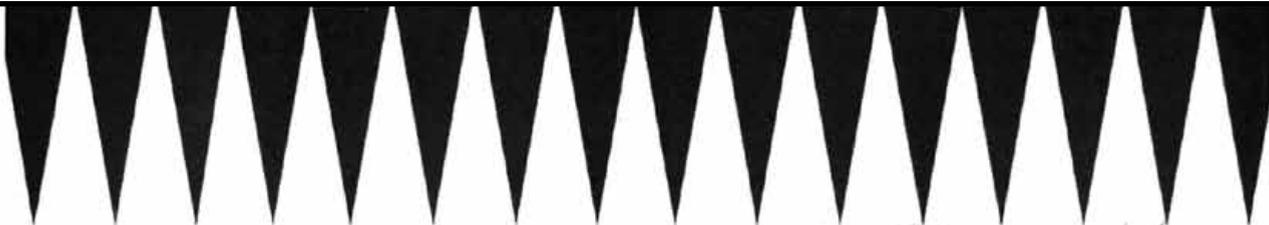
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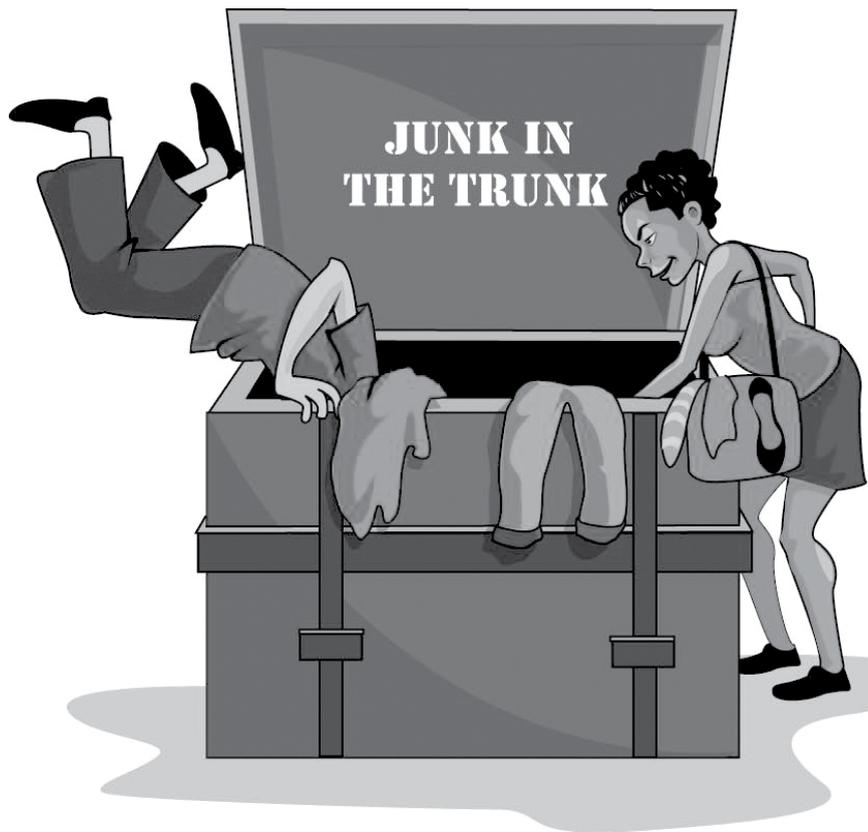


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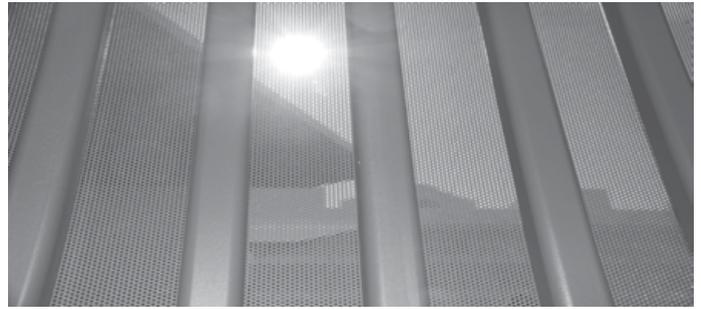
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“AN UNCERTAIN UNION”

JOHN O'KANE



“An Uncertain Union”

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NOT A REVOLUTION - YET

MIKE DAVIS

We should resist the temptation to over-interpret Trump's election as an American Eighteenth Brumaire or 1933. Progressives who think they've woken up in another country should calm down, take a stiff draught, and reflect on the actual election results from the swing states.

Data, of course, is incomplete. The leading exit polls, like Pew and Edison, are hardly flawless in their harvesting of opinion and the final word on the turnout and its composition must await the Current Population Survey's reports over the next year or two. Nonetheless, the county-level returns authorize some pertinent observations.

1. Turnout was initially reported to be significantly lower than 2012, but late returns indicate the same percentage of voters (app. 58 per cent) although with a smaller major party share. The minority parties, led by the Libertarians, increased their vote from 2 to 5 percent of the total.

2. With the exceptions of Iowa and Ohio, there were no Trump landslides in key states. He polled roughly the same as Romney, making up smaller votes in the suburbs with larger votes in rural areas to achieve the same overall result. His combined margin of victory in Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania combined was razor thin, about 107,000 votes.

3. The great surprise of the election was not a huge white working-class shift to Trump but rather his success in retaining the loyalty of Romney voters, and indeed even slightly improving on the latter's performance amongst evangelicals for whom the election was viewed a last stand. Thus economic populism and nativism potently combined with, but did not displace, the traditional social conservative agenda

4. The key factor in carrying the Republicans was Trump's cynical covenant with religious conservatives following the primary defeat of Cruz. He gave them a free hand to draft the party platform at the Convention and then

teamed with one of their popular heroes, Pence of Indiana, a nominal Catholic who attends an evangelical megachurch. At stake for right-to-lifers, of course, was control of the Supreme Court and a final chance to reverse *Roe vs. Wade*. This may explain why Clinton, who unlike Obama allowed herself to be identified with late-term abortions, underperformed him by 8 points amongst Latina/o Catholics.

5. The defection of white working-class Obama voters to Trump was a decisive factor mainly in a lake-shore rim of industrial counties in Michigan, Ohio and Pennsylvania – Monroe, Ashtabula, Lorain, both Eries, and so on – which are experiencing a new wave of job flight to Mexico and the US South. This region is the most visible epicenter of the revolt against globalization.

In other depressed areas – the coal counties of southeastern Ohio, the former anthracite belt of eastern Pennsylvania, the Kanawha Valley of West Virginia, the piedmont textile and furniture towns of the Carolinas, Ap-

palachia in general – the pro-Republican blue-collar realignment in presidential politics (but not always in local or state politics) was already the status quo. The mass media has tended to conflate these older and newer strata of “lost Democrats,” thus magnifying Trump's achievement.

6. I've been unable to find reliable data about the turnout of non-college whites in key states or nationally. According to the dominant narrative Trump simultaneously mobilized non-voters and converted Democrats, but the variables are independent and their weights are unclear in states like Wisconsin or Virginia (which Clinton narrowly held) where other

factors like Black turnout and the size of the gender gap were likely more important.

7. A crucial cohort of college-educated white Republican women appeared to have rallied to Trump in the last week of the campaign after having wavered in previous polling. This has been attributed by several commentators, including Clinton herself, to Comey's surprise intervention and renewed skepticism about her honesty. Disapproval of Trump's rapist behavior, moreover, was counterbalanced by disgust at Bill Clinton and Anthony Weiner. As a result, Clinton made only modest gains, sometimes none at all, in the crucial red suburbs of Milwaukee, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh.

8. A fifth of Trump voters – that is to say, approximately 12 million voters – reported an unfavorable attitude toward him. No wonder the polls got it so wrong. “There

**The downward
or blocked mobility
of graduates,
especially from
working class
and immigrant
backgrounds, is the
major emergent social
reality, not the long
agony of the Rustbelt.**

– Mike Davis

is no precedent,” wrote the *Washington Post*, “for a candidate winning the Presidency with fewer voters viewing him favorable, or looking forward to his administration, than the loser.”

Many of these nose-holders may have been evangelicals who were voting the platform, not the man, but others wanted change in Washington at any price, even if it meant putting a suicide bomber in the Oval Office.

9. Even the Cato Institute seems to believe that the election should be interpreted as Clinton’s loss, not Trump’s win. She failed to come close to Obama’s 2012 performance in key Midwestern and Florida counties. Despite his strenuous last-minute efforts, the president could not transfer his popularity (now higher than Reagan’s in 1988) to his old opponent. Ditto for Sanders.

Although the findings are controversial and perhaps misinterpreted by David Atkins at the *American Prospect*, the Edison/*New York Times* exit polls indicate

that Trump relative to Romney achieved only the slightest improvement amongst Whites, perhaps just one percent, but “bested him by 7 points among Blacks, 8 points among Latinos and 11 points among Asian Americans.”

10. Whether or not that was actually the case, the lower Black turnout in Milwaukee, Detroit and Philadelphia alone would explain most of Clinton’s defeat in the Midwest. In south Florida a massive effort improved the Democratic vote but that was offset by reduced turnout (largely Black voters) in the Tallahassee, Gainesville and Tampa areas.

11. Not all of this diminished Black turnout, to be fair, was a boycott of Clinton. Voter suppression undoubtedly played an important if yet unmeasured role. “Some states,” reports one study, “have closed polling places on a massive scale. In Arizona, almost every county reduced polling places. In Louisiana, 61 per cent of parishes reduced polling places. In Louisiana, 61 percent of parishes



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reduced polling places. In our limited sample of Alabama counties, 67 percent closed polling places. In Texas, 53 percent of counties in our limited sample reduced voting locations.” There is also evidence that discriminatory voter ID requirements -- the jewel in the crown of Scott Walker’s counter-revolution -- significantly reduced the vote in low-income precincts of Milwaukee.

12. An alternate explanation of Clinton’s under-performance in Wisconsin and Michigan was the alienation of millennial Sanders voters: in both states Jill Stein’s total was greater than the margin of Clinton’s defeat. The Green vote was also significant in Pennsylvania and Florida (49,000 and 64,000 respectively). But Gary Johnson, who won 4,151,000 votes nationally despite his cluelessness about world politics, probably harmed Trump much more than Clinton.

13. Since the 2004 insurgency of Howard Dean, progressive Democrats have fought uphill against Party regulars for a full 50-state strategy that invests in base building in otherwise gerrymandered red congressional districts. The consistent failure of the DNC, for example, to make a major commitment to Texas Democrats – a state that is now majority minority – has long been an open scandal.

The Clinton campaign, flush with funds but obviously short on brains, compounded a disastrous strategy. She failed for example to visit Wisconsin after the Convention despite warnings that Scott Walker’s fired-up followers were fully enlisted behind Trump.

Likewise she disdained Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack’s advice that she set up a “rural council” such as had served Obama so well in his Midwestern primary

and presidential campaigns. In 2012, he managed to add 46 per cent of small town votes to his urban majority in Michigan and 41 per cent in Wisconsin. Her desultory results were 38 per cent and 34 per cent, respectively.

14. Ironically, Trump may have been advantaged by his poor backing from the Kochs and other conservative mega-donors, who switched priorities to invest in saving Republican congressional majorities. In the event Comey’s letter to Congress was the equivalent of \$500 million worth of anti-Clinton ads while down-ticket Republicans received an unexpected financial lifeline.

15. My emphasis on the contingent and fragile character of the Trump coalition, however, needs to be accompanied by a warning about the toxic contents of his politics. As I’ve argued in another note, Trump is less a loose cannon and opportunist than usually portrayed. His campaign systematically pushed all the buttons associated with the white-nationalist alt-right whose godfather is Pat Buchanan and the would-be Goebbels is Stephen Bannon.

Trump, President Obama consoles us, is “non-ideological.” Ok, but Buchanan-Bannon have buckets of ideology and it’s called fascism. (For those who think this is an exaggeration and that fascism is passe, please go to Buchanan’s site and scroll to the list of his most popular columns. One blames Poland for the start of World War Two and another basically claims that Blacks should pay reparations to whites.)

16. David Axelrod claims that it has taken only a week for the Republicans to fully “capture” Trump and Robert Kuttner agrees. Perhaps.

Certainly Trump will attempt to honor his commitment to the Christians and give them the Supreme

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Court – a goal that Mitch McConnell may facilitate with the “nuclear option” in the Senate. Likewise Peabody, Arch and the other coal companies will get new permits to destroy the earth, immigrants will be sacrificed to the lions, and Pennsylvania will be blessed with a right-to-work law. And, of course, tax cuts.

But on social security, medicare, deficit spending on infrastructure, tariffs, technology, and so on, it's almost impossible to imagine a perfect marriage between Trump and the institutional Republicans that doesn't orphan his working-class supporters. Mortgage bankers still rule the universe.

17. Therefore it would not be difficult to imagine a future scenario where the alt-right ultimately splits with or is expelled from the administration and quickly moves to consolidate a third political force around the expanded base it has won thanks to Trump's demagoguery. Or, another possibility, that Trump's incendiary trade and contradictory domestic policies plunge the country into a new depression and Silicon Valley finally steps up to the plate to save the center-left Democratic Party.

But whatever the hypothesis, it must take account of the real revolution in American politics, the Sanders campaign. The downward or blocked mobility of graduates, especially from working class and immigrant backgrounds, is the major emergent social reality, not the long agony of the Rustbelt. I say this while recognizing the momentum given to economic nationalism by the loss of five million industrial jobs over the last decade, more than half of them in the South.

But Trumpism, however it evolves, cannot unify millennial economic distress with that of older white workers, while Sanders showed that heartland discontent can be brought under the umbrella of a “democratic socialism” that reignites New Deal hopes for a Economic Bill of Rights. With the Democratic establishment in temporary disarray, the real opportunity for transformational political change (“critical realignment” in a now archaic vocabulary) belongs to Sanders and Warren. We must hurry.

Mike Davis is author of *City of Quartz* and many other books. He teaches creative writing at UC, Riverside.



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HOW THE GOP FLIPPED AND STRIPPED YET ANOTHER ELECTION

BOB FITRAKIS AND
HARVEY WASSERMAN

Hillary Clinton has won the popular vote in the 2016 presidential election by well over a million votes. But her impending defeat in the Electoral College comes with familiar signs that yet another American election has been stripped and flipped. This article presents a comprehensive overview of how it was done, and a brief summary of how our electoral system needs to be changed to make sure it doesn't happen again.

The primary indicators of the massive election theft are by now familiar. They include the realities of pre- and post-election polling; the massive stripping of primarily black, Hispanic, Muslim and Asian-American voters from computer-generated registration rolls mostly maintained by private, partisan companies; unverifiable "black box" electronic voting machines and central tabulators, also mostly manufactured and maintained by private corporations; and much more.

Were this election held in any other country, the US State Department and independent monitors from around the world would denounce it as a fraud and contemplate international intervention. What follows only begins to scratch the surface.

The Electoral College

Much is finally being said about the Electoral College, with new popular demands for its abolition. Clinton is about to become the sixth presidential candidate to

win a legitimate majority but lose the presidency. It also happened in 1800, 1824, 1876, 1888, and 2000. Nearly 15% of our 45 presidents have been "selected" with the denial of the public will through an institution established in large part to enhance the power of slaveowners.

In February, 2013, at progressive.org, we joined the multitudes throughout our history in calling for the Electoral College's abolition: "It will take a Constitutional Amendment, and a hell of a lot of work, to abolish this corrupt anachronism. But unless we want to see an endless succession of George W. Bushes in the White House, something had better be done – and quick." The consequences of inaction are all too clear.

Computerized Jim Crow Stripping of Voter Registration Rolls

US elections have been defined throughout history by a divide-and-conquer strategy of racial manipulation. As we outline in our new *Strip & Flip: Death of American Democracy* (freepress.org/solartopia.org): chattel slavery, the Constitution's "three-fifths bonus," Jim Crow segregation, third world imperial conquest, and the Drug War have all played a role in denying African-American/Hispanic/Asian-American citizens their right to vote. From the foundation of the Republic, this disenfranchisement has defined the balance of power.

In recent years, the disenfranchisement has been most importantly done by the Republican Party, and by computer. As investigative reporter Greg Palast has shown in *The Best Democracy Money Can Buy*, in 2000 Florida governor Jeb Bush used a program called Choice-Point to strip more than 90,000 predominantly black and Hispanic citizens from the voter registration rolls in an election decided by 537 votes. The pretext was alleged felony convictions. The selection was "won" by Bush's brother

George W., although a full recount (which was stopped 5-4 by the US Supreme Court in its infamous *Bush v. Gore* decision) would have given Al Gore the majority in Florida, and in the Electoral College.

As we have reported from Columbus, in 2004 more than 300,000 predominantly urban citizens were stripped from the voter registration rolls in an election the

**The vast majority
of the popular votes
in this election
nationwide were
cast on either
computerized
touch-screen
electronic machines,
or on Scantron
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counted by computer.**

– Bob Fittrakis and Harvey Wasserman

CLINTON CAMPAIGN GAVE US PRESIDENT TRUMP

KEVIN GOSZTOLA

Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, her network of super political action committees, and the liberal establishment relished a matchup against Donald Trump. However, her campaign failed to put forward an alternative for voters that would combat a candidate that tapped into the vast amount of disillusionment among citizens. Tsunamis of voters unaccounted for in state polls, who do not identify with either the Democratic or Republican Parties, made President Trump a reality.

Clinton's concession speech indicated the campaign and many of its supporters are unwilling to confront the hubris of her presidential run. Yet, citizens, especially those on the left, must, in order to find the clarity to move onward with fights for social, economic, racial, and environmental justice.

The Democratic Party rigged parts of the party's primary for Clinton, and it helped stave off a decisive challenge from Senator Bernie Sanders. The senator addressed the material conditions of the working class, including people of color. He warned the Democrats of wealth inequality, destructive free trade agreements, and some of the negative effects of global capitalism on the common man or woman. He connected with disaffected people who the Clinton campaign effectively wrote-off and performed well in states that Clinton lost in the general election.

However, the Democratic Party elites survived and coerced Sanders and his supporters into falling in line at their national convention. The party leadership enforced unity in Philadelphia to make it appear as if all was well when that was not the case.

Most progressive groups, like all presidential elections, demobilized or essentially became mechanisms

for the Clinton campaign to mobilize voters from August to Election Day. This allowed the message of "Never Trump" to dominate as the only challenge to Trump, and without a real vision for lifting up the many Americans enticed by Trump's campaign, the nation ended up with an end result similar to Senator John Kerry's campaign, which ran primarily on the fact that he was not President George W. Bush.

It did not help the Clinton campaign that she had a reputation for supporting regime change wars, which have greatly destabilized parts of the world. Her fingerprints were all over the Libya disaster. She voted for the Iraq War, which created the conditions for the rise of the Islamic State. And, although it is questionable whether Trump really ever opposed the Iraq invasion, he insisted he was against the Iraq War during debates to undermine Clinton and fueled the perception that Clinton was somehow responsible for ISIS. Trump held himself out as someone who would not plunge the country into reckless military engagements.

Clinton's closing argument included the following, "Is America dark and divisive or helpful and inclusive? Our core values are being tested in this election, but everywhere I go, people are refusing to be defined by fear and division. Look, we all know we've come through some hard economic times, and we've seen some pretty big changes. But I believe in our people. I love this country, and I'm convinced our best days are ahead of us if we reach for them together."

That may have sounded good in the office of a campaign's headquarters, but there was nothing specific in this buzzword-laden pablum. Multiculturalism does not help anyone pay their mortgage or find a job. As wrong as it is for millions of white Americans to take out their frustrations on people of col-

or, the system failed them and keeps failing them. Additionally, establishment politicians like Clinton wrote off many of these people, believing if they focused on emphasizing diversity they would overcome the painful intertwined realities of class and race in the U.S. They were wrong.

Let us go back to the belief that a candidate like Trump would be perfect for Hillary Clinton. In April 2015, a strategy memo for the DNC was drafted by the campaign two months before Trump announced his candidacy. The goal was to "make whomever the Republicans nominate

**Efforts to process
what unfolded
on Election Day
must recognize
that the warning
of Sanders
and millions of his
supporters went
unheeded.**

— Kevin Gosztola

unpalatable to a majority of the electorate.”

“Force all Republican candidates to lock themselves into extreme conservative positions that will hurt them in a general election,” the campaign recommended. “Undermine any credibility/trust Republican presidential candidates have to make inroads to our coalition or independents.”

It advocated against marginalizing “more extreme candidates.” The campaign wanted to make “Pied Piper candidates,” like Trump, Senator Ted Cruz, and Ben Carson, into representatives of the Republican Party. “We need to be elevating the Pied Piper candidates so that they are leaders of the pack and tell the press to [take] them seriously.” (The memo was attached to an email published by WikiLeaks.)

In the same month, Clinton campaign manager Robby Mook pushed for a primary schedule where the red states held their primaries early. It would increase “the likelihood the Rs nominate someone extreme.”

Essentially, the Clinton campaign engaged in steps that would help ensure Trump was the Republican presidential nominee. Their acts enabled the rise of Trump, and they lost to the opponent they wanted to face because they made the same mistakes Democrats make time and time again. They clung to failed corporate Democratic policies that have devastated this country for the past two decades, and in some ways this election can be viewed as a referendum on those policies. And they treated the candidate who had answers for Americans as “unrealistic,” a “hapless legislator,” an “Obama betrayer,” and a socialist independent who was not a real Democrat. As in, he was not one of them, and they did not want him in their club. On June 26, Sanders warned Democrats what happened with Brexit in Britain could happen. He shared what he saw on the campaign trail. He noted the tens of thousands factories closed over the past 15 years. “More than 4.8 million well-paid manufacturing jobs have disappeared” as a result of trade agreements. Forty-seven million Americans live in poverty. Millions have no health insurance or are underinsured. Just as many struggle with student debt. “Frighteningly, millions of poorly educated Americans will have a shorter life span than the previous generation as they succumb to despair, drugs and alcohol.”

“Meanwhile, in our country the top one-tenth of 1 percent now owns almost as much wealth as the bottom 90 percent. Fifty-eight percent of all new income is going

to the top 1 percent. Wall Street and billionaires, through their “super PACs,” are able to buy elections,” Sanders added.

“On my campaign, I’ve talked to workers unable to make it on \$8 or \$9 an hour; retirees struggling to purchase the medicine they need on \$9,000 a year of Social Security; young people unable to afford college,” Sanders shared. “I also visited the American citizens of Puerto Rico, where some 58 percent of the children live in poverty and only a little more than 40 percent of the adult population has a job or is seeking one.”

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It is important to note the Clinton campaign engaged in a calculated act of deception by supporting the Service Employees International Union's "Fight for 15" while refusing to support a \$15 minimum wage. All the states with minimum wage ballot initiatives passed wage increases yesterday. The campaign could have mobilized so many more states had this sort of thing been on the ballot. The possibility of more economic security may have increased enthusiasm. But the Clinton campaign did no such thing.

"The notion that Donald Trump could benefit from the same forces that gave the Leave proponents a majority in Britain should sound an alarm for the Democratic Party in the United States," Sanders concluded. "Millions of American voters, like the Leave supporters, are understandably angry and frustrated by the economic forces that are destroying the middle class."

"In this pivotal moment, the Democratic Party and a new Democratic president need to make clear that we stand with those who are struggling and who have been left behind. We must create national and global economies that work for all, not just a handful of billionaires."

Efforts to process what unfolded on Election Day must recognize that the warning of Sanders and millions of his supporters went unheeded. Clinton practically ran as an avatar of the billionaire class, albeit a potentially benevolent caretaker of the masses if they just stood with her. Had more in the establishment media and institutions

of power taken the time to reflect on what transpired in the Democratic primary, they would have feared the worst and taken more steps to prevent a Trump primary by trying to shift the dynamic of her campaign.

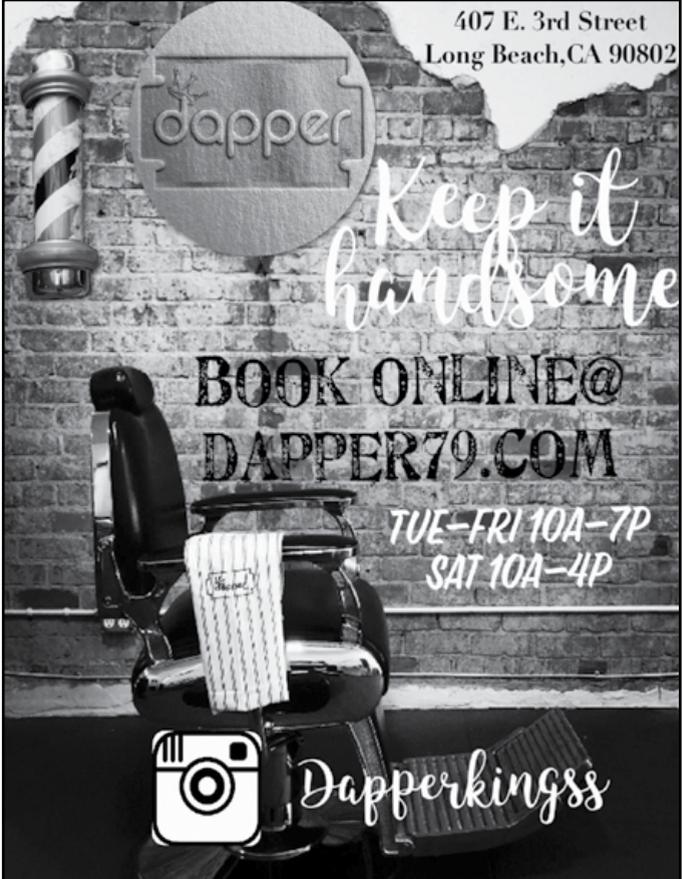
Lest one forget, the Clintons are New Democrats. They aligned with business forces in the early 1990s. They stood with conservative Democrats, who broke with labor, civil rights, and other liberal causes. They pushed the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). They backed welfare repeal, bills which fueled the rise of mass incarceration, and signed a 1997 budget that slashed millions for social programs like Medicare and Medicaid. They put corporate interests over environmental protections. They encouraged the deregulation of industry, which greatly boosted Wall Street. Altogether, the Clintons enabled the right as it decimated the liberal class and expanded unfettered capitalism. (For more, read Lance Selfa's book, *The Democrats: A Critical History*.)

Finally, the outcome confirms what many expressed months ago. The Democratic Party was willing to do whatever it took to nominate Hillary Clinton, even if it meant working against the very forces behind Bernie Sanders, which could help them succeed against Donald Trump, because the last thing they wanted was a major shift toward more socially democratic policies. Also, Clinton was next in line. Whether voters viewed her as a weak candidate or a dishonest and untrustworthy politician did not matter. They would go to battle for her and gladly lose this war.

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GOP won by 118,775. A quarter of all voters in heavily Democratic Cleveland were de-registered. Ohio's ill-gotten electoral votes gave George W. Bush a second term. This became the only time in US history an entire state's Electoral College delegation was challenged on the floor of the US Congress.

This year, Palast has reported that a new program called Crosscheck has been used by some 30 GOP secretaries of state to strip more than 1.1 million predominantly black, Hispanic, Islamic, and Asian-American citizens from the voter rolls. Originating with far-right Republican Kris Kobach, Kansas's secretary of state, Crosscheck eliminated more than enough minority voters in at least three swing states to flip the entire presidential election.

Palast has reported that Ohio's GOP secretary of state Jon Husted also used Crosscheck to eliminate some 497,000 mostly black, Latino, and African-American citizens from the voter rolls in Ohio, falsely accusing them of registering in more than one state. Such eliminations went on throughout the US.

According to Reuters, over the past five years Husted himself has stripped some two million citizens from the voter rolls in Ohio, even without Crosscheck, with Democratic areas twice as likely to be stripped as Republican ones. Reuters writers Andy Sullivan and Grant Smith point out that the neighborhoods that most heavily backed President Obama lost the most voters. In heavily Democratic Cleveland, Columbus, and Cincinnati, they report, Democrat-leaning areas were purged at twice the rate as Republican ones.

The mass disenfranchisement also impacted races for the US Senate. If not for the usual "irregularities," at least four Democrats would likely have won seats (in Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin, and Missouri) that they officially lost. Similar results are evident from 2014 Senate races in North Carolina, Colorado and Alaska. Thus in the past two years, mass disenfranchisement and computerized vote stripping may well have flipped seven Upper House seats from the Democrats to the GOP.

Thus the electronic race-based stripping of voter rolls in the GOP's favor has probably on its own taken to the far right the presidency, control of the US Senate, and ultimately the US Supreme Court. It should be noted

that out of disgust with Donald Trump, the GOP multi-billionaire Koch Brothers shifted much of their massive financial weight from the presidential race to Congressional and other "down-ballot contests," where these key Senate seats and others in the US House and state governments were almost certainly impacted.

Traditional Jim Crow Stripping of Voter Registration Rolls

Alongside computerized techniques, the Republicans have effectively deployed still more traditional Jim Crow tactics to strip black/Hispanic/Asian-American/Muslim citizens of their ability to vote, many of which have been delineated in the *New York Times*.

In part these include: demands for photo ID, elimination of polling places, narrowing time frames in which citizens can vote, deliberate distribution of misinformation about voting requirements, non-counting of provisional ballots, failure to send out absentee ballots, intimidation and widespread confusion at polling places, and much more.

Throughout the corporate media, the obligatory hand-wringing about a drop in voter turnout invariably avoids the obvious cause of race-based restrictions that make it harder to vote, selective limitations on when citizens can vote, and targeted reductions in where they can vote.

In its 2013 *Shelby County vs. Holder* decision, the US Supreme Court gutted protections provided by the 1965 Voting Rights Act, opening the floodgates for such Jim Crow abuse throughout the electoral system.

Numerous reports indicate that citizens were often confronted with photo ID requirements even where they were voided by the courts. As in Ohio 2004, reports indicate many citizens were directed by official websites to polling places that did not actually exist. This year Ohio secretary of state Jon Husted failed to distribute more than 1,050,000 absentee ballot applications to citizens entitled to them. Husted also waged a relentless war against early voting periods, such as "souls to the polls" Sundays, that encouraged African-Americans to vote. He also worked hard to strip out polling stations from urban areas.

In Wisconsin, which Trump allegedly carried by about 27,000 votes, some 300,000 registered voters lacked required photo ID. According to Ari Berman's "Did the

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Republicans Rig the Election?” appearing in *The Nation*, Wisconsin’s turnout was the lowest in two decades. That includes a drop of 52,000 in heavily African-American Milwaukee, nearly twice Trump’s margin of victory in the entire state.

According to a report by Richard Hayes Philips, extremely high turnouts for Trump in rural areas of Wisconsin “are not credible.” Among other things, the vote counts in five Republican towns exceed the number of registered voters, according to freepress.org.

On election day, media throughout the US reported the kinds of mass delays and confusion that defined the elections of 2000 and 2004. According to Berman, there were 868 fewer polling stations in Arizona, Texas, and North Carolina alone, accompanied by a notable drop in African-American turnouts. According to Berman, 14 states imposed new restrictions on voting. Three of them – Wisconsin, Indiana and Ohio – were never before under federal Voting Rights Act supervision.

Said the *New York Times*: “Voters nationwide endured long waits in line, malfunctioning voting machines, ill-informed poll workers and a litany of lesser annoyances on Tuesday with scattered reports that some voters gave up trying to cast ballots.”

David Becker, the Executive Director of the Center for Election Innovation, told the Times, “There are scattered indications of machine breakdowns that are being addressed.”

A typical description has been provided by Steven Rosenfeld (*Alternet*) about the “Democratic epicenter” in Durham County, North Carolina:

“...the state’s voter registration database and e-poll books tied into it were down, prompting long lines, delays and necessitating people fill out provisional ballots. The data was also scrambled, with voter rolls in the wrong locations, people tagged as voting when they had not, and people not on lists even though they had their state registration cards.”

In an editorial the day after the election, the *Times* lamented that in North Carolina “The state’s Republican Party issued a news release boasting that cutbacks in early voting hours reduced black turnout by 8.5% below 2012 levels, even as the numbers of white early voters increased by 22.5%.”

Throughout the US, voters with “problems” in their registration are routinely given provisional ballots, which are allegedly counted later. But the forms are often impossibly complex, with poll workers often failing to count them at the sight of a single minor error, such as writing below a line, omitting a middle initial, failing to include a birthday and much more. Ohio secretary of state Husted won the right from the US Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals to not count provisional ballots that contain a minor mistake. Thus tens of thousands of provisional ballots have been routinely left uncounted, unbeknownst to the voters. More than 115,000 provisional and “spoiled” ballots from Ohio’s 2004 election remain uncounted.

Often absurd discrepancies have become normalized. In 2004 hundreds of mostly Democratic Native

Americans allegedly cast ballots on their New Mexico reservations without signifying a choice for president. This year in North Carolina, Trump and the GOP’s US Senate candidate allegedly won by nearly 200,000 votes while the incumbent Republican governor was allegedly defeated (he’s demanding a recount). In Michigan, tens of thousands of voters allegedly filled out their entire ballots but somehow left the presidential choice vacant in a race essentially too close to call.

Polling Indicators

In the lead-up to November 8, pre-election polls strongly indicated a Clinton victory. Post-election exit polls showed her winning as well, most critically in the swing states whose Electoral College votes could have given her the presidency.

Exit polls are the accepted international standard for indications of election fraud and vote tampering. Eric Bjornlund and Glenn Cowan’s 2011 pamphlet “Vote Count Verification: a User’s Guide for Funders, Implementers and Stakeholders,” was done under the auspices of Democracy International for the US Agency for International Development (USAID). It outlines how exit polling is used to ensure free and fair elections.

It adds that “U.S.-funded organizations have sponsored exit polls as part of democracy assistance programs in Macedonia (2005), Afghanistan (2004), Ukraine (2004), Azerbaijan (2005), the West Bank and Gaza Strip (2005), Lebanon (2005), Kazakhstan (2005), Kenya (2005, 2007), and Bangladesh (2009), among other places.”

In countries like Germany and Switzerland, which use hand-counted paper ballots, exit polls are accurate to a margin error of less than 1%.

Here the 2016 exit polls were paid for by a major corporate media consortium, as has been standard practice for years. Here they are designed to reflect the actual vote count within a 2% margin of error nationally. But in the US, if exit polls don’t agree with official vote counts, they are regularly “adjusted” to conform to official results, no matter how implausible. This makes fraudulent elections appear legitimate.

During this year’s Republican primaries, unadjusted exit polls confirmed official vote counts in all cases. In the Democratic primaries, unadjusted exit polls significantly varied from the official outcome in 12 of 26 primaries. All the errors went in Hillary Clinton’s favor in her race against Bernie Sanders. This is a virtual statistical impossibility and suggests a rigged vote count.

In the general election against Donald Trump, things went the other way. In 24 of 28 states, unadjusted exit polls also showed Clinton with vote counts significantly higher than the final official outcome. The likelihood of this happening in an election that is not rigged is in the realm of virtual statistical impossibility. In fact, based on the exit polls, the odds against such an unexplained “Trump Shift” are one in 13,110 presidential elections.

For example, Ohio’s exit polls showed Trump and Clinton in a dead heat – 47 percent for Clinton to 47.1 for Trump. Officially, Trump won with 52.1 percent of

the vote to Clinton's 43.5 percent. This unexplained and unexpected 8.5 percent shift for Trump is mathematically impossible.

The exit polls also showed Clinton winning in Florida. But an unaccounted for 2.5 percent shift to Trump gave him a victory that was a virtual statistical impossibility. Similar numbers abide in Pennsylvania and North Carolina.

Given the prevalence of other Jim Crow tactics, it's likely the exit polls were impacted by non-white voters in all the key swing states who were given provisional ballots (or they voted electronically) leading them to believe their votes were being counted, even though they were not.

In key Senate races in Florida, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Missouri, exit polls also showed Democratic candidates winning by statistically significant margins, but then losing the official vote count.

In 2014, Senate races in North Carolina, Colorado, and Alaska ended with exit polls also showing Democratic Senate candidates winning the popular vote, while ultimately losing the official vote count. The odds against this happening in two consecutive elections that are not rigged are also astronomical.

The tendency of such official outcomes to slide to the GOP after showing "blue" for Democrats in the exit polls is more fully documented by Jon Simon in his definitive book CODE RED. Simon coined the phrase "Red Shift" and discusses what has once again become a dominant factor in a presidential election claimed by the Republicans at *OpEdNews*.

Electronic Flipping

The vast majority of the popular votes in this election nationwide were cast on either computerized touch-screen electronic machines, or on Scantron ballots that are counted by computer. In neither case are there public monitoring capabilities or legal recourse for vote counts that are flipped.

In 2016, as in all previous US elections at least since 2000, the electronic vote count remains anyone's guess. In states with a governor and secretary of state from the same party, the final tally can be whatever they want it to be.

Such techniques were used in Florida 2000 and Ohio 2004 to strip voter rolls and flip George W. Bush into the White House. More than 90,000 black/Hispanic

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voters were disenfranchised by Gov. Jeb Bush (George's brother) in a Florida election officially decided by 537 votes. More than 300,000 primarily black/Hispanic voters were stripped from voter rolls in an Ohio 2004 election officially decided by 118,775.

In Florida's 2000 presidential election, 16,000 votes cast for Gore in Volusia County were electronically subtracted and 4,000 were credited to Bush, giving him a leg up on the evening's vote count. This caused Fox News commentator John Ellis (Bush's first cousin) to call the election for the GOP.

In Ohio 2004, John Kerry was shown winning the election by 4.2%, more than 200,000 votes, at 12:20 a.m. Then the electronic vote count ceased. At 2 a.m., a Bush lead began to emerge, somehow reaching 2.5%. The 6.7% flip is a virtual statistical impossibility.

All of this was done by private contractors working for the company SmarTech, based in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The key information technology specialist in charge of the vote count was Michael Connell, an Akron-based associate of the Bush family, who was hired by the Ohio secretary of state with a no-bid contract to supervise the state's official vote count. Connell later died in a mysterious plane crash after being deposed in federal court. The fact that electronic voting machines cannot be monitored was voted a Most Censored story in 2016

Computer "Black Box Voting" specialist Bev Harris, who uncovered the electronic vote flipping in Florida 2000, has warned this year that a method of "fractionated voting" could have been easily used to manipulate electronic vote counts. The manipulation could be done by secretaries of state in conjunction with partisan for-profit corporations in ways that are virtually impossible to detect, and simply not open to legal challenge. According to Harris, this "fraction magic," used in counties' central tabulators, could have flipped hundreds of thousands of votes.

In Ohio this year, a new generation of electronic vote scanning machines makes it possible to retrieve electronic images of ballots that have been cast on paper in the order that they were cast. These machines come with an audit log that would detect any illegitimate vote changes by central tabulators.

But Secretary of State Husted opted to allow local election boards to leave both security functions – the audit log and the image scanners – turned off. Bob Fitrakis sued in the Franklin County Court of Common Pleas to have the monitoring functions turned on. But Judge David Cain ruled on Election Day that the election officials need not turn on those security features, leaving the public with no way to monitor the outcome. (A similar lawsuit filed in Arizona by election protection activist John Brakey actually succeeded.)

Such problems are built into the system nationwide. In Pennsylvania, for example, Rosenfeld reports that "16 counties are still using aging countywide tabulators which" are easily hacked, and "use old versions of Microsoft operating systems, which have security vulnerabilities that have never been fixed."

Throughout the US, including the swing states

that will decide the presidential outcome in the Electoral College and states that have increased the GOP margin in the US Senate, the entire vote count remains an electronic mystery.

VR Systems, based in Tallahassee, handles registration records in Florida and more than a dozen other states. It was hacked prior to the election. Indeed, much finger-pointing against alleged foreign electronic intruders still goes on. But there are more than enough open portals into our electronic voting system to let domestic hackers easily flip an election.

Sources cited by Rosenfeld say Clinton won only those Wisconsin counties with paper ballots, while losing those with a mix of paper and machine voting by 1-2%, and those with only machines only by 10-15%.

Those results echo outcomes in New Mexico 2004, where Kerry won all precincts with hand-counted paper ballots and lost all those with machines, a reality he personally noted in a post-election conference call.

Millions of dollars would be required to do meaningful recounts in states like Wisconsin, which may well have legitimately gone for Clinton and chosen a Democratic US Senator. Michigan's 4,800 precincts could cost up to \$125 each to recount. The impact of such recounts, even if they show Clinton winning, would then be up for grabs.

So Did the GOP Strip and Flip the 2016 Election?

There is no doubt that Hillary Clinton won America's popular vote by more than a million votes. That popular vote victory will be reversed in an Electoral College originally designed to enhance the power of slaveowners and now being used for the sixth time to deny the White House to the rightful winner.

There is no doubt that more than enough black, Hispanic, Islamic and Asian-Americans were electronically stripped from the voter registration rolls by Crosscheck and other means to have given Clinton victories in those swing states that would have swung the Electoral College in her favor.

There is no doubt additional Jim Crow tactics meant to further disenfranchise black/Hispanic/Asian-American voters – such as stripping away voting times and precincts, denial of absentee ballots, non-counting of provisional ballots, and much more – stripped Clinton of hundreds of thousands of additional legitimate votes.

There is no doubt that exit polls showed her winning in more than enough states to have given her a victory in the Electoral College. They also indicated a seven-seat swing in the US Senate in 2014 and 2016, more than enough to give the GOP control of the US Supreme Court. There is no doubt that the election was largely conducted on electronic machines, and with electronically-counted Scantron ballots that are completely beyond public accountability. These voting machines are run on secret, proprietary corporate software to which the public is not allowed access.

As in 2000 and 2004, the actual final vote count once again resides in black box machines controlled by private corporations, GOP governors, and secretaries of

state, whose ability to easily hack and flip the official outcome cannot be monitored or brought to accountability. In at least one state (Ohio) the GOP took legal action to prevent the public from gaining potential access to the electronic vote count ... and won!

There is also no doubt that had this election been conducted as it was in virtually any other country, the civilized world would have denounced it as completely unreliable and almost certainly false. Had it been in our "national interest" to do so, American troops would have poured in to "restore democracy" after such an obviously rigged charade.

Throughout the campaign, GOP candidate Trump cleverly complained of a "rigged election." He continually warned of innumerable non-whites and Muslims voting multiple times for Hillary Clinton. Of course the opposite happened. Hundreds of thousands of non-white citizens were systematically denied their right to vote. Since even that wasn't enough to elect Donald Trump, the Electoral College will once again deny democracy. And thanks to the dark magic of electronic voting machines, we will never really know 2016's true vote count.

But the underlying nightmare is that this has been done before, that we've known about stripped and flipped elections for at least sixteen years, and that nothing has been done. If anything, due to the spread of electronic voting machines, our electoral system is more corrupt and less accountable than it was in 2000, when the GOP first stripped and flipped George W. Bush into the White House.

We advocate universal automatic voter registration, transparent voter rolls, a four-day national holiday for voting, universal hand-counted paper ballots, abolition of the Electoral College, an end to gerrymandering, a ban on corporate money in politics.

Bob Fittrakis & Harvey Wasserman are co-authors of the upcoming *Strip & Flip: Death of American Democracy* (Freepress.org; Solartopia.org.)

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In Donald Trump's victory speech after the presidential election, he vowed:

"We are going to fix our inner cities and rebuild our highways, bridges, tunnels, airports, schools, hospitals. We're going to rebuild our infrastructure, which will become, by the way, second to none. And we will put millions of our people to work as we rebuild it."

It sounds great; but as usual, the devil is in the details. Both parties in Congress agree that infrastructure is desperately needed. The roadblock is in where to find the money. Raising taxes and going further into debt are both evidently off the table. The Trump solution is touted as avoiding those options, but according to his economic advisors, it does this by privatizing public goods, imposing high user fees on the citizenry for assets that should have been public utilities.

Raise taxes, add to the federal debt, privatize – there is nothing new here. The president-elect needs another alternative; and there is one, something he is evidently open to. In May 2016, when challenged over the risk of default from the mounting federal debt, he said: "You never have to default, because *you print the money*." The Federal Reserve has already created trillions of dollars for the 1% by just printing the money. The new president could create another trillion for the majority of the 99% who elected him.

Another Privatization Firesale?

The infrastructure plan of the Trump team was detailed in a report released by his economic advisors Wilbur Ross and Peter Navarro in October 2016. It calls for \$1 trillion of spending over 10 years, funded largely by private sources. The authors say the report is straightforward, but this writer found it hard to follow, so here the

focus will be on secondary sources. According to Jordan Weismann on *Slate*:

"Under Trump's plan...the federal government would offer tax credits to private investors interested in funding large infrastructure projects, who would put down some of their own money up front, then borrow the rest on the private bond markets. They would eventually earn their profits on the back end from usage fees, such as highway and bridge tolls (if they built a highway or bridge) or higher water rates (if they fixed up some water mains). So instead of paying for their new roads at tax time, Americans would pay for them during their daily commute. And of course, all these private developers would earn a nice return at the end of the day."

The federal government already offers credit programs designed to help states and cities team up with private-sector investors to finance new infrastructure. Trump's plan is unusual because, as written, it seems to be targeted at fully private projects, which are less common.

David Dayen, writing in *The New Republican*, interprets the plan to mean the government's public assets will be "passed off in a privatization firesale." He writes:

It's the common justification for privatization, and it's been a disaster virtually everywhere it's been tried. First of all, this specifically ties infrastructure—designed for the common good—to a grab for profits. Private operators will only undertake projects if they promise a revenue stream. . . .

So the only way to entice private-sector actors into rebuilding Flint, Michigan's water system, for example, is to give them a cut of the profits in perpetuity. That's what Chicago did when it sold off 36,000 parking meters to a Wall Street-led investor group. Users now pay exorbitant fees to park in Chicago, and city government is helpless to alter the rates.

You also end up with contractors skimping on costs to maximize profits.

Time for Some Outside-the-box Thinking

That is the plan as set forth by Trump's economic policy advisors; but he has also talked about the very low interest rates at which the government could borrow to fund infrastructure today, so perhaps he is open to other options. Since financing is estimated to be 50% of the cost of infrastructure, funding infrastructure through a

The infrastructure plan of the Trump team was detailed in a report released by his economic advisors... it calls for \$1 trillion of spending over 10 years, funded largely by private sources.

– Ellen Brown

publicly-owned bank could cut costs nearly in half, as shown here.

Better yet, however, might be an option that is gaining traction in Europe: simply issue the money. Alternatively, borrow it from a central bank that issues it, which amounts to the same thing as long as the bank holds the bonds to maturity. Economists call this “helicopter money” – money issued by the central bank and dropped directly into the economy. As observed in *The Economist* in May 2016:

Advocates of helicopter money . . . argue for fiscal stimulus—in the form of government spending, tax cuts or direct payments to citizens—financed with newly printed money rather than through borrowing or taxation. Quantitative easing (QE) qualifies, so long as the central bank buying the government bonds promises to hold them to maturity, with interest payments and principal remitted back to the government like most central-bank profits.

Helicopter money is a new and rather pejorative term for an old and venerable solution. The American colonies asserted their independence from the Motherland by issuing their own money; and Abraham Lincoln, our first Republican president, boldly revived that system during the Civil War. To avoid locking the government into debt

with exorbitant interest rates, he instructed the Treasury to print \$450 million in US Notes or “greenbacks.” In 2016 dollars, that sum would be equivalent to about \$10 billion, yet runaway inflation did not result. Lincoln’s greenbacks were the key to funding not only the North’s victory in the war but an array of pivotal infrastructure projects, including a transcontinental railway system; and GDP reached heights never before seen, jumping from \$1 billion in 1830 to about \$10 billion in 1865.

Indeed, this “radical” solution is what the Founding Fathers evidently intended for their new government. The Constitution provides, “Congress shall have the power to coin money [and] regulate the value thereof.” The Constitution was written at a time when coins were the only recognized legal tender; so the Constitutional Congress effectively gave Congress the power to create the national money supply, taking that role over from the colonies (now the states).

Outside the Civil War period, however, Congress failed to exercise its dominion over paper money, and private banks stepped in to fill the breach. First the banks printed their own banknotes, multiplied on the “fractional reserve” system. When those notes were heavily taxed, they resorted to creating money simply by writing it into deposit accounts. As the Bank of England acknowledged in its spring 2014 quarterly report, banks create deposits whenever they make loans; and this is the source of 97% of the UK money supply today. Contrary to popular belief, money is not a commodity like gold that is in fixed supply and must be borrowed before it can be lent. Money is being created and destroyed all day every day by banks across the country. By reclaiming the power to issue money, the federal government would simply be returning to the publicly-issued money of our forebears, a system they fought the British to preserve.

Countering the Inflation Myth

The invariable objection to this solution is that it would cause runaway price inflation; but that monetarist theory is flawed, for several reasons.

First, there is the multiplier effect: one dollar invested in infrastructure increases gross domestic product by at least two dollars. The Confederation of British Industry has calculated that every £1 of such expenditure would increase GDP by £2.80. And that means an increase in tax revenue. According to the New York Fed,

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in 2012 total tax revenue as a percentage of GDP was 24.3%. Thus one new dollar of GDP results in about 24 cents in increased tax revenue; and \$2 in GDP increases tax revenue by about fifty cents. One dollar out pulls fifty cents or more back in the form of taxes. The remainder can be recovered from the income stream from those infrastructure projects that generate user fees: trains, buses, airports, bridges, toll roads, hospitals, and the like.

Further, adding money to the economy does not drive up prices until demand exceeds supply; and we're a long way from that now. The US output gap – the difference between actual output and potential output – is estimated at close to \$1 trillion today. That means the money supply could be increased by close to \$1 trillion annually without driving up prices. Before that, increasing demand will trigger a corresponding increase in supply, so that both rise together and prices remain stable.

In any case, today we are in a *deflationary* spiral. The economy needs an injection of new money just to bring it to former levels. In July 2010, the New York Fed posted a staff report showing that the money supply had shrunk by about \$3 trillion since 2008, due to the collapse of the shadow banking system. The goal of the Federal Reserve's quantitative easing was to return inflation to target levels by increasing private sector borrowing. But rather than taking out new loans, individuals and businesses are paying off old loans, shrinking the money supply. They are doing this although credit is very cheap, because they need to rectify their debt-ridden balance sheets just to stay afloat. They are also hoarding money, taking it out of the circulating money supply. Economist Richard

Koo calls it a "balance sheet recession."

The Federal Reserve has already bought \$3.6 trillion in assets simply by "printing the money" through QE. When that program was initiated, critics called it recklessly hyperinflationary; but it did not create even the modest 2% inflation the Fed was aiming for. Combined with ZIRP – zero interest rates for banks – it encouraged borrowing for speculation, driving up the stock market and real estate; but the Consumer Price Index, productivity and wages barely budged. As noted on CNBC in February:

Central banks have been pumping money into the global economy without a whole lot to show for it . . . Growth remains anemic, and worries are escalating that the U.S. and the rest of the world are on the brink of a recession, despite bargain-basement interest rates and trillions in liquidity.

Boldness Has Genius in It

In a January 2015 op-ed in the UK *Guardian*, Tony Pugh observed:

"Quantitative easing, as practiced by the Bank of England and the US Federal Reserve, merely flooded the financial sector with money to the benefit of bondholders. This did not create a so-called wealth affect, with a trickle-down to the real producing economy. . . *If the EU were bold enough*, it could fund infrastructure or renewables projects directly through the electronic creation of money, without having to borrow. Our government has that authority, but lacks the political will."

In 1933, President Franklin Roosevelt boldly



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UNION VOTE

SPARKY BALDWIN

When former President Reagan decided to cut funding to the Department of Education, the day he sent his funding package to Congress he participated in the ribbon cutting of a new elementary school. The national media ran the picture of the ribbon cutting on Page 1, touting the President as an “education president,” and the story about gutting the DoE somewhere between Page 8 and Page 40 – depending on the newspaper you were reading. Given that Reagan’s action was the beginning of ongoing cuts to education and ground zero for today’s spiraling student loan debt, his recognition as an education president, at least from this vantage, couldn’t be more factually refuted. Still, the strategy was a brilliant one in the short term, and it is not too dissimilar to an apparent strategy underway by Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia and his efforts to shrink the city’s personnel costs, especially pension obligations.

Garcia, when in the public gaze, promises to increase middle class jobs and make housing affordable, two features of the local economic landscape Long Beach residents support in significant numbers. However, Garcia’s interest in shrinking city obligations may trump his public promises to promote jobs and housing. A case in point is approximately 700 city jobs with union representation that have lost representation, due to a variety of maneuvers, both active and tacit, and as a result those positions could be soon outsourced, likely resulting in lost pensions, livable wages and other social benefits typically associated with civil service, as well contributions to the community. In short, 700 family wage jobs may be lost through privatization while the mayor shifts our attention to his administration’s efforts, at least in public, to promote jobs and affordable housing.

Eric East, a former trustee of Local Lodge 1930 and shop steward, explains that the city has been operating since 2012 without a contract with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM). That contract covers street sweeping, towing, parking enforcement and refuse collection.

In 2012, Long Beach negotiated a one-year contract to continue services, without raises. Once that agreement was in place, negotiations reopened between the City and IAM. East said the City was looking for a number of “takeaways,” and no raises, “and we were looking for salary increases and no takeaways.” Additionally, Long Beach hired a legal firm well versed in union breaking to conduct the negotiations.

Ultimately, after membership split twice on a vote to decertify the union, a decertification was approved in October, 2015. That meant 700 city positions were in play, both supervisory and skilled positions, within the bargaining unit.

But here’s where it gets interesting. Mayor Garcia, an apparently staunch supporter of family wage jobs, has been conspicuously silent on the union negotiations that affect these jobs, as well as services that affect virtually all Long Beach residents, but especially lower income residents.

Consider trash pickup. It is already insufficient in the downtown area. Alleys are full of trash and that

trash creates new environments for other problems, mostly rodents. There is more trash than the available services can handle. So if we’re not meeting the public need at this point, how can we meet it with reduced services, or certainly commercialized ones that depend on profit?

Against this backdrop, rumor

has it Mayor Garcia is looking to outsource street sweeping, parking enforcement and refuse collection. Now keep in mind, these full time jobs pay roughly \$30,000 per year. “These people are at the lowest economic spectrum, barely able to live in Long Beach,” East said. Yet, those union jobs are significantly better than other work opportunities in the city.

So why did union members choose to abandon the union? East says it has a lot to do with the national apathy to participate in governance. However, on a local level, that apathy raises deeper concerns.

The greatest concern, according to East, is that the employment culture in Long Beach might change to an at-will structure. At-will employment, while it sounds as if it provides rights to employees, really is a way for employers to rid themselves of employees they dislike, for any reason. In fact, they don’t even have to dislike them. Unions were formed and have served the purpose of reducing undue treatment of certain employees based on



these kinds of reasons.

If you asked a member who voted against the certification, you'd likely hear something very similar to what we heard in the national presidential election, that people feel "unrepresented and under-served," and finally "lashed out," East said.

From the union side, East believes they were basically out-organized. Apparently, the union felt it had nothing to worry about. Who will give up a reasonable living for the unknown? He thinks the former union membership believes it can do a better job than the union currently representing them, and adds: "Facts don't matter when you've determined what you're going to believe." Another national parallel!

Neither side has adequately presented its positions to the public. East argues that the city is not investing in the long-term, certainly if Mayor Garcia's nominal claim to create family wage jobs is a benchmark. While historically we can see that municipal services decrease costs, privatizing them guarantees increased costs to consumers, and potentially a delimiting of services.

The real bottom line, according to East, is that some people who have been able to live in Long Beach and make a living may have to move to outlying communities where the rents can be supported by the lower salaries. Housing costs in Long Beach are increasing 6-8 percent per year.

At the same time, the city would like to unburden itself of as much of the city personnel costs as possible and this is the first move in that direction that could crack

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the façade, according to East. East, a member of IAM for 7 years, sees this failed certification as a prelude to further decertifications of city unions, and a step toward the outsourcing of city operations. We've already seen the abysmal results from outsourcing in a variety of municipalities around the country, including Portland, Oregon. Why are cities continuing down this path when it invariably costs residents much more than it would otherwise? And why don't they demand a better accounting and allocation of public resources? There needs to be more education of the citizens about the consequences of these dangerous trends!

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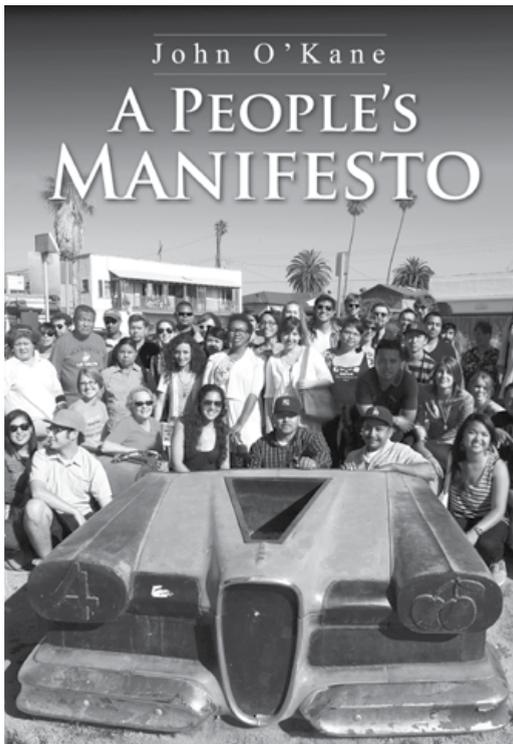


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Publisher of *AMASS* Magazine Releases *A People's Manifesto*

2015-05-13 www.everythinglongbeach.com/publisher-of-amass-magazine-releases-a-peoples-manifesto/

A People's Manifesto, by John O'Kane, editor and publisher of *AMASS* Magazine, is a new book just published by SPD Books. It focuses on the opinions and perspectives of the people, ordinary citizens, non-experts, outsiders, those without influence, about the state of American society over the past several years, especially since the Great Recession of 2008. More specifically, the author engages in a series of conversations with a diverse number of people from varying backgrounds on the issues: the economy and jobs, political polarization, campaign reform, the elite domination of political life, the Tea Party phenomenon, inequality, immigration, austerity and the ongoing budget crises, and foreclosures, among others.

The book is 200 pages long, and priced at \$24.95. It can be purchased at all fine bookstores, as well as online at Amazon and other sites.

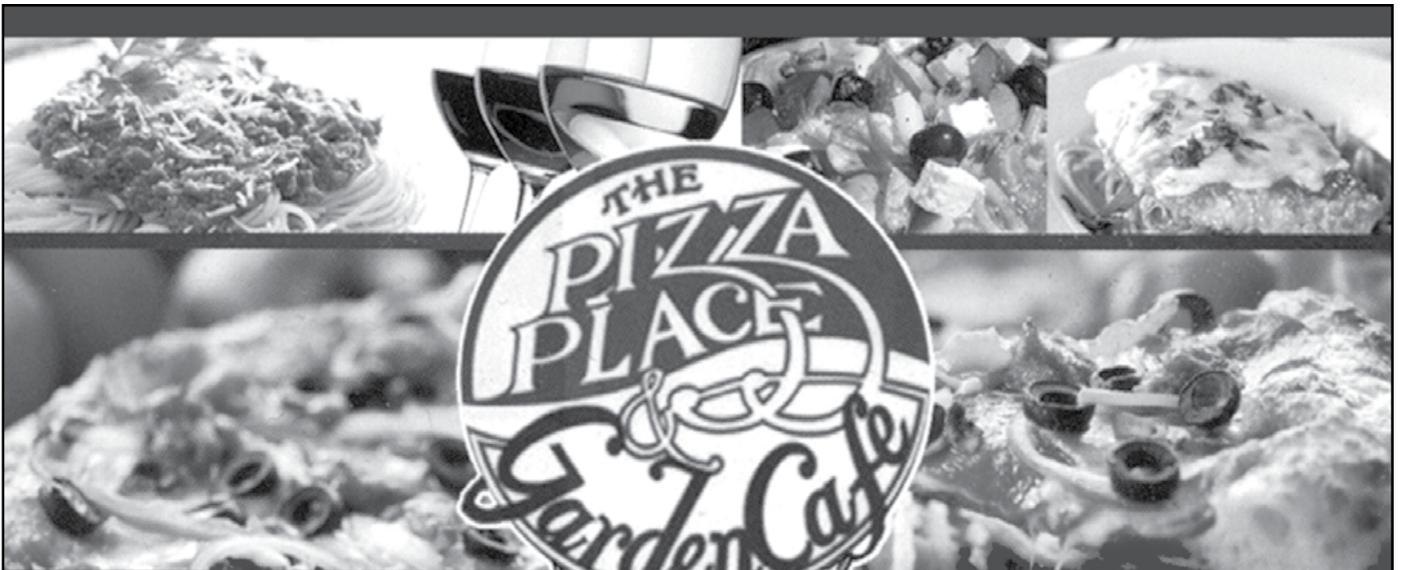
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JOHN O'KANE

I hate television! The hours and hours of pre-pubescent gaping don't count. That was merely tough love; the parents' success at finding a surrogate babysitter to feed my head with enough happy trails to keep me out of trouble for another day. Neither do the fitful samplings during puberty, a must to plug into the social conversations that promised to pass me beyond it. But those pictures mostly heated my mettle for making it in the dating game, and the fallout from trying to match its soapy stories to real life probably stunted my age of reason. Love wasn't that easy. Once stung with conflicting signals twice alienated, and I went off into adulthood a skeptical Oedipus, distrusting predictable stories, cardboard characters and weak, nauseating narratives. I became a believer in the idea of television as a toaster with pictures and got interested in literary stories, especially those that faced the nausea of the way things are with at least some sesame, doing a dissertation some years later on indie film in the sixties and seventies. Fascinated with shadows, framings, the metaphors of picture language and non-linear narratives, I realized how influential my technological past had been. That third-hand Admiral set with its multi-shadowed scenes; those mylar-like distortions on our toaster.

I forgot television until the nineties when I tasted the current fare, soon realizing that the programming I grew up with might be worth another look. There's nothing like a void in the present to make you nostalgic. I was attracted to stories produced between the latter half of the sixties and the late seventies, finding the quality equivalent of those in indie film made roughly during the same time stretch. Many of these were programs I had snootily passed over, and I gave them another look. Not only did they help me fill in important gaps, they helped me better grasp the period I was living in. I quickly became a rerun junkie, my attention pitched to the present and past simultaneously. In the throes of nostalgia I swooned over my discoveries, especially "The

Rockford Files."

I found a private eye story that rocked. The early episodes attempt to create some link with noir. We see Jim Rockford (James Garner) trying to make it as a private investigator in a dark and threatening urban scene. The tone is serious and the stories are dramatic. His father (Noah Beery) kids him about trying to be "Sam Spade," an attitude that will continue throughout the series. He's constantly trying to convince his son to get a normal, safer occupation. But soon the formula that kept it going from 1974 to 1980 takes over. The scenes are light and often suburban, and there's very little direct violence. Quality stories about the social, political, economic and cultural mindset of America take over and the tone is often satirical.

His character retains some of the stereotypical private eye traits. He dazzles people with witty one-liners that quickly size-up situations, not unlike Sam Spade. In one episode Rene Auberjonois repeatedly jokes about his tone and language, calling him "Bogie!" His flip attitude, while mostly fun-loving and carefree, is often pessimistic. Inept bureaucrats, greedy corporate players and corrupt union officials are the norm in a world full of takers. He commiserates with Susan Strasberg in an early episode, a client he tries to help but only manages to dredge up more and more obstacles and problems for her, about how cruel life is. We have to grab moments of happiness when they randomly flash before us and do the best we can to survive. Not all that far removed from Bogie's world either.

Some see this clever reference to Sam Spade as garnish on mostly the same ole formula; a ruse to snag the audience that grew

up on the real noir. Which is true, of course, but when you're swooning you focus your energy around the object desired and tune out mostly everything else. In passing over these stories back then I didn't notice that the toaster had upgraded to a kind of closed-wire cuisinart convection oven that mostly hid its mojo. It spawned new stories with relevance but they were a mishmash of quoting, entertainment and serious reflection grasped in different ways by different watchers. They have to be. To remain on the air and survive the ratings wars they have to compromise. Writers must pitch the content with market seg-

**In passing
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— John O'Kane

ments in mind and aim to satisfy the largest possible audience while staying coherent. Only in subsidized systems where the commercial apparatus is eliminated can there be deep and pure literary addresses to one segment. "All in the Family," one of the great successes of that era, built huge audiences that identified with a conservative voice in Archie Bunker, and a liberal one in his son-in-law Michael, both able to see their messages as coherent. And one of the persistent addresses of this apparatus is to those who merely want to escape and enjoy themselves.

Rockford's world can be seen as a very specific one: the aftermath of the sixties when utopian aspirations for discovering big truths through existing institutions have all but vanished. The saving grace is that they've migrated as little truths into small pockets of vital experiment where the little and good people bond together in community and help each other out, practicing the values of a benevolent America shadowed by changes in the new decade. Live within your existential limits and be happy, the stories say. This new America is often contrasted with the one his father, Rocky, lived through in the thirties under Roosevelt when the New Deal worked for the people. Since the sixties generation gap still resonated with audiences, this was a clever way to capitalize on contrasting values and interests, giving some a nostalgic bypass of the painful contemporary moment to one they recognize, and others pleasure in knowing how they've advanced beyond those threadbare years of old. Or forget the allegory and gloat in the comical characterization of these differences!

Similarly with Rockford's lifestyle. He lives in a modest trailer on the beach where he receives those in the community who desperately need his services. That need is not constant enough to keep the creditors at bay, however, and he occasionally supplements his second-storey work with temporary gigs down at the docks where his father spent his active life. Not often, since he relishes his freedom to maneuver as a self-employed entrepreneur, using much of his time in leisure activities, especially fishing. He's a man of the people; a connoisseur of the quotidian everyday. If he didn't wear sports coats and have short hair he could easily pass for a dropout who refuses to work the system. His actions and beliefs suggest sympathy for some sort of democracy of the people not all that different from what the alienated youth of the sixties harbored, though he's hardly naïve enough to believe it could be institutionalized. The folksy permutations of blue grass on the sound track drench us in populism.

But Rockford's populism is a strange mix of qualities and can attract viewers that wouldn't seem to share much sympathy. The votes for community are unmistakable in their social and political senses. And the economic populism comes through in many episodes. There's an especially interesting two-part story from late in the decade, starring Ned Beatty ("Profit and Loss"), exposing the cooked books of shell corporations and their predatory mergers and acquisitions (and with not one single shootout!). But when it comes to culture a not-so-liberal audience can find comfort. While he easily bonds with

people of color, and supports women's rights (reluctantly, perhaps because he's a heart throb, though no womanizer either), many see him as a typical sports fanatic, obsessed with the Lakers and Rams, with no interest in high art, or any art for that matter. His on-again, off-again flame, Beth Davenport (Gretchen Corbett), tries to upgrade his cultural sensibilities one night by taking him to the opera but he splits in the middle.

But then what do liberal and conservative really mean? The kind of community that organizes itself around culture, especially bohemians, can lead to cliquish groupings or trendy behavior among its members.

One of the great episodes is "Quickie Nirvana," set in Venice. It satirizes a counter-culture hippie dropout who is trendiness personified. She chants and meditates, spouting love and sharing and peace and virtually any cliché circulating through the seventies' culture of narcissism. She claims to be free and her own person but she's irresponsible and blind to the world around her. Her actions damage people, including Rockford who gets caught up in some payoff scheme at the law firm where she barely works. She idolizes a guru who commands the minds and bodies of the impressionable at a cultish camp in the mountains, and during pre-death therapy, where she immerses in a tank of water for several hours to revive her senses, he learns of the scheme and absconds with a stash of cash she's unwittingly carrying to pull off the scheme, heading south with a local waitress. The coda



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shows Rockford bumping into her under the original Abbot Kinney arches on Windward where her new personality and name serve bible-hawking evangelism. Who's the real dropout!

Few viewers of this program, then or now, would say that it ever presents a coherent comment on populism. In fact few over the years have likely been interested in such gobbledygook. They go with the story flow, Garner's smooth, seductive persona, the witty dialogue, etc. There's no direct coherent statement but I see a latent complex one, another sure sign of its literary quality. Populism is quite relevant for our times. In the election just concluded both sides claimed to be pitching their message to the people, mostly to get their votes. Like in the program, the rhetoric was pretty fuzzy. Conservatives targeted them as repositories of freedom and support for less government, occasionally quoting some vague notions about equality but proposing little or nothing in the way of specifics to bring that about, mostly expecting traditional hierarchies to continue. Culturally they spotlighted the beer-drinking Joe the plumbers and NASCAR-dads against elitist intellectuals and art snobs. Liberals targeted them as candidates for a diverse rainbow of integrated citizens, sympathetic with benevolent government, pushing for equality a little harder than the conservatives but offering little either in the way of specifics to make that happen. They stressed cultural identity for groups and market segments perhaps more than equality, and support for art and culture, especially high art as an enriching prep for quality citizenship. Both maintained some distance from actual people. Bernie tried to bring it all together, the social, political, economic and cultural facets of populism, getting people to participate and stressing more equality than either the conservatives or liberals.

Rockford's fragmentary portrayals and interactions surface full-blown in the nineties on the national scene, about the time nostalgia motivated my look at television, with Ross Perot's conservative and Ralph Nader's liberal candidacies for president. Seeing the program after this eruption secured my ongoing interests in these ideas and led to a work of literary journalism, *A People's Manifesto*, that investigates their meaning in the minds and behaviors of people from various walks of life in Los Angeles; and related work on Huffingtonpost.

Another significant part of this series that likely passed by most viewers is the rich slant on criminality. Bohemians are often fascinated with criminals or at least those who stretch the law (the Hell's Angels for Ken Kesey and Allen Ginsberg, for example), and this series has a lively sample. Rockford himself was in prison for five years, getting a pardon, but in the process met several muses who find their way into the scripts. Evelyn Martin aka Angel (Stuart Margolin) is a central character who Rockford meets in prison and they become very close friends. Angel is master of the con and always being pursued and arrested by Dennis (Joe Santos), Rockford's close friend at the LAPD who runs plates and does other favors for him. But he always gets off. His personality and interaction with characters suggest he's often framed or a

victim of circumstances driven by a scamming society. The suggestion is clear too that Rockford was framed, hence the pardon. Angel's subterranean lifestyle is shown to be a culturally liberating force that pulses Rockford's larger community.

Another "criminal" type in the series is Gandolf Fitch aka Gandy (Isaac Hayes) who Rockford also meets in prison. It's through him that we get another angle on Rockford's character. Gandy calls him Rockfish, despite being corrected repeatedly, because of his take on Rockford's timidity when it comes to physical activity and threatening situations, a strong suggestion he's not the criminal type. Though when pushed he can handle himself. This characterization meshes with Garner's previous roles, especially Bret Maverick in that late fifties/early sixties series. Elliot Gould's Marlowe in Robert Altman's "The Long Goodbye," released in 1973, is a close kin.

Gandy's an angry black man who settles disputes with his fists, but it turns out he was framed too and so he deserves to be! Rockford's efforts are central to proving his innocence. We witness his ability to use charm and guile to get results. Like all members of Rockford's community, this "criminal" has a heart of gold. They're always willing to help each other out when circumstances demand it. It even extends to women's roles. Rita Moreno plays a perennially busted, down-and-out hooker whose real identity is closer to a nurturing, mature feminist. Shades of Jane Fonda in "Klute," from 1971; Diane Ke-



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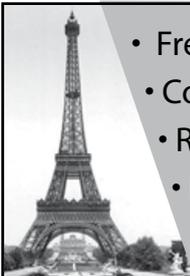
aton in "Looking for Mr. Goodbar," from 1978; or even Julie Christie in "McCabe and Mrs. Miller," from 1972. The era was fascinated by prosties-as-persons.

When the best citizens are branded criminals, something's amiss with the branding and the branders. And it's this tenor that keeps these stories made in the indie Hollywood era of the sixties and seventies, before the mega-corporate conglomeration of the industry seeds about the time the series expires, freshly relevant and different for the watcher motivated to process the convection oven's serendipitous sparks. Prosties, con artists, angry aggressors and just bad people fill the current-day commercial screen but they're usually stereotypes and flawed in some individually unexplainable ways. They often have no links to a community or society. Their actions are often unambiguously evil but redeemable by their coolness and attractiveness, leaving them reinforced but morally muddled.

In a quality story like "The Rockford Files" these figures take on different meanings. Linking criminality with good values and hearts offers humane alternatives to a normal society which it indicts, casting critical doubt on its institutions and redeeming the characters as superior. They can be seen as socialized anti-heroes/heroines. These figures are alienated loners drifting through society unable to see existing society as the answer and therefore unable to be heroic. Here there's engagement and passion within a community that sponsors practical goodness, and the values of sharing, refusing the myths of singular, larger than life heroes and heroines.

What's exciting is to see this at work in the post-Rockford commercial fare. Like the "A-Team." It panders to violence and many other predictable action adventure stereotypes, but these attractive underground criminals who help those victimized by bad people in society were falsely accused, thus offering at least a small critique of the Vietnam War. Plus they hire out for free or very low rates and refuse heroic recognition while they comically evade the short arms of the military law!

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Now in their 20s and 30s, millennials are getting more attention than any other generation lately, especially when it comes to food. The latest U.S. census report found this group has surpassed baby boomers in terms of population size, with the demographic representing 83.1 million people.

Coming into their prime spending years, they're greatly influencing the food business. Millennials represent \$290 billion in spending power, according to IRI Worldwide. By 2020, millennial spending in the U.S. could surge to a whopping \$1.4 trillion annually, representing 30 percent of total retail sales, say figures from Accenture.com.

This generation is often lumped together as having the same needs, characteristics and shopping behaviors when millennials are, in fact, quite different from each other, as IRI indicates. CPG marketers should move past simplistic generalities and identify with millennials as truly unique individuals according to IRI.

"Food manufacturers keep forgetting that the generation spreads across such a wide range of ages and life stages [and] has very unique needs," says Sara Martens a research analyst for the Corn Refiners Association in Washington.

Millennials are the most digitally connected generation in history, raised with internet access and mobile devices, and they use both constantly in their shopping journeys. As such, they received "unprecedented exposure" to knowledge about diet and nutrition growing up – via the internet in particular – and continue to be influenced by nutrition concerns, according to research from the Hartman Group. They shop online regardless of the time or place.

While their spending power is growing, they're also spending it differently. Twenty-nine percent regularly use a mobile app to pay for purchases. "As the first generation of digital natives, millennials are comfortable with technology, though not all are early adopters or constantly connected," says Robert Tomei, president of consumer and shopper mar-

keting at IRI. "They are loyal to brands that prove themselves worthy, but they also enjoy hunting for a good deal," he adds.

Fifty-two percent will choose quality over price. However, two-thirds are working with limited grocery budgets, so a good number are value-conscious by necessity.

Not only do they consider themselves foodies, they value premium ingredients and higher quality food offerings. They're inclined to splurge on locally produced foods, Mintel says, although half of them find it important to make food purchases that fit within their budget.

The draw to high quality ingredients may explain why more than half of millennials find traditional grocery store fare less appealing than that of specialty stores. Functional ingredients that attract millennials include exotic flavors like lemongrass, sriracha hot sauce, matcha green tea, galangal Thai ginger and Meyer lemon, lists Lana Woshnak, director of technical services at DSM Nutritional Products in

Parsippany, N.J., in a recent white paper series called "Strategic Nutrition for Millennials."

Qualities such as all natural, organic, vegetarian/vegan and locally sourced speak to this generation, she points out. Living a healthy lifestyle means something to them, and they look for wholesome nutrition, exercise, eat more hormone-free foods and tend to be more adventurous and "open to trying new flavors" than other generations. Woshnak also observes that transparency in business operations is important. "Millennials have shown their power [in the food and beverage industry] in persuading large companies to change the composition of some products."

Measure of Distrust

Yet U.S. millennials are twice as likely as others to distrust large food makers, as consumer interest in brand transparency continues to grow, reports Mintel. Its research shows 59 percent will stop buying a certain brand's products if they believe the brand is unethical, while 58 percent agree where they buy groceries reflects their personal values – that compares to just 28 percent of non-millennials.

Questioning the long-term health effects of chemical ingredients, millennials choose fresher items at supermarkets, often avoiding the middle aisles' cans, bottles and cartons. They're wary of high salt, sugar, fat, artificial ingredients and preservatives, and as a result, they're helping natural and organic foods disrupt the increasingly fragment-

Millennials are the most digitally connected generation in history, raised with internet access and mobile devices, and they use both constantly in their shopping journeys.

– Lauren R. Hartman

ed food industry, challenging legacy brands that are seeing eroding sales.

“With growing distrust and a greater desire for transparency from food manufacturers, millennials want brands to form a genuine, authentic connection with them; and brands should recognize the impact millennials have on their businesses,” adds Amanda Topper, a Mintel food analyst.

Mintel says they’re likely to avoid buying processed foods (58 percent, versus 51 percent of non-millennials) and are more open to trying foods made for specific diets (e.g., vegan, paleo, gluten free).

“Another value millennials are looking for is authenticity in the foods they eat and the beverages they drink,” confirms Tom Schufreider, COO of caramel color provider Sethness Products Co., Skokie, Ill. “This extends to the ingredients in those products. When it comes to colors, this manifests itself in consumers wanting ingredients that they can easily identify and feel comfortable with.”

Natural but Tasty

Callouts such as local, natural, authentic and premium can sway millennials’ food-buying decisions, Nielsen’s research shows. Thirty-eight percent of respondents to a recent Nielsen study say ingredients sourced sustainably are very important in their purchase decisions.

“Millennials want everything,” summarizes Emily Munday, a culinologist/nutritionist at product development/clean label food consulting firm CuliNex in Seattle. “They want convenient, tasty, easy to prepare snacks and meals that taste great and offer multiple benefits. They’re also more educated on how food affects their bodies than any previous generation. They also want experience from food, not just sustenance.”

Katherine Langel, another CuliNex culinologist, adds they have adventurous tastes, demand portability and enviro-friendly options, global flavors and regional cuisine. In drinks, sales are increasing in categories such as sparkling water, like the LaCroix brand, which reflects millennials’ growing demand for premium beverages with natural ingredients, says Adam Fleck, Morningstar director of consumer equity research. LaCroix sales have doubled to \$225 million since 2014, the Wall Street Journal reported.

Natural energy drinks and tea, such as yerba mate and kombucha, are trendy millennial beverages. “Millennials are on a quest for bigger, bolder, ‘badder’ flavor experiences,” Munday says. “They view higher protein foods as healthier and more satisfying, yet many are cutting down on meat consumption and look for foods made with plant-based proteins.”

Food and beverage developers are responding by replacing artificial ingredients, flavors and colors in various products. They’re also replacing added sugar, especially with that ingredient being called out in the Nutrition Facts panel.

Kind Healthy Snacks, a favorite of millennials, says it’s the first national snack brand to publish the added sugar content across its portfolio, having done so in early August, two years in advance of the deadline set by FDA. Company officials say they’ve always tried to minimize the use of sug-

ars, but last year made a concerted effort to reduce its use in anticipation of the new labeling regulation.

“Publishing the added sugar content in our snacks is a natural next step in our ongoing commitment to transparency,” explains Daniel Lubetzky, Kind’s founder and CEO.

Millennials’ pursuit of authentic, craft and disruptive beverages prompted PepsiCo to nationally launch its Stubborn craft soda line in August. Stubborn incorporates fair trade-certified cane sugar (no high-fructose corn syrup) and comes in 12-oz. glass bottles. Containing 90-100 calories, the drink will be available in orange hibiscus, classic root beer, black cherry, lemon berry acai and agave vanilla cream soda flavors. PepsiCo says the emerging craft soda industry is here to stay.

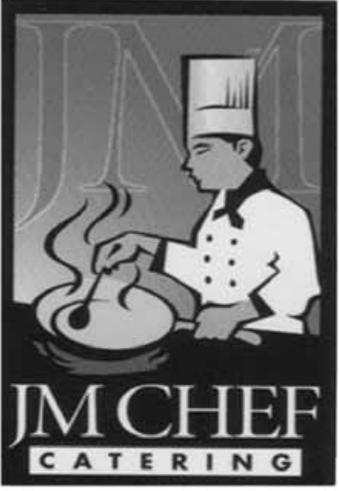
Almost all Americans (94 percent) snack daily, but millennials take snacking a step further, with 52 percent preferring to snack instead of eat regular meals (versus 20 percent of non-millennials).

At grocery stores, 46 percent of millennials look to buy foods that will keep them full, compared to just 32 percent of non-millennials. Thirty-seven percent place importance on buying foods that will energize them (versus 20 percent of non-millennials) and 40 percent place importance on foods that are convenient. Another 35 percent place importance on purchasing food that’s fun to eat.

General Mills, Minneapolis, launched Totino’s Pizza Sticks and Stuffed Nachos in August to tap into mil-

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lennials' desire and craving for unique experiences and convenience. "Consumers [in this group tend to replace meals with snacks] and told us they look for adventurous new flavors that help them indulge in the things they love doing," explains Brad Hiranaga, director of marketing for Totino's.

Millennial Parents

There's another baby boom under way, but it's not being fueled by frisky baby boomers. Millennials are entering the child-bearing years, and they're having a huge impact on baby food sales.

Sales of traditional, commercially prepared baby foods were falling, mainly because busy millennial parents are making their own baby foods using less or no sugar, sodium, artificial ingredients and high-temperature processing techniques. At least they were making their own baby food. Even for millennial moms, that's getting old fast, so they look for minimally processed, organic, non-GMO and no-sugar-added products for their little ones. And probably in a pouch, rather than a jar.

Millennial parents have particularly high standards for the foods they feed their children, especially babies," CuliNex's Langel notes. "They look for adventurous options and ingredients like beet, apricots and pumpkin."

"Millennial parents want to instill positive eating habits," Martens adds. "But remember, millennials aren't all the same," she adds. "And taste and price usually take priority."

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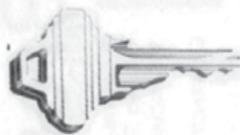
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UNSATURATED FAT LINKED TO LOWER MORTALITY

MARGE DWYER

Consuming higher amounts of unsaturated fats was associated with lower mortality, according to a study from Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health. In a large study population followed for more than three decades, researchers found that higher consumption of saturated and trans fats was linked with higher mortality compared with the same number of calories from carbohydrates. Most importantly, replacing saturated fats with unsaturated fats conferred substantial health benefits. This study provides further support for the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans that emphasize the types of fat rather than total amount of fat in the diet.

The study is the most detailed and powerful examination to date on how dietary fats impact health. It suggests that replacing saturated fats like butter, lard, and fat in red meat with unsaturated fats from plant-based foods—like olive oil, canola oil, and soybean oil—can confer substantial health benefits and should continue to be a key message in dietary recommendations. The study was published online July 5, 2016 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

“There has been widespread confusion in the biomedical community and the general public in the last couple of years about the health effects of specific types of fat in the diet,” said Dong Wang, a doctoral candidate, SD ’16, in the Departments of Nutrition and Epidemiology at Harvard Chan School and lead author of the study. “This study documents im-

portant benefits of unsaturated fats, especially when they replace saturated and trans fats.”

The study included 126,233 participants from two large long-term studies—the Nurses’ Health Study and the Health Professionals Follow-Up Study—who answered survey questions every 2-4 years about their diet, lifestyle, and health for up to 32 years. During the follow-up, 33,304 deaths were documented. Researchers from Harvard Chan School and Brigham and Women’s Hospital examined the relationship between types

rated fats was also linked with greater mortality risk. When compared with the same number of calories from carbohydrate, every 5% increase in saturated fat intake was associated with an 8% higher risk of overall mortality.

Conversely, intake of high amounts of unsaturated fats—both polyunsaturated and monounsaturated—was associated with between 11% and 19% lower overall mortality compared with the same number of calories from carbohydrates. Among the polyunsaturated fats, both omega-6, found in most plant oils, and omega-3 fatty acids, found in fish and soy and canola oils, were associated with lower risk of premature death.

The health effects of specific types of fats depended on what people were replacing them with, the researchers found. For example, people who replaced saturated fats with unsaturated fats—especially polyunsaturated fats—had significantly lower risk of death overall during the study period, as well as lower risk of death from CVD, cancer, neurodegenerative disease, and respiratory disease, compared with those who maintained high intakes of saturated fats. The findings for cardiovascular disease are consistent with many earlier studies showing reduced total and LDL

Every 2% higher intake of trans fat was associated with a 16% higher chance of premature death during the study period.

— Marge Dwyer

of fats in the participants’ diets and overall deaths among the group during the study period, as well as deaths due to cardiovascular disease (CVD), cancer, neurodegenerative disease, and respiratory disease.

Different types of dietary fat had different associations with mortality, the researchers found. Trans fats—on their way to being largely phased out of food—had the most significant adverse impact on health. Every 2% higher intake of trans fat was associated with a 16% higher chance of premature death during the study period. Higher consumption of satu-

(“bad”) cholesterol when unsaturated fats replace trans or saturated fats.

People who replaced saturated fats with carbohydrates had only slightly lower mortality risk. In addition, replacing total fat with carbohydrates was associated with modestly higher mortality. This was not surprising, the authors said, because carbohydrates in the American diet tend to be primarily refined starch and sugar, which have a similar influence on mortality risk as saturated fats.

“Our study shows the importance of eliminating trans fat and replacing saturated fat with unsatu-

rated fats, including both omega-6 and omega-3 polyunsaturated fatty acids. In practice, this can be achieved by replacing animal fats with a variety of liquid vegetable oils," said senior au-

thor Frank Hu, professor of nutrition and epidemiology at Harvard Chan School and professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School.

Other Harvard Chan School

researchers who were involved in the study included Yanping Li, Stephanie Chiuve, Meir Stampfer, JoAnn Manson, Eric Rimm, Walter Willett, and Frank Hu.

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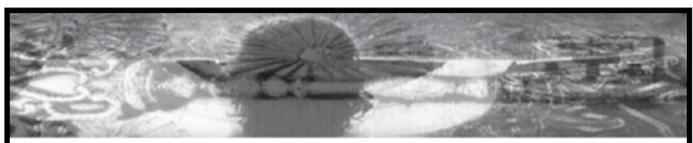


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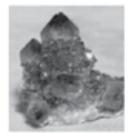
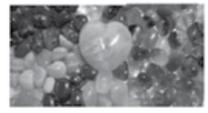
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MONSANTO POISED TO TAKE OVER THE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEM

JAMIE COREY AND
LISA GRAVES

Bayer announced last month that it plans to purchase Monsanto, the controversial chemical corporation that has been sued around the world over its products. Nowadays, Bayer has a more consumer-friendly corporate reputation, but has a checkered past too. (Bayer's history as a German company during the Nazi era is well documented.)

According to *Vox*, if regulators approve the \$66 billion deal, the merger would create the largest agribusiness giant in the world, "selling 29 percent of the world's seeds and 24 percent of its pesticides."

Selling nearly a third of the world's seeds actually means owning a huge portion of the seed stock on the planet. And, Monsanto has spent decades genetically modifying seeds to make them compatible with its chemical pesticides and herbicides, as with Roundup-ready corn. Those are the kinds of chemicals and modifications that can't be washed off.

In the U.S., citizens have been waging major campaigns to try to get GMO products labeled and/or to prevent the use of GMO crops in their communities. These efforts have been attacked by Monsanto and other chemical corporations, which have worked to defeat citizen democracy through subterfuge—as with the deceptive ads that beat back California's proposition on GMO labeling and with a "preemption" bill in Oregon to trump local ballot measures that passed overwhelmingly in two Oregon counties that banned GMO crops.

That preemption bill was similar to other anti-local democracy measures peddled by the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC).

From fracking bans to minimum wage and GMO labeling, ALEC and its politicians have successfully driven preemption efforts with its "model" legislation throughout different parts of the country at the behest of

ALEC's 40th anniversary meeting in Chicago, as the "Preemption of Local Agricultural Laws Act," which is known as the "Monsanto Protection Act," by its foes.

At the Agriculture Subcommittee meeting of ALEC's Energy, Environment, and Agriculture Task Force—which was co-chaired by "CropLife America," a trade group for

the industry—corporate lobbyists and politicians voted to make that bill a new ALEC "model" to push across the country. It also passed to become binding law in Oregon, as CMD's Rebekah Wilce documented this in her June 2014 story, "Oregon's GMO Sellout." As she wrote in a story published by *The Progressive*:

"All six of the world's biggest pesticide and GMO companies—BASF, Bayer, Dow, DuPont, Monsanto, and Syngenta—donated \$455,000 to the effort to overturn the ballot initiative...[I]t was "more than eight times more" than any other county ballot measure has ever received...[Oregon's Willamette Valley grows a] majority of the sugar beet seed for the country, and as of 2010, 95 percent of sugar beets grown in the United States are GMOs engineered to be resistant

to heavy applications of Monsanto's Roundup glyphosate.... [So local citizens] filed an initiative that 'establishes certain rights to a local food system while banning GMO agriculture,' according to attorney Ann Kneeland... The initiative, she says, would 'prevent corporations from eviscerating local law-making.' Their commercial rights should not trump 'the community's right to protect residents' health, safety, and welfare,' she says. [But] not every state has bowed to Monsanto and GMOs. In April [2014], Vermont passed a law requiring the labeling of GMOs. It marked a huge victory...."

The connection to ALEC in all this is perhaps unsurprising given that both Monsanto and Bayer have been

Monsanto is a known funder of ALEC and Bayer previously sat on ALEC's corporate "Private Enterprise" Board, where the company's VP of Public Policy and State Government Affairs served as Treasurer

– Jamie Corey and Lisa Graves

giant corporations.

An Oregonian who leads a group with ties to Monsanto claimed he authored the bill, but as Lisa Arkin of the Pesticide Action Network North America noted, both the Oregon bill and the ALEC bill share the same name and have the same core operative language and effect: "A local government may not enact or enforce a . . . measure, including but not limited to an ordinance, regulation, control area, or quarantine, to inhibit or prevent the production or use of agricultural seed, flower seed . . . or vegetable seed or products of agricultural seed, flower seed . . . or vegetable seed."

After the Oregon bill was introduced in 2013, it was taken to

financial supporters of ALEC over the years, with Monsanto providing major funding and Bayer sending more than a half-dozen lobbyists to ALEC meetings to advance its legislative agenda among pliable ALEC politicians.

Monsanto is a known funder of ALEC and Bayer previously sat on ALEC's corporate "Private Enterprise" Board, where the company's VP of Public Policy and State Government Affairs served as Treasurer. Bayer has also been listed as the ALEC State corporate co-chair of Massachusetts, Nevada, Pennsylvania, South Dakota, and

Texas.

Also, as CMD reported in 2013, Monsanto along with several other companies and trade groups spent more than \$50,000 in the span of four months, as legislators considered bills to override various county laws in Hawaii that banned GMO's and required disclosure of pesticide use and GMO crops.

In another attempt to buy influence in Hawaii, Bayer and Monsanto along with other big agricultural corporations, associated trade groups, and their lobbyists and employees

contributed more than \$700,000 to state and county candidates in Hawaii from November 2006 through December 2013.

Monsanto has also funded front group king Richard Berman's so-called "Center for Consumer Freedom" and the right-wing Washington Legal Foundation, among others.

Monsanto and Bayer's Troubling Past

Since 1993, CMD has closely tracked the propaganda campaigns funded by Monsanto. In 1995, CMD's



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founder John Stauber and Sheldon Rampton published *Toxic Sludge is Good for You*, which provides an in-depth overview on how corporations, including Monsanto, team up with the public relations industry to mislead the public for corporate profits.

Monsanto manufactured the majority of the world's polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs)—a dangerous chemical known for its numerous health effects—until Congress banned the product in 1976. Among the many controversial products Monsanto has marketed since then are Dichlorodiphenyl-trichloroethane (DDT), Recombinant Bovine Growth Hormone (rBGH), and Aspartame (an artificial sweetener).

(Monsanto got the increasingly controversial sweetener from the G.D. Searle corporation, which was led by Donald Rumsfeld in the 1980s before he became the head of ALEC, for a time. The Searle family fortune resulting from its products and selling off the company has been transmuted into a foundation that helps fuel the ALEC agenda, including major grants to ALEC's sister organization, the State Policy Network, and its affiliates in the states, which claim to be think tanks but which were designed to peddle the rightwing agenda of select corporations in state legislatures and state press.)

Monsanto also produced Agent Orange (known as Herbicide Orange), which was contaminated by an extremely toxic dioxin compound (2,3,7,8-Tetrachlorodibenzodioxin, or TCDD). In the 1960's and early 1970's Monsanto manufactured the product for the U.S. military as part of its herbicidal warfare program during the Vietnam War from 1961 to 1971. As a result, millions of Vietnam citizens suffered from health problems and disabilities.

Today, Monsanto is more widely known for its weed killer Roundup and its efforts to modify human food crops, like corn, to tolerate massive quantities of that herbicide. As a result, Monsanto has poured numerous resources into blocking GMO regulation at both the federal and state level.

Those regulations are very popular with consumers but loathed by Monsanto. As retired Environmental Protection Agency scientist Ray Seidler has said: "Genetically engineered food affects more than the bottom lines of the agriculture industry. The majority of genetically modified food is altered in a lab to increase tolerance to huge quantities of herbicides, or to produce its own pesticides that cannot be washed off. The public has a right to

know whether or not they are participating in the degradation of our natural environment."

But Monsanto was unable to use its financial resources to get a bipartisan group of legislators and a Democratic governor to help it block citizens' rights in Oregon.

And while Bayer's positive reputation has risen in the United States, the company has a troubling past. Bayer's parent company IG Farben profited from producing Zyklon B—the deadly gas in Nazi gas chambers in Auschwitz used to kill millions.

More recently, several lawsuits have been filed against Bayer for downplaying apparent side effects—including stroke, cardiac arrest, blood clots and gallbladder problems—for its contraceptive products Yasmin and Yaz.

If Bayer's purchase of Monsanto passes regulatory antitrust scrutiny, activists will have to contend with an even bigger foe that dominates huge portions of the pharmaceutical and chemical business with lobbying arms that are even more coordinated than before.

Jamie Corey is a researcher working on environment issues. She earned her BA in political science from Simpson College. Lisa Graves is Executive Director of the Center for Media and Democracy, the publisher of PRWatch.org, SourceWatch.org, and BanksterUSA.org.

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