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photo by John O'Kane

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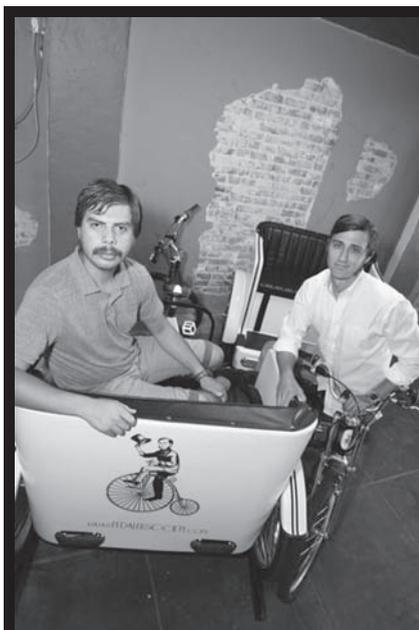
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SLOBODAN DIMITROV



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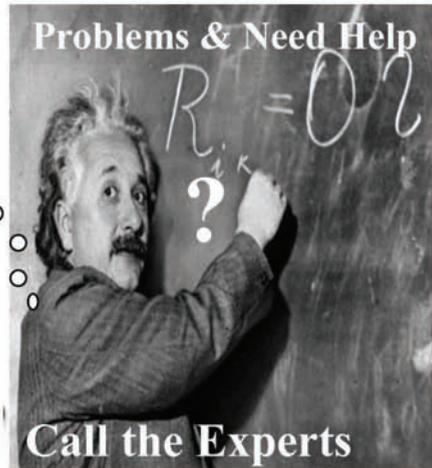
Slobodan Dimitrov is a photographer based in the Long Beach/Los Angeles Harbors. His 20 year long project on the Piledrivers can currently be seen in the lobby of Local 2375, Wilmington CA. He was selected for the Los Angeles Public Library Neighborhood Project to document the community of San Pedro for the public archives in 2000. The San Pedro photographic documentary exhibited at the Central Library in October 2001. In 2008 he received another commission from the Los Angeles Public Library to document industrial Los Angeles in the Port of LA. In July 2010, the Artist Portrait series was exhibited at Angels Gate Cultural Center. To date he has had over 130 exhibits, nationally and internationally.

He has been a contributing photographer for *The Dispatcher*, *LA Weekly*, *The Building Trades News*, *Random Lengths*. His work has appeared in *The Nation*, *Carpenter*, *Solidarity*, *SEIU*, *UNITE*, *Machinists Int.*, *America at Work*, *The Progressive*, *Los Angeles Magazine*, and *The Economist*, among many labor publications and newspapers. sdimitrovphoto.com

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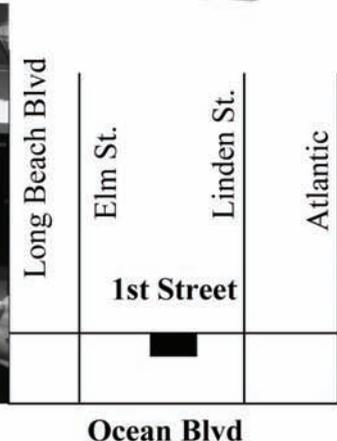
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SAVING THE RICH AND LOSING THE ECONOMY

PAUL CRAIG ROBERTS

Economic policy in the United States and Europe has failed, and people are suffering.

Economic policy failed for three reasons:

(1) policymakers focused on enabling offshoring corporations to move middle class jobs, and the consumer demand, tax base, GDP, and careers associated with the jobs, to foreign countries, such as China and India, where labor is inexpensive; (2) policymakers permitted financial deregulation that unleashed fraud and debt leverage on a scale previously unimaginable; (3) policymakers responded to the resulting financial crisis by imposing austerity on the population and running the printing press in order to bail out banks and prevent any losses to the banks regardless of the cost to national economies and innocent parties.

Jobs offshoring was made possible because the collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in China and India opening their vast excess supplies of labor to Western exploitation. Pressed by Wall Street for higher profits, US corporations relocated their factories abroad. Foreign labor working with Western capital, technology, and business know-how is just as productive as US labor. However, the excess supplies of labor (and lower living standards) mean that Indian and Chinese labor can be hired for less than labor's contribution to the value of output. The difference flows into profits, resulting in capital gains for shareholders and performance bonuses for executives.

According to *Manufacturing and Technology News* (September 20, 2011) the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages reports that in the last 10 years the US lost 54,621 factories, and manufacturing employment fell by 5 million employees. Over the decade, the number of larger factories (those employing 1,000 or more em-

ployees) declined by 40 percent. US factories employing 500-1,000 workers declined by 44 percent; those employing between 250-500 workers declined by 37 percent, and those employing between 100-250 workers shrunk by 30 percent. <http://www.manufacturingnews.com>.

These losses are net of new start-ups. Not all the losses are due to offshoring. Some are the result of business failures.

US politicians, such as Buddy Roemer, blame the collapse of US manufacturing on Chinese competition and "unfair trade practices." However, it is US corporations that move their factories abroad, thus replacing domestic production with imports. Half of US imports from China consist of the offshored production of US corporations.

The wage differential is substantial. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 2009, average hourly take-home pay for US workers was \$23.03. Social insurance expenditures add \$7.90 to hourly compensation, and benefits paid by employers add \$2.60 per hour for a total labor compensation cost of \$33.53.

In China as of 2008, total hourly labor cost was \$1.36, and India's is within a few cents of this amount. Thus, a corporation that moves 1,000 jobs to China saves \$32,000 every hour in labor costs. These savings translate into higher stock prices and executive compensation, not in lower prices for consumers who are left unemployed by the labor arbitrage.

Republican economists blame "high" US wages for the current high rate of unemployment. However, US wages are about the lowest in the developed world. They are far below hourly labor costs in Norway

(\$53.89), Denmark (\$49.56), Belgium (\$49.40), Austria (\$48.04), and Germany (\$46.52). The US might have the world's largest economy, but its hourly workers rank 14th on the list of the best paid. Americans also have a higher unemployment rate. The "headline" rate that the media hypes is 9.1 percent, but this rate does not include any discouraged workers or workers forced into part-time jobs because no full-time jobs are available.

The US government has another unemployment

The high speed Internet has made it possible to offshore many professional service jobs, such as software engineering, Information Technology, research and design. Jobs that comprised ladders of upward mobility for US college graduates have been moved offshore.

-- Paul Craig Roberts

rate (U6) that includes workers who have been too discouraged to seek a job for six months or less. This unemployment rate is over 16 percent. Statistician John Williams (Shadowstats.com) estimates the unemployment rate when long-term discouraged workers (more than six months) are included. This rate is over 22 percent.

Most emphasis is on the lost manufacturing jobs. However, the high speed Internet has made it possible to offshore many professional service jobs, such as software engineering, Information Technology, research and design. Jobs that comprised ladders of upward mobility for US college graduates have been moved offshore, thus reducing the value to Americans of many university degrees. Unlike former times, today an increasing number of graduates return home to live with their parents as there are insufficient jobs to support their independent existence.

All the while, the US government allows in each year one million legal immigrants, an unknown number of illegal immigrants, and a large number of foreign workers on H-1B and L-1 work visas. In other words, the policies of the US government maximize the unemployment rate of American citizens.

Republican economists and politicians pretend that this is not the case and that unemployed Americans consist of people too lazy to work who game the welfare system. Republicans pretend that cutting unemployment benefits and social assistance will force "lazy people who are living off the taxpayers" to go to work.

To deal with the adverse impact on the economy from the loss of jobs and consumer demand from offshoring, Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan lowered interest rates in order to create a real estate boom. Lower interest rates pushed up real estate prices. People refinanced their houses and spent the equity. Construction, furniture and appliance sales boomed. But unlike previous expansions based on rising real income, this one was based on an increase in consumer indebtedness.

There is a limit to how much debt can increase in relation to income, and when this limit was reached, the bubble popped.

When consumer debt could rise no further, the large fraudulent component in mortgage-backed derivatives and the unreserved swaps (AIG, for example) threatened financial institutions with insolvency and froze the banking system. Banks no longer trusted one another. Cash was hoarded. Treasury Secretary Paulson, browbeat Congress into massive taxpayer loans to financial institutions that functioned as casinos. The Paulson Bailout (TARP) was large but insignificant compared to the \$16.1 trillion (a sum larger than US GDP or national debt) that the Federal Reserve lent to private financial institutions in the US and Europe.

In making these loans, the Federal Reserve violated its own rules. At this point, capitalism ceased to function. The financial institutions were "too big to fail," and thus taxpayer subsidies took the place of bankruptcy and reorganization. In a word, the US financial system was socialized as the losses of the American financial institutions were transferred to taxpayers.

little fish theatre

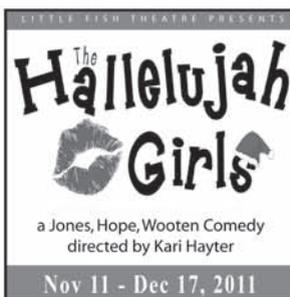
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European banks were swept up into the financial crisis by their unwitting purchase of the junk financial instruments marketed by Wall Street. The financial junk had been given investment grade rating by the same incompetent agency that recently downgraded US Treasury bonds.

The Europeans had their own bailouts, often with American money (Federal Reserve loans). All the while Europe was brewing an additional crisis of its own. By joining the European Union and (except for the UK) accepting a common European currency, the individual member countries lost the services of their own central banks as creditors. In the US and UK the two countries' central banks can print money with which to purchase US and UK debt. This is not possible for member countries in the EU.

When financial crisis from excessive debt hit the PIIGS (Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece, and Spain) their central banks could not print euros in order to buy up their bonds, as the Federal Reserve did with "quantitative easing." Only the European Central Bank (ECB) can create euros, and it is prevented by charter and treaty from printing euros in order to bail out sovereign debt.

In Europe, as in the US, the driver of economic policy quickly became saving the private banks from losses on their portfolios. A deal was struck with the socialist government of Greece, which represented the banks and not the Greek people. The ECB would violate its charter and together with the IMF, which would also violate its charter, would lend enough money to the Greek government to avoid default on its sovereign bonds to the private

banks that had purchased the bonds. In return for the ECB and IMF loans and in order to raise the money to repay them, the Greek government had to agree to sell to private investors the national lottery, Greece's ports and municipal water systems, a string of islands that are a national preserve, and in addition to impose a brutal austerity on the Greek people by lowering wages, cutting social benefits and pensions, raising taxes, and laying off or firing government workers.

In other words, the Greek population is to be sacrificed to a small handful of foreign banks in Germany, France and the Netherlands. The Greek people, unlike "their" socialist government, did not regard this as a good deal. They have been in the streets ever since.

Jean-Claude Trichet, head of the ECB, said that the austerity imposed on Greece was a first step. If Greece did not deliver on the deal, the next step was for the EU to take over Greece's political sovereignty, make its budget, decide its taxation, decide its expenditures and from this process squeeze out enough from Greeks to repay the ECB and IMF for lending Greece the money to pay the private banks.

In other words, Europe under the EU and Jean-Claude Trichet is a return to the most extreme form of feudalism in which a handful of rich are pampered at the expense of everyone else. This is what economic policy in the West has become--a tool of the wealthy used to enrich themselves by spreading poverty among the rest of the population.

On September 21 the Federal Reserve announced

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a modified QE 3. It said that the bank would purchase \$400 billion of long-term Treasury bonds over the next nine months in an effort to drive long-term US interest rates even further below the rate of inflation, thus maximizing the negative rate of return on the purchase of long-term Treasury bonds. The Federal Reserve officials say this will lower mortgage rates by a few basis points and renew the housing market.

The officials say that QE 3, unlike its predecessors, will not result in the Federal Reserve printing more dollars in order to monetize US debt. Instead, the central bank will raise money for the bond purchases by selling holdings of short-term debt. Apparently, the Federal Reserve believes it can do this without raising short-term interest rates, because back during the recent debt-ceiling-government-shutdown-crisis, the Federal Reserve promised banks that it would keep the short-term interest rate (essentially zero) constant for two years.

The Fed's new policy will do far more harm than good. Interest rates are already negative. To push them further down will have no positive effect. People aren't buying houses because interest rates are too high, but because they are either unemployed or worried about their jobs and do not see a recovering economy.

Insurance companies are making very little on their investments and consequently are unable to build their reserves against claims. So they raise premiums. The cost of a homeowner's policy will go up by more than the cost of a mortgage will decline. The cost of health and car insurance will go up. The Federal Reserve's newly announced policy will impose more costs on the economy than it will reduce.

In addition, in America today savings earn virtually nothing. Indeed, they produce an ongoing loss as the interest rate is below the inflation rate. The Federal Reserve has interest rates so low that only professionals who are playing arbitrage with algorithm-programmed computer models can make money. The typical saver and investor get hardly anything on bank CDs, money market funds or municipal and government bonds. Only high risk debt on instruments like Greek and Spanish bonds pay interest that is higher than inflation.

For four years interest rates, when properly measured, have been negative. Americans are getting by, maintaining living standards, by consuming their capital. Even those with a cushion are eating their seed corn. The path that the US economy is on means that the number of Americans without resources to sustain them will be rising. Considering the extraordinary political incompetence of the Democratic Party, the right-wing of the Republican Party, which is committed to eliminating income support programs, could find itself in power. If the right-wing Republicans implement their program, the US will be beset with political and social instability. As Gerald Celente says, "when people have have nothing left to lose, they lose it."

Dr. Roberts was Assistant Secretary of the Treasury for Economic Policy under Ronald Reagan.

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IS CAPITALISM DOOMED?

NOURIEL ROUBINI

The massive volatility and sharp equity-price correction now hitting global financial markets signal that most advanced economies are on the brink of a double-dip recession. A financial and economic crisis caused by too much private-sector debt and leverage led to a massive re-leveraging of the public sector in order to prevent Great Depression 2.0. But the subsequent recovery has been anemic and sub-par in most advanced economies given painful deleveraging.

Now a combination of high oil and commodity prices, turmoil in the Middle East, Japan's earthquake and tsunami, eurozone debt crises, and America's fiscal problems (and now its rating downgrade) have led to a massive increase in risk aversion. Economically, the United States, the eurozone, the United Kingdom, and Japan are all idling. Even fast-growing emerging markets (China, emerging Asia, and Latin America), and export-oriented economies that rely on these markets (Germany and resource-rich Australia), are experiencing sharp slowdowns.

Until last year, policymakers could always produce a new rabbit from their hat to reflate asset prices and trigger economic recovery. Fiscal stimulus, near-zero interest rates, two rounds of "quantitative easing," ring-fencing of bad debt, and trillions of dollars in bailouts and liquidity provision for banks and financial institutions: officials tried them all. Now they have run out of rabbits.

Fiscal policy currently is a drag on economic

growth in both the eurozone and the UK. Even in the US, state and local governments, and now the federal government, are cutting expenditures and reducing transfer payments. Soon enough, they will be raising taxes.

Another round of bank bailouts is politically unacceptable and economically unfeasible: most governments, especially in Europe, are so distressed that bailouts are unaffordable; indeed, their sovereign risk is actually fueling concern about the health of Europe's banks, which hold most of the increasingly shaky government paper.

Nor could monetary policy help very much. Quantitative easing is constrained by above-target inflation in the eurozone and UK. The US Federal Reserve will likely start a third round of quantitative easing (QE3), but it will

be too little too late. Last year's \$600 billion QE2 and \$1 trillion in tax cuts and transfers delivered growth of barely 3% for one quarter. Then growth slumped to below 1% in the first half of 2011. QE3 will be much smaller, and will do much less to reflate asset prices and restore growth.

Currency depreciation is not a feasible option for all advanced economies: they all need a weaker currency and better trade balance to restore growth, but they all cannot have it at the same time. So relying on exchange rates to influence trade balances is a zero-sum game. Currency wars are thus on the horizon, with Japan and Switzerland engaging in early battles to weaken their exchange rates. Others will soon follow.

Meanwhile, in the eurozone, Italy and Spain are now at risk of losing market access, with financial pressures now mounting on France, too. But Italy and Spain are both too big to fail and too big to be bailed out. For now, the European Central Bank will purchase some of their

bonds as a bridge to the eurozone's new European Financial Stabilization Facility. But, if Italy and/or Spain lose market access, the EFSF's \$627 billion war chest could be

To enable market-oriented economies to operate as they should and can, we need to return to the right balance between markets and provision of public goods. That means moving away from both the Anglo-Saxon model of laissez-faire and voodoo economics, and the continental European model of deficit-driven welfare states.

-- Nouriel Roubini

depleted by the end of this year or early 2012.

Then, unless the EFSF pot were tripled--a move that Germany would resist--the only option left would become an orderly but coercive restructuring of Italian and Spanish debt, as has happened in Greece. Coercive restructuring of insolvent banks' unsecured debt would be next. So, although the process of deleveraging has barely started, debt reductions will become necessary if countries cannot grow or save or inflate themselves out of their debt problems.

So Karl Marx, it seems, was partly right in arguing that globalization, financial intermediation run amok, and redistribution of income and wealth from labor to capital could lead capitalism to self-destruct (though his view that socialism would be better has proven wrong). Firms are cutting jobs because there is not enough final demand. But cutting jobs reduces labor income, increases inequality and reduces final demand.

Recent popular demonstrations, from the Middle East to Israel to the UK, and rising popular anger in China--and soon enough in other advanced economies and emerging markets--are all driven by the same issues and tensions: growing inequality, poverty, unemployment, and hopelessness. Even the world's middle classes are feeling the squeeze of falling incomes and opportunities.

To enable market-oriented economies to operate as they should and can, we need to return to the right balance between markets and provision of public goods. That

means moving away from both the Anglo-Saxon model of laissez-faire and voodoo economics, and the continental European model of deficit-driven welfare states. Both are broken.

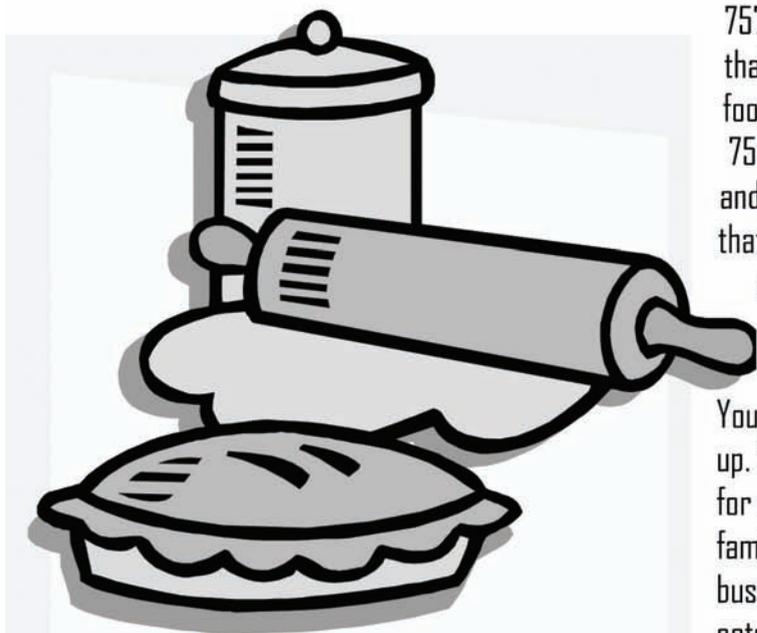
The right balance today requires creating jobs partly through additional fiscal stimulus aimed at productive infrastructure investment. It also requires more progressive taxation; more short-term fiscal stimulus with medium and long-term fiscal discipline; lender-of-last-resort support by monetary authorities to prevent ruinous runs on banks; reduction of the debt burden for insolvent households and other distressed economic agents; and stricter supervision and regulation of a financial system run amok; breaking up too-big-to-fail banks and oligopolistic trusts.

Over time, advanced economies will need to invest in human capital, skills and social safety nets to increase productivity and enable workers to compete, be flexible and thrive in a globalized economy. The alternative is--like in the 1930s--unending stagnation, depression, currency and trade wars, capital controls, financial crisis, sovereign insolvencies, and massive social and political instability.

Nouriel Roubini is Chairman of Roubini Global Economics, Professor of Economics at the Stern School of Business, New York University, and co-author of *Crisis Economics*. www.project-syndicate.org.

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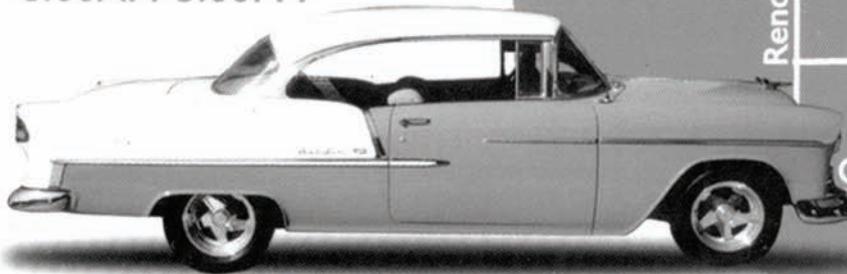
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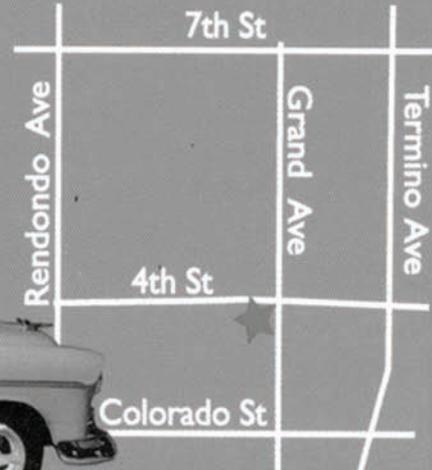
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THE PRICE OF 9/11

JOSEPH E. STIGLITZ

The September 11, 2001, terror attacks by Al Qaeda were meant to harm the United States, and they did, but in ways that Osama bin Laden probably never imagined. President George W. Bush's response to the attacks compromised America's basic principles, undermined its economy, and weakened its security.

The attack on Afghanistan that followed the 9/11 attacks was understandable, but the subsequent invasion of Iraq was entirely unconnected to Al Qaeda--as much as Bush tried to establish a link. That war of choice quickly became very expensive--orders of magnitude beyond the \$60 billion claimed at the beginning--as colossal incompetence met dishonest misrepresentation.

Indeed, when Linda Bilmes and I calculated America's war costs three years ago, the conservative tally was \$3-5 trillion. Since then, the costs have mounted further. With almost 50% of returning troops eligible to receive some level of disability payment, and more than 600,000 treated so far in veterans' medical facilities, we now estimate that future disability payments and health-care costs will total \$600-900 billion. But the social costs, reflected in veteran suicides (which have topped 18 per day in recent years) and family breakups, are incalculable.

Even if Bush could be forgiven for taking America, and much of the rest of the world, to war on false pretenses, and for misrepresenting the cost of the venture, there is no excuse for how he chose to finance it. His was the first war in history paid for entirely on credit. As America went into battle, with deficits already soaring from his 2001 tax cut, Bush decided to plunge ahead with yet another round of tax "relief" for the wealthy.

Today, America is focused on unemployment and the deficit. Both threats to America's future can, in no small measure, be traced to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Increased defense spending, together with the Bush

tax cuts, is a key reason why America went from a fiscal surplus of 2% of GDP when Bush was elected to its parlous deficit and debt position today. Direct government spending on those wars so far amounts to roughly \$2 trillion--\$17,000 for every US household--with bills yet to be received increasing this amount by more than 50%.

Moreover, as Bilmes and I argued in our book *The Three Trillion Dollar War*, the wars contributed to America's macroeconomic weaknesses, which exacerbated its deficits and debt burden. Then, as now, disruption in the Middle East led to higher oil prices, forcing Americans to spend money on oil imports that they otherwise could have spent buying goods produced in the US.

But then the US Federal Reserve hid these weaknesses by engineering a housing bubble that led to a consumption boom. It will take years to overcome the excessive indebtedness and real-estate overhang that resulted.

Ironically, the wars have undermined America's (and the world's) security, again in ways that Bin Laden could not have imagined. An unpopular war would have made military recruitment difficult in any circumstances. But, as Bush tried to deceive America about the wars'

costs, he underfunded the troops, refusing even basic expenditures--say, for armored and mine-resistant vehicles needed to protect American lives, or for adequate health care for returning veterans. A US court recently ruled that veterans' rights have been violated. (Remarkably, the Obama administration claims that veterans' right to appeal to the courts should be restricted!)

Military overreach has predictably led to nervousness about using military power, and others' knowledge of this threatens to weaken America's security as well. But America's real strength, more than its military and economic power, is its "soft power," its moral authority. And this, too, was weakened: as the US violated basic human rights like *habeas corpus* and the right not to be tortured, its longstanding commitment to international law was called into question.

In Afghanistan and Iraq, the US and its allies knew that long-term victory required winning hearts and minds. But mistakes in the early years of those wars complicated that already-difficult battle. The wars' collateral damage has been massive: by some accounts, more than a million Iraqis have died, di-

Even if Bush could be forgiven for taking America, and much of the rest of the world, to war on false pretenses, and for misrepresenting the cost of the venture, there is no excuse for how he chose to finance it.

--Joseph E. Stiglitz

rectly or indirectly, because of the war. According to some studies, at least 137,000 civilians have died violently in Afghanistan and Iraq in the last ten years; among Iraqis alone, there are 1.8 million refugees and 1.7 million internally displaced people.

Not all of the consequences were disastrous. The deficits to which America's debt-funded wars contributed so mightily are now forcing the US to face the reality of budget constraints. America's military spending still nearly equals that of the rest of the world combined, two decades after the end of the Cold War. Some of the increased expenditures went to the costly wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the broader Global War on Terrorism, but much of it was wasted on weapons that don't work against enemies that don't exist. Now, at last, those resources are likely to be redeployed, and the US will likely get more security by paying less.

Al Qaeda, while not conquered, no longer appears to be the threat that loomed so large in the wake of the 9/11 attacks. But the price paid in getting to this point, in the US and elsewhere, has been enormous--and mostly avoidable. The legacy will be with us for a long time. It pays to think before acting.

Joseph E. Stiglitz is University Professor at Columbia University, Nobel laureate in economics, and the author of *Freefall: Free Markets and the Sinking of the Global Economy*.

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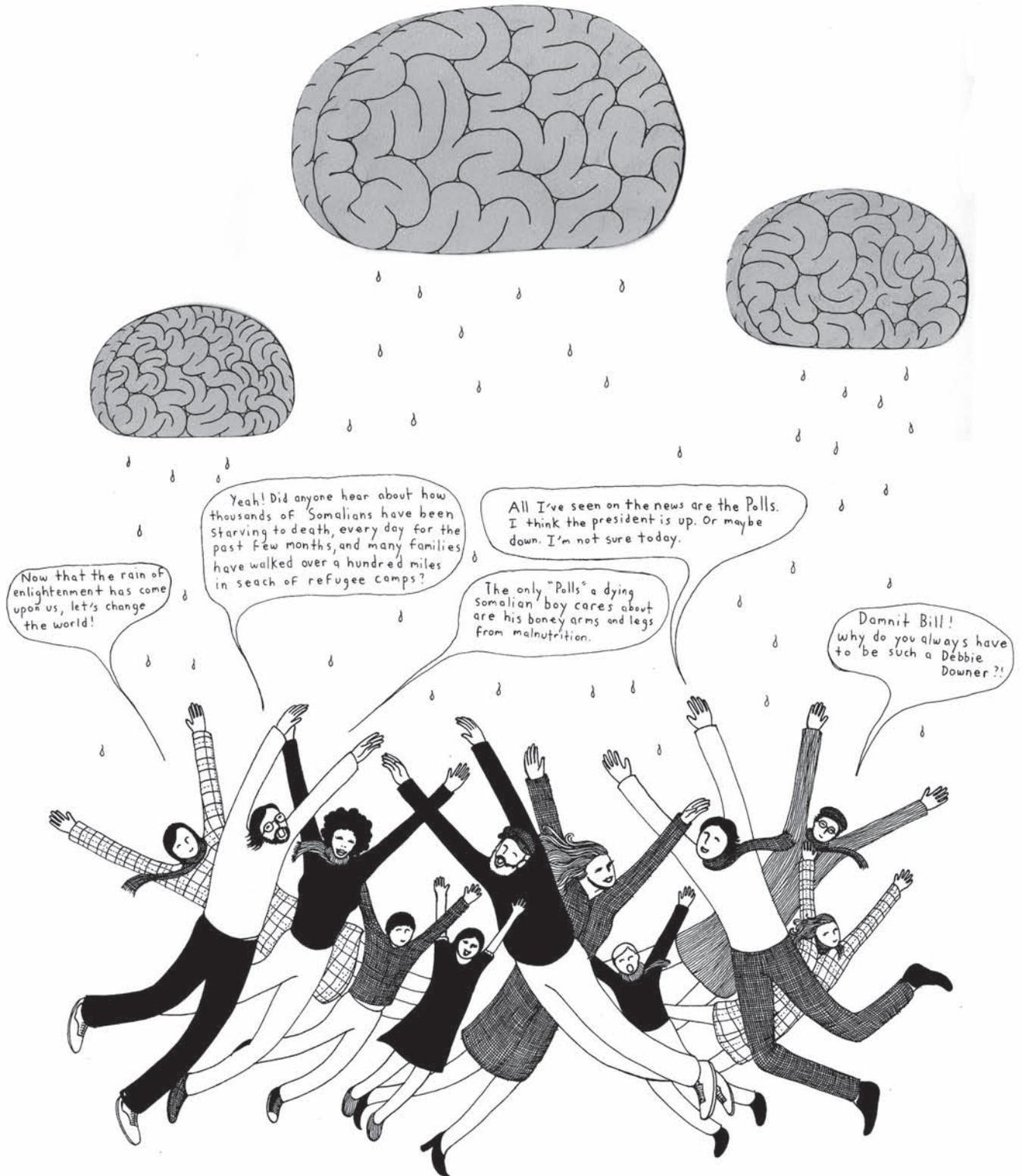
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The Day it Rained Wisdom by Dave Van Patten



MELINA PARIS
JOHN O'KANE

The recession has taken its toll on the Long Beach downtown business district. Familiar facades have become mere memories in the past few months, like Sipology at Broadway and Linden and the 4th Street Deli at 5th and Pine. "For Lease" and "For Rent" signs are the common language of hot economies where vacancies are sought and filled with folks who chase after new opportunities. But when the same vacancies remain for months, and even years, we're in the grips of a new language: the uncharted territory of the downward spiral.

Yet how long can we wait for the politicians and CEOs and city officials who command the oversized and never-failing bureaus, offices and departments to get the good times rolling again? When will the austerity cuts reach a point where the cash-rich corporations are so confident and certain in the future that they finally pump it into the accounts of eager entrepreneurs? If what some economists say is true, that a shrinking economy needs policy action that will counter its downward cycle, then as the usual suspects spin their wheels and the media hype that goes with it, how can we navigate our way against the current?

The Long Beach Pedaler Society may have an answer. In fact we glimpse it in their logo. A man who sits on a Penny-Farthing bicycle (or velocipede) has a tattoo of a sextant on the inside of his wrist, an old navigational tool used to locate the position of a ship, measure distances and navigate the way forward. This symbolizes their forward thinking.

The Society is three enterprising young guys: Joseph Bradley, Jesus Chavez and Dana Seagraves. To them the way forward, according to Joseph, means innovating in unexpected and unusual ways, and above all avoiding those of the too big to fail corporations that are more about stifling innovation than forging creative paths.

Can you push forward and help counter the downward cycle with vehicles that seem more suitable for downtown Karachi?

They're no Luddites, those anti-tech visionaries from the 19th century, though I caught a glimmer of interest in Critical Mass, the contemporary group of bicyclists that embraces strains of their philosophy. They're mostly nostalgic for the old and want to use these machines to take advantage of opportunities in the cracks of the collapse.

But these visionaries do seem motivated by something more than mere profit-taking. There's philosophy that wraps the business plan, the sense of fulfilling the idea at the core of the American Dream of building a business through your own efforts. And ethics. Joseph feels that corporations today have become too one-dimensional. Their pursuit of profit has become so important that employees are expendable.

A certain style packages their venture, an artiness missing in your freshly-minted MBA go-getters. They seem more like hip artists as fascinated with the idea of doing things as executing them. Of course they're located on the cusp of the arts district, and could very well be squatting in one of downtown Long Beach's phantom gal-

leries. Their loft on Pine is raw and unfinished, and the scattered contents are meaningfully arranged. It could be home to edgy sculptors who've molded their first pedal-powered carriages for posterity. Imagine the euphoria and energy of those early silicon valley garage startups, absent the techno-geekry and obsession with ever faster machines.

Speed, the illusion of those art progressives like Marinetti that led to endless software upgrades and traffic nightmares. The rush for these futurists will come from navigating through rush hour alongside the

creeping corvettes and hummers and UPS trucks toward Belmont Shores with relaxed passengers and secure documents...

AMASS: How did you first get interested in the idea of a cab and courier service?

LBPS: The concept behind Pedaler Society is tried and true. We mostly wanted to raise the level of professionalism in the industry. We feel that while many of the people who are employed by companies that offer these kind of services are often considered nomadic employees, it doesn't have to be that way. These folks perform an important service that we hope to upgrade. This service deserves more attention and the backing from what is considered more standard business financing. Through this

**Imagine the euphoria
and energy of those
early silicon valley garage
startups, absent the
techno-geekry and
obsession with ever faster
machines.**

-- Melina Paris & John O'Kane

focus we discovered the ability to clearly define, structure and elevate an entire industry. You might say we formed in order to fulfill the need for better organization and direction.

AMASS: Did you see a demand for these services that wasn't being satisfied through the usual channels?

LBPS: Historically the bicycle taxi business has been largely overlooked, and often criticized for its lack of organization. We feel that while many people have bypassed the whole notion of the potential for cycling as a legitimate form of organization, and especially as a people mover, there are clearly many scenarios where it can be used productively. We have found that many metropolitan markets are receptive to using a technology that was once considered obsolete. Through innovation and a re-envisioning these uses, we feel we can provide an important service in competitive situations where cars are simply no longer the answer.

AMASS: Do you see yourselves providing a more eco-friendly way to deliver these services?

LBPS: We did form out of an interest to service markets with transportation plans tailored to bicycle taxis, as I suggested. We strive to be the industry leader in the provision of these services. But there is also a huge green movement in this city and we wanted to fill a need and provide a service in the most environmentally-friendly way as well.

AMASS: Did it have anything to do with the newly-created infrastructure for bicycling from the city of Long Beach?

LBPS: We are very excited to be using the amazing infrastructure for bicycling that the city has just constructed. It has put a lot of money into this and we are eager to take advantage of the opportunity to firm up and streamline the industry.

AMASS: Are you working with the city closely, then?

LBPS: We are working closely with the policy makers and opinion leaders from the city to develop an operations plan that clearly meets the demand that they feel exists. Without the direction of local and municipal business leaders, we would mostly be guessing. Which is what this industry has done historically. Our task is to meet with municipal and business leaders in each city that we plan to operate. Through these meetings we want to learn more about our services, what's needed and what will work,

and use this information for planning our operations. Our goal is to flesh out and stress the special characteristics that each city offers. We appreciate the chance to work with Long Beach city officials, who seem progressive-minded. It is this forward thinking that the South Bay at large has embraced in developing bicycle infrastructure.

We look forward to working with all of these leaders throughout the area.

AMASS: Were there any road blocks at first in getting things off the ground?

LBPS: We had to overcome some negative imaging. This kind of business isn't exactly a typical one. But we're different from others that have tried this in the past. There were some barriers, like getting permits. But we've followed the city's cues at every turn because we want to be here long-term. We want to partner with the city, work in reciprocity with it while providing the safest product we can.

AMASS: Would you have pursued this venture without this infrastructure?

LBPS: While this infrastructure led to specific municipally-sanctioned routes and thus eased the development of routing on our part, we would have still moved forward on our own and laid the groundwork to demonstrate the need for our service and illustrate how our routes can

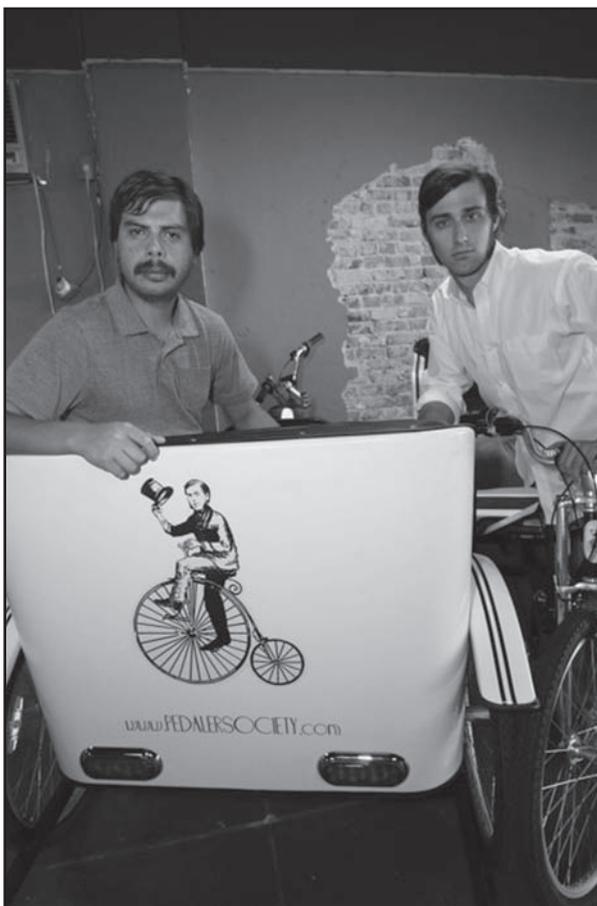


photo by Slobodan Dimitrov work.

AMASS: What are your short-term and long-term goals?

LBPS: Just getting out to the street at this point, and getting as many bikes as possible on the street. But eventually connecting all the amazing corridors in Long Beach: 4th Street, the East Village Arts District, 2nd Street and Bixby Knolls. We want to drive home the crucial importance of this form of transportation to the community's progress for residents. When visitors come here we want them to take notice as to how all of this can work and pass the knowledge on to others out there. We want to serve as ambassadors for cycling. It's about educating people. We'd like to be able to serve the community for 50 years, like the Long Beach Transit!

AMASS: Like your logo suggests, you may very well then be headed into uncharted territory!

LBPS: We welcome it! We feel we know what we're good at, and are open to responding to new challenges down the road...

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SCIENTISTS UNDER ATTACK

JEFFREY M. SMITH

“One question means one career.” This was the harsh warning of UC Berkeley Professor Ignacio Chapela for those daring to conduct independent research on genetically engineered foods and crops. “You ask one question, you get the answer and you might or might not be able to publish it; but that is the end of your career.” Both he and biologist Arpad Pusztai dared to ask questions and do the research. And then all hell broke loose.

Using stunning visuals filmed on three continents, veteran German filmmaker Bertram Verhaag’s “Scientists Under Attack” tracks the fate of these two scientists at the hands of a multi-billion dollar industry that is desperate to hide the dangers of their genetically modified organisms (GMOs). *BR Online* says of the film, “Belief in noble and incorrupt research and science is reduced to absurdity.” *Arthouse* says the “movie shows how purchased truth becomes the currency in the perfidious business between science and multinationals.” And *GMWatch* writes, “Original research showing problems with GM crops is buried under a deluge of smears and follow up studies are not done.”

The insect-killing, career-ending potato

“As a scientist looking at it and actively working on the field, I find that it’s very, very unfair to use our fellow citizens as guinea pigs.” - Arpad Pusztai, UK’s World in Action TV show

When Dr. Pusztai voiced his concerns about the health risks of genetically modified (GM) foods during a nationally televised interview in August 1998, his was not simply just another voice in a contentious debate. Pusztai was the world leader in his field, and he had received major government funding to come up with the official method for testing the safety of GM foods. His protocols were supposed to become the required tests before any new GMO entered the European market. Pusztai was an insider, and an advocate of GM foods—that is until he actually ran those tests on supposedly harmless GM potatoes.

The high-tech spuds were engineered to produce their own pesticide. “The point of the whole genetic modification experiment was to protect the potato against aphids, which are one of the major pests in Scotland,” he said. His team inserted a gene from the snowdrop plant into the potatoes, which did in fact protect the GM crop from the insects.

As part of his safety studies, he fed that insecticide producing GM potato to rats, along with a complete and balanced diet. Another group of rats ate natural potatoes. A third was fed not only the natural potatoes, but they also received a dose of the same insecticide that the GM potato produced. This way, if the insecticide was harmful, he would see the same health problems in both the group that ate the GM potatoes, and those that ate the diet spiked with the insecticide. To his surprise, only those that ate the GM potato had severe problems—in every organ and every system he looked at.

Massive health problems linked to GMOs

“After the animals were killed and dissected,” Pusztai recalled, “we found out that in comparison with the non-genetically modified potatoes, their internal organs developed differently.” The intestines and stomach lining, for example, increased in size, the liver and kidneys were smaller, and the overall rate of growth was retarded. And the immune system suffered. Pusztai emphasized, “They found in those data 36 – 36! – very highly significant differences between the GM-fed animals and the non-GM fed animals.”

Since the rats that ate the natural potatoes plus the insecticide did not have these issues, there was one obvious conclusion—the

process of genetically engineering the potatoes caused unpredicted side effects, turning a harmless food into a dangerous one.

When Pusztai saw the extensive damage that his potatoes caused in the lab animals, he also realized that if biotech companies had done the safety studies, the dangerous potatoes would have easily made it to market. He knew this because a few months earlier, he had reviewed the confidential submissions from the biotech companies which allowed their GM soy and corn onto the market. “They were flimsy,” he said. “They were not scientifically well founded.” They would never detect the changes in GMO-fed animals.

Reading the industry studies was a turning point

Peeking through these stories of personal attacks are the very real dangers of GMOs, which compel the audience to question the use of GMOs in their own diets.

--Jeffrey M. Smith

in Pusztai's life. He realized what he was doing and what the industry scientists were doing were diametrically opposed. He was doing safety studies. Companies like Monsanto, on the other hand, were doing as little as possible to get their foods on the market as quickly as possible.

Pusztai also realized that the GM soy and corn already on the market had been produced using the same process that had created his dangerous potato. Thus, the GM crops being consumed in the UK and the US might lead to similar damage in the gut, brain and organs of the entire population.

Thus, during his TV interview, Pusztai flatly stated: "If I had the choice, I would certainly not eat [GM foods] until I see at least comparable experimental evidence which we are producing for genetically modified potatoes."

Ambushed

After the TV show aired, Pusztai was a hero at his prestigious Rowett Institute, where the director praised his work to the press, calling it world-class research. After two days of high-profile media coverage throughout Europe, however, the director received two phone calls from the UK Prime Minister's Office.

"It's only when we think there was political pressure coming from the top that the situation changed," said Pusztai. "And then the director, to save his own skin, decided that the best way to deal with the situation [was] A) to destroy me, B) to make me shut up."

Pusztai was told the next morning that his contract would not be renewed, he was silenced with threats of a lawsuit, his team was disbanded, and the protocols were

not to be implemented in GMO safety assessments. And then came the attacks.

Coordinated between the Institute, biotech academics, and even the pro-GMO UK government, a campaign to destroy Pusztai's reputation was launched. They were determined to counter the negative media coverage and protect the reputation of GMOs—even if it meant promoting blatant lies and sacrificing a top scientist's career. Because Pusztai was gagged, he said, "whatever they did say on TV, radio and wrote in the newspapers, I could not deny it, I could not correct it, I could not say what was the real situation."

"The most hurtful thing of all," remembers Pusztai's wife Susan, "was that he wasn't allowed to talk to his colleagues and his colleagues were not allowed to talk to him. So whenever he entered a room, they went silent within seconds."

After seven excruciating months, a committee at the UK Parliament invited Pusztai to speak. This lifted the gag order, which allowed Pusztai to ultimately publish his research, and be interviewed for this film.

Oops—GMOs weren't supposed to be there

Ignacio Chapela had "a long-term relationship with a group of indigenous communities" in Mexico. Although GM corn was not yet legally grown in the country, Chapela decided to equip the Mexicans with a laboratory that could test for its presence, in case GMOs were eventually introduced. To help with the training, his colleague David Quist brought GM corn from the US. For the non-GM control corn, Chapela said, "we thought we should just use the local corn, which, of course, is going to be



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clean and wonderful. And the surprise came when the negative control started coming out positive. That means we started finding transgenic materials where they were not supposed to be.”

Chapela says, “The reason why our findings were so astounding was because it was thought that there was no transgenic corn being planted in Mexico at all. And people wanted it that way. . . . Why? Because Mexico is the center of origin of corn. The Mexican government was worried about maintaining the integrity of the land races.” Apparently GM corn imported as food was unknowingly being grown, and had already started contaminating the source of corn’s biodiversity.

According to Chapela the industry “had been telling the world that they really had control over these crops, that if they planted . . . transgenic corn in one field, that transgenic corn would not go anywhere else. So our discovery that we were finding transgenic corn maybe a thousand miles from the nearest legal transgenic corn field was a huge problem for them because it really showed very simply, and with real evidence, that they really did not have control.”

Chapela and Quist wrote up the finding, which was accepted for publication by the prominent journal *Nature*. This made “many people within the industry very nervous and very unhappy,” says Chapella. They “started a discreditation campaign for the paper. They did not want the paper to be published.”

Unable to stop *Nature*, however, a Monsanto PR

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company--the Bivings Group--deployed plan B. “They created two fictitious characters, two doctors,” recounts Chapela. “And these two doctors went on the internet and started spreading rumors that what we had said was false and that the paper was flawed.” The disinformation campaign went viral. It put huge pressure on *Nature*, spread the false notion that contamination had not taken place, and resulted in a campaign against Chapela by biotech advocates in his University.

“In my case,” says Chapela, “I was pushed out of the university at least three times. Every time I fought back and we managed to keep my job. But it’s been very difficult.”

Trashing scientists worldwide

The treatment of Pusztai and Chapela illustrates what happens around the world to scientists who discover harm from GM crops. The work of Russian scientist Irina Ermakova, for example, was viciously attacked, and there were repeated attempts to intimidate her: papers were burnt on her desk and samples were stolen from her lab.

Peeking through these stories of personal attacks are the very real dangers of GMOs, which compel the audience to question the use of GMOs in their own diets. Consider the impact of Ermakova’s research on young women planning to raise a family. After she fed genetically engineered soy flour to female rats, more than half of their offspring died within three weeks.

The film also unravels the claims of biotech benefits on the farm level. A visit to Brazil introduces her-

bicide-tolerant Roundup Ready soybeans, engineered to make weeding a field easier. Farmers can spray Monsanto's Roundup herbicide right on the field, and the GMOs survive. But this has led to massive overuse of Roundup, which in turn has led to the emergence of herbicide-tolerant superweeds—no longer controllable with Roundup.

A natural reaction to these stories might be to ask why isn't the government telling us the truth and protecting us. Unfortunately, they are part of the problem.

FDA cover up

The FDA scientists who reviewed GMOs in the early 1990s were uniformly concerned about their health impacts, according to attorney Andrew Kimbrell, who runs the D.C.-based Center for Food Safety. He was on the team that sued the FDA in 1998, forcing them to turn over nearly 60,000 pages of secret internal memos. Kimbrell extracts key memos from massive filing cabinets in his office, reading the scientists' warnings: toxins, nutritional problems, loss of biodiversity, change in water use, etc.

"So the scientists asked for these studies," says Kimbrell. "But the politicians at the FDA and in the administration at that time said no. They suppressed the science. And these questions, these studies, have never been done."

Instead, the US government maintains the illusion that nothing is wrong, and that this science works just as the biotech companies are telling us. This is beautifully illustrated with excerpts of biotech apologist Nina Fedoroff, the former science advisor to the Secretary of State. Her bland assurances about the safety of GMOs crumble with each new revelation in the film.

Unprecedented risks; no benefits

"No one gets up in the morning saying I want to go buy a genetically engineered food," says Kimbrell. "They offer no benefits, no more nutrition, no more flavor, no nothing. They only offer risks." He says the average rational person would ask, "Why would I buy a food that offers me no new benefits but only risks?" Kimbrell, who wrote the book *Your Right to Know*, says it was "critical for the industry to get these foods out without anyone knowing, because if they knew, they would obviously choose not to buy them."

But as Chapela's discovery of self-propagating GMO contamination illustrates, the risk of GMOs extends well beyond individual considerations. He warns, "We are manipulating life in a way that we really do not understand, we cannot control, and then we're letting it go into the environment. So it's a change that is radical, that is unprecedented, that is beyond anything we can understand, and it is irretrievable. We cannot get it back. That's my concern!"

"Scientists Under Attack" is recommended for all those who love nature, and for everyone who eats.

Jeffrey M. Smith is the executive director of the Institute for Responsible Technology. His last book is *Genetic Roulette*. ResponsibleTechnology.org.

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FOX NEWS SMEARS

MELINDA WARNER

As Fox News celebrates its 15th anniversary, here's some of the network's most outlandish smears since 2004.

Kerry Just Loves His Manicures. Loves them!

On October 1, 2004, Fox chief political correspondent Carl Cameron wrote a fake news story about Sen. John Kerry receiving a manicure before a debate and included false quotes like "Didn't my nails and cuticles look great? What a good debate!" Kerry said Friday" and "Women should like me! I do manicures," Kerry said."

The network subsequently issued a retraction and an apology. But this "stupid mistake" was not the only time Fox ridiculed Sen. Kerry for run-of-the-mill, pre-television appearance personal maintenance. Brit Hume, Bill O'Reilly, Pat Caddell, and others all similarly took the opportunity to mock Kerry following the debate.

Scientists Are Liars.

Fox News hasn't let the fact that 97 percent of the world's climate scientists agree that global warming is occurring and that human activity is very likely to blame stop them in their quest to make sure their viewers think science, facts, and reality are figments of the left's collective imagination. No, no, no. Scientists are liars, obviously, and global warming can be linked to naturally occurring phenomena. Like moon volcanoes.

Following the 2009 release of hacked emails from the Climate Research Unit at the University of East Anglia, Fox repeatedly claimed that the emails showed scientists "fudging data to make their case for global warming." The allegation was unfounded at the time and was later shown to be false by numerous inquiries. Undaunted, Fox has continued to push this mythology ever since. Fox's Stuart Varney: Emails Suggest "Scientists Are Fudging Data To

Make Their Case For Global Warming." Fox & Friends: Stolen Emails Show Scientists "Fudging," "Doctored" Data. Sean Hannity: Scientists "Were Certainly Fudging" Data. Chris Wallace: Emails Showed "Some Of The Climate Scientists Were Apparently Fudging The Numbers." Fox Reporter Kellogg: Emails Suggest Scientists Who "Believe" In Climate Change "Were Trying To Manipulate The Data." Mike Huckabee: "A Lot Of The Scientists Were Cooking Data In Order To Reach A Political, Not A Scientific Conclusion."

But Fox wasn't content to restrict the "scientists are liars" message to the University of East Anglia. Following the lead of the Heartland Institute, Fox News trumpeted the utterly baseless claim that scientists at the University of Colorado are "doctored" sea level data to "exaggerate the effects of global warming." In reality, the scientists used a standard and transparent procedure performed by other research groups around the world, and even the climate skeptic cited by Fox News objects to the implication that the group engaged in scientific wrongdoing.

Democrats Want To Kill You!

Desperate to find something, anything with which to defeat the Democrats' health care bill (because ensuring all Americans have access to quality, affordable health care is not a Fox News priority), Fox News was eager to peddle the nonsense that the bill contained a provision that elderly and sick people would face down "death panels" before obtaining approval for care. Never mind that the "death panel" provision was actually something the congressional Republicans had previously supported and was uncontroversial on its face--it simply lets Medicare reimburse patients who want to talk to their doctors about end-of life planning. No, don't mind that.

Arianna Huffington = KKK = Nazis.

In 2008, Fox News' Bill O'Reilly got himself very worked up over some reader comments on The Huffington Post. Following an article reporting on a fall that sent Nancy Reagan to the hospital, some readers posted tacky, hateful comments on the piece; O'Reilly read one that said "Like her evil husband, she has lived far too long. Here's hoping she dies

in the tub." Because the site's editor, Arianna Huffington, did not delete the comments, O'Reilly decided that made her the same as two of the most evil groups to walk the earth, saying on air: "You know, what's the difference be-

Following the lead of the Heartland Institute, Fox News trumpeted the utterly baseless claim that scientists at the University of Colorado are "doctored" sea level data to "exaggerate the effects of global warming."

--Melinda Warner

tween the Ku Klux Klan and Arianna Huffington? What's the difference?" "I don't see any difference between Huffington and the Nazis."

As disgusting as this instance is, it is not unheard of for Fox News personalities to invoke the two groups to describe progressives or progressive ideals. O'Reilly frequently likens those he disagrees with to Nazis and the KKK, including Daily Kos, Michael Moore, and Al Franken.

We Gave Them Arizona And They Set It On Fire!

The national debate over immigration has become increasingly more absurd on Fox News. In 2010, Fox News reported that the Obama Administration gave a "major strip of AZ to Mexico." The Fish and Wildlife Service quickly debunked the claim with the facts that the small area was off limits to the public while security measures were improved.

Then in 2011, Fox News ran with the rumor that a tragic Arizona wildfire had been set by undocumented immigrants. First brought to national attention by Sen. John McCain (R-AZ), Fox personalities kept the story alive even though there were few facts to support the claim. Two American citizens were found to have allegedly left a campfire unattended, causing the resulting fire.

Shariah Law Is Coming!! (Psst...Muslims Are Scary)

Fox News hosts have been fairly consistent in

their panic that Shariah law is coming to the United States. It's a very scary, and definitely very Muslim-sounding, word to them. In September 2009, Fox's Hannity dubiously claimed that Harold Koh, legal adviser to the U.S. State Department, "advocates the use of Shariah law in America." The smear continued even after Koh explicitly denied the accusations.

Then in August 2010, Hannity claimed that Imam Rauf, former Imam of Park 51, wanted to "shred our Constitution" and replace it with Shariah law. Hannity supported his claim by taking sentences out of context from Rauf's book *What's Right With Islam*. Fox News' Fox & Friends also picked up the attacks when hosting *Washington Times*' Frank Gaffney, who had previously offered the absurd charge that then Supreme Court nominee Elena Kagan was "enabling efforts to insinuate" Shariah law in the U.S.

In July 2011, the *New York Times* published a long profile that exposed just how insubstantial "creeping Shariah" conspiracy theories really are. Think that dissuaded Fox News? Think again. In fact, in August, Fox's Eric Bolling fearmongered about Sohail Muhammad, a Muslim judge appointed to the bench by New Jersey's Republican Governor Chris Christie, having "a completely objective view on American case law." Bolling promised his audience: "We'll keep our eye on" the judge. Moreover, Fox News continues to host right-wing blogger Pamela Geller, who without expertise in Islam, Islamic law or Arabic repeatedly insinuates fear over the "spread of Shariah in the United States."



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I Don't Really Believe Obama's A Socialist, But I'll Tell You He Is Anyway.

In 2008, as Fox News watched its chances of electing another Republican president diminish, they pulled out all the stops. Fox's Washington deputy managing editor Bill Sammon appeared as a guest several times to suggest then-Sen. Obama was a socialist and even sent an email to his coworkers that highlighted what he described as "Obama's references to socialism, liberalism, Marxism and Marxists." Well, lo and behold, in 2009 Sammon was a paid speaker on a cruise organized by a conservative college. During his speech Sammon said:

"Last year, candidate Barack Obama stood on a sidewalk in Toledo, Ohio, and first let it slip to Joe the Plumber that he wanted to quote, 'spread the wealth around.' At that time, I have to admit, that I went on TV on Fox News and publicly engaged in what I guess was some rather mischievous speculation about whether Barack Obama really advocated socialism, a premise that privately I found rather far-fetched."

So when Fox's Washington deputy managing editor, and one of its vice presidents, is making mischievous speculations--that he himself did not believe--about political candidates, what can be expected of the rest of the network?

You Shouldn't Watch Men Dancing.

In 2011, Fox's worldview was challenged when Chaz Bono, a transgendered man, became a contestant on



the popular *Dancing with the Stars* competition. Despite the best efforts of host Megyn Kelly, many of her coworkers recited all sorts of anti-transgender fearmongering on the "news" channel. Dr. Keith Ablow, a Fox News contributor and one of the worst offenders against the transgender community, authored a FoxNews.com column in which he commented: "It would be wrong to think that gender dysphoria cannot be kindled by celebrating those who have undergone sexual reassignment surgery." "I advise parents to not allow their children to watch the episodes in which Chaz appears." "Chaz Bono should not be applauded any more than someone who, tragically, believes that his species, rather than gender, is what is amiss and asks a plastic surgeon to build him a tail of flesh harvested from his abdomen."

FoxNews.com pulled the column from its site, but Fox News has continued to host Dr. Ablow.

Spies Tell All Their Friends That They're Spies.

In 2003, George W. Bush Administration officials leaked the identity of a CIA covert operative--Valerie Plame--to several journalists, including columnist Robert Novak. Novak subsequently printed that information in a column that sought to discredit Plame's husband, retired diplomat Joseph Wilson, who had written an op-ed disputing President Bush's claims about Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. Even though the announcement of her occupation destroyed her career as an operative, and may

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have put in jeopardy every mission she had been part of, Fox News figures and guests decided it didn't matter, with some suggesting that she had outed herself...even though she openly discussed her former position only after Novak published his column. Fox personalities continued to insist that none of their friends (and future coworkers) in the Bush Administration did anything wrong because even if Plame did work for the CIA she wasn't covert (she was).

We Don't Need Facts To Try To Destroy Progressives' Careers.

You never can tell where Fox News will go when they decide to try and destroy someone's career. They're so creative, it's quite difficult to keep up.

In 2009, then-White House Communications Director Anita Dunn received more than her fair share of attention. There was no balance to the attacks--just a relentless drumbeat of commenters using cropped video to attach her to Mao Zedong. Dunn had told graduating students that Mao and Mother Teresa were two of her "favorite political philosophers," and based on short quotes from them, she offered the advice that "you don't have to follow other people's choices and paths" or "let external definition define how good you are internally."

Fox quickly turned these comments into ammunition for attacks. Beck began by insisting that Dunn "worships" and "idolizes" "her hero" Mao Zedong. Not to be outdone, one of Fox News' so-called "straight news" programs, *Special Report*, cropped a video of Dunn to show her saying Mao is one of the "people that I turn to most." Host Sean Hannity and paid contributor Michelle Malkin

happily contributed to this line of attack, long after Dunn had left office.

Again in 2009 during the witch hunt on Obama czars, Fox News participated in the attempted destruction of Education Department official Kevin Jennings. Fox falsely accused Jennings of "encourage[ing]" and "covering up" the statutory rape of one of his students. On Sean Hannity's show, Karl Rove even falsely accused Jennings of engaging in "high-profile, in-your-face advocacy of things like NAMBLA." Hannity and numerous others called for Jennings to be fired, but since the entire attack was based on Fox News fabrications, Jennings kept his job until he chose to leave it.

Gay Marriage? Why Do People Want To Be Allowed To Marry Ducks??

The ongoing fight for marriage equality for all has been met with some ridiculous resistance from Fox News. Bill O'Reilly has warned his audience of the possible ramifications of legal same-sex marriage for gay couples: the law will lead to legal marriages between humans and goats, ducks, and dolphins. It's not hard to understand why the comparison of human marriage to bestiality is demeaning and horrible--unless, of course, you're a Fox News host.

This Guy Beck Has Some Great Ideas. Let's Give Him A Show.

In his two-year run on Fox News, Beck presented reliable, factual stories unhinged, conspiratorial smears such as: President Obama is a racist with "deep-seated ha-

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tred for white people"; the caliphate is coming; and [insert progressive's name here] is "the most dangerous man in America," "is the head of the snake," and "want to destroy" America. Not to mention his repeated comments about the looming apocalypse and that only those who listen to his advice will be ready. Also, there were costumes. And tears.

Obama Went To School At A Madrassa (Psst... Muslims Are Scary)

In January 2007, Fox News pulled out of the Internet cesspool the idea that then-Sen. Obama was raised a Muslim and received his early education in a madrassa in Indonesia. *Fox & Friends'* Steve Doocy asked: "Why didn't anybody ever mention that that man right there was raised--spent the first decade of his life, raised by his Muslim father--as a Muslim and was educated in a madrassa?"

Of course, the reason no one had ever mentioned it was that it never happened. CNN quickly and conclusively debunked the claim, visiting the school in question and determining that it was not a madrassa. In fact, the sorts of extremist schools feared by Fox did not begin to appear in Indonesia until 12 years after Obama moved away. Of course.

Powerful Women Should Know Their Place. Progressive Ones, That Is.

Fox News has never been a bastion of feminism. So imagine their constant consternation at the powerful specter of former Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi. Not afraid to attack everything from her appearance to her femininity to her intelligence, Fox News has taken

every opportunity to get in a sucker punch. Comments from Fox personalities include: Dennis Miller Called Pelosi A "Shrieking Harridan Magpie." Bill O'Reilly: "Even Nancy Pelosi Can Figure This Out." O'Reilly: Pelosi "Can't Blink With All The Stuff She's Got In Her Forehead." Glenn Beck Would Give Pelosi "Man Of The Year." "Where She Belongs." Sean Hannity Agreed With Guest That Pelosi "Should Be Home" With "Tea, Crumpets--Back In San Francisco." Sarah Palin: "In The Words Of Dennis Miller" Pelosi's Explanation Of Health Care Waivers "Are A Tight-Faced Lie."

WHAT IN THE WORLD IS THIS NEW FAN-GLED HIGH FIVE?!?!

Fox News' *America's Pulse* host E.D. Hill was evidently confused about a fist bump shared by the Obamas on stage just before Barack Obama's acceptance speech upon becoming the Democratic nominee for president. She decided the minor gesture on an otherwise eventful day first needed an entire segment of her show (during which the various forms of human congratulatory actions were dissected), and second needed to be introduced with the comment, "A fist bump? A pound? A terrorist fist jab? The gesture everyone seems to interpret differently." These kids today. Congratulating each other with fancy high fives. Even Fox News employees don't know how to deal. Hill lost her show within a few days after apologizing on air, saying "I certainly didn't mean to associate the word 'terrorist' in any way with Senator Obama and his wife."

Melinda Warner is a columnist for MediaMatters.org.

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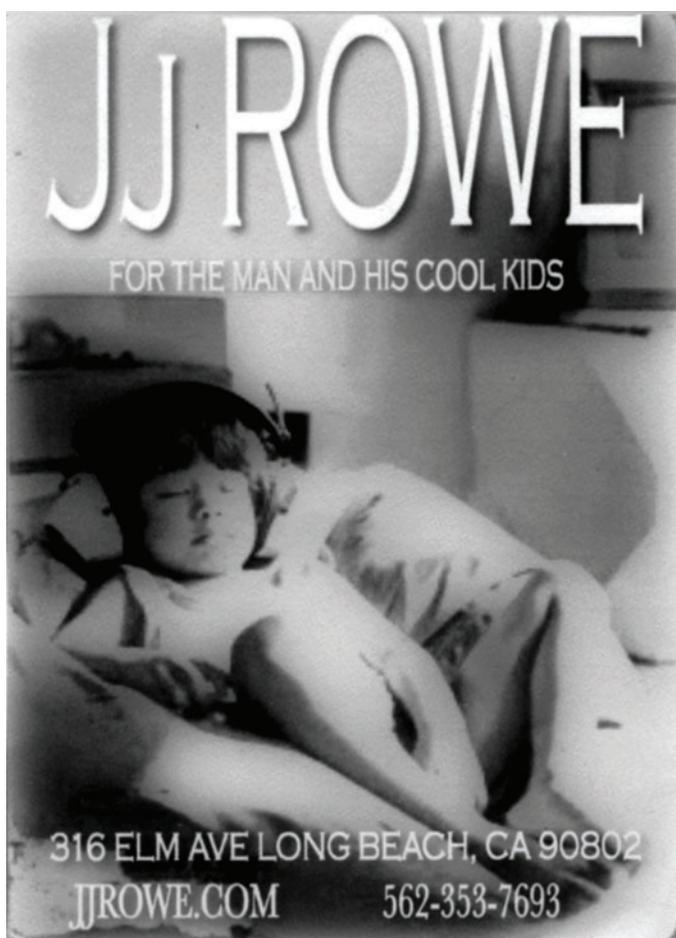
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MORAL CLARITY OF OCCUPY WALL STREET

ROBERT BOROSAGE

Once Occupy Wall Street demonstrations started to sweep across America, the mainstream media began to pay attention--and sounded a chorus of criticism. The movement was disorganized; it had no agenda. It wasn't organized like the Tea Party. Fox News trotted out ace reporter Geraldo Rivera--really--to charge that European anarchists, paid illegal aliens, and out and out leftists were behind the innocent kids. Herman Cain led disapproving Republicans, calling the movement "un-American," when he should have been celebrating what it was doing for pizza sales.

Virtually everything said about this movement is wrong. Stand back; take a clear look. Every politician should understand one thing: this is coming at you and you must decide. Whose side are you on?

1. Moral clarity

Occupy Wall Street has no policy agenda, but it has utter moral clarity. The demonstrators have built an island of democracy in the belly of Wall Street. The bankers looking down on them would be on the street had not taxpayers bailed them out. And now they are confronted with students sinking under student debt with no jobs, homeowners who are underwater and can't find mortgage relief, workers desperate for work.

No one is confused about the message. Wall Street got bailed out; Main Street was abandoned. The top 1% rigs the rules and pockets the rewards. And 99% get sent the bill for the party they weren't even invited to.

2. Non violent discipline

That moral clarity was dramatized when the demonstrators stayed disciplined in the face of police provocation, including pepper spray in the face. The movement did not begin to sweep the country until people saw the police protecting

Wall Street's banksters by assaulting peaceful protestors. Suddenly this wasn't a disorganized, rag tag gathering. These were citizens under attack for exercising their rights. That struck a powerful moral chord.

3. A Rising Protest

Across the country, people have responded to this clarity. Unemployed kids rallied to their side. White-collar workers stopped by for lunch. Suburbanites came in to share. On Wall Street, Liberty Square became a tourist center.

Unions and national progressive organizations marched in sup-

the summer as thousands turned up at town meetings and sobered legislators with their demand for jobs, not cuts. *The Washington Post* suggested that unions and national organizers were resentful of Occupy Wall Street, but in fact most were buoyed by the energy unleashed, the moral challenge posed.

4. Political Steamroller

Pundits dismiss Occupy Wall Street for not having a clear agenda. They are told to turn their protests into political demands. Some offer suggestions of what they should advocate--"infrastructure investment" says Paul Krugman, a speculation tax on banks, home mortgage relief. The press wonders if Occupy will become the left-wing Tea Party and run candidates in elections, as if left-wing Koch brothers were orchestrating the protests.

But this is silly. Occupy Wall Street is already a political steamroller. Without an agenda, without an electoral operation, without a slate of candidates, if it continues to grow, it will force every national politician to decide whose side he or she is on. Are you with the banks or with the 99%? And prove it. Reporters will insure the question gets posed; voters will be interested in the answer.

Occupy Wall Street is already a political steamroller. Without an agenda, without an electoral operation, without a slate of candidates, if it continues to grow, it will force every national politician to decide whose side he or she is on.

--Robert Borosage

port, without pretending to speak for the demonstrators. For progressives, this surge of protest began building months ago, when thousands of people rallied to take over the capitol building in Madison, Wisconsin to protest Gov. Scott Walker's attempt to crush worker rights. It built over

This is a question that discomfits the White House, as Vice President Joe Biden admitted, since the administration bailed out the banks without reforming them. It is a question that exposes Republicans--particularly Tea Party Republicans--the ersatz populists who brayed against the bank bailout in the election, and then have

worked tirelessly to roll back any reforms, gut the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, and reopen the financial casino. It is a question, as the demonstrators show, not simply about the banks. The demonstrators demand action on jobs. And they want Wall Street to pay us back--not cuts in Medicare or student loans or schools.

And these challenges are likely to grow more stark. Mass unemployment is continuing. More and more Americans are losing their homes. More kids are graduating from school into the worst jobs scene in decades. Big banks are in increasing legal and financial peril for their pervasive fraud and abuses in the housing bubble. Independent Attorneys General like New York State's Eric Schneiderman have launched investigations. Investors are collecting on lawsuits.

If this economy continues to stagnate or slow, which seems increasingly likely, banks like Bank of America are going to be looking for another bailout. And once more, every national politician, from the president on down, will have to decide

whose side they are on.

5. It's Only Just Begun

No one can predict what happens to Occupy Wall Street, but the public protests have just begun. When the Civil Rights Movement took off,

it too faced many of the same criticisms. It had too many demands. Its priorities were unclear. Did it want only to overturn legal segregation? Why was King going to Chicago? Why was he talking about poverty, and not just about equal rights? How



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But King wasn't the only voice. There were competing and complementary centers of power. There were lawyers and lobbyists. Students in SNCC chafed at King's caution. Black power challenged integration. Riots shook the country.

Movements aren't tidy. They aren't organized. They unleash energy. They inspire ordinary people to leave their daily routines and do extraordinary things. They inspire; they insult; they mortify. They disrupt business as usual. And if they touch a chord, they grow, and they force politicians and citizens to decide.

Historically, when America has reached the levels of extreme inequality and corruption that it now witnesses, popular movements arise to demand change. The populist movements of the late 19th century took on the Robber Barons. Unions, left parties, Huey Long and his "every man a King" movement pushed Roosevelt from the left in the 1930s. And now, even as pundits were wondering where the left was, the eruption is beginning again.

Will this movement be a factor in the 2012 elections? It already is. Will it make clear demands? It already has. Whose side are you on? Wall Street or kids in the street? The

top 1% or the 99%? It doesn't get clearer than that.

Robert Borosage is founder of www.ourfuture.org.

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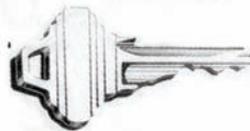


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PRIVATIZING EDUCATION

ROBERT D. SKEELS

On September 14, 2011 former Gates Foundation executive and Broad Superintendents Academy graduate John Deasy gave a much ballyhooed speech at Occidental College. While I may have time in the future to critique his mendacious stream of business-speak, which amounted to a clever corporate couching of school privatization in the language of “civil rights,” it was his aloof response to an attendee’s pertinent question on school libraries that deserves an immediate response. Here’s a quote from an attendee who endured Deasy’s verbal assault on public education:

“[O]ne of Rosemary’s questions about his shutting school libraries got through. He said libraries would be irrelevant soon as books will move to electronic format. This was after he lamented about the plight of a homeless student living in a tent. I kid you not. I guess the kid in the tent will have to access books on the \$800 I-Pad he can’t afford.”

A pointed and poignant question indeed to Los Angeles Unified School District’s (LAUSD) Superintendent John Deasy, a man who deliberately gutted LAUSD’s libraries in defiance of California’s Assembly Bill 114, which was supposed to mandate the district spend its copious surplus funds on retaining the very personnel Deasy and company gleefully laid off in a most ignominious fashion by the way. Deasy’s vapid and vacuous response to the library question sums up everything about corporate education reforms and shows why Deasy was hand selected to implement the neo-

liberal agenda in Los Angeles.

As disgusting as Deasy’s quote about libraries being irrelevant was, it wasn’t surprising considering his astonishing wealth and privilege. For wealthy white males like Deasy, poverty is something you see on television and it’s easily solved by applying forms of the meritocracy myth via vile “no excuses” rhetoric and corporate privatization policies cloaked as promoting “high expectations.” Deasy’s own phrasing of the threadbare right-wing no excuses rhetoric reads as follows: “I actually believe that no other issue—circumstances of poverty, one parent, no parent, race, language proficiency, special need—none of that has a greater affect on the

thinking and policies exacerbate the inequality of access to books in a way that is both classist and racist. A brief, but fact-packed essay by Stephen Krashen--author of *Schools Matter*--entitled “Kindelization: Are Books Obsolete?” patently disproves everything Superintendent Deasy claims. Let’s look at some of the important facts in the essay.

According to Krashen, data shows that “ebooks appear to be capturing some of the paperback book market, but certainly not all of it, and not the hard cover or tradebook market. Thus far ebooks make up only a tiny percentage of total school library collections.” In other words, while ebooks are making inroads in the

profitable popular paperback sector, there hasn’t been a great deal of investment in the more costly and lower volume textbook and hardcover sectors. As a consequence “ebooks only account for one-half of one percent of school library collections, and this is predicted to increase to only 7.8% in five years.”

It isn’t just that ebooks aren’t widespread enough to be considered a suitable replacement for school libraries. It’s that access to ebooks is strictly class based. The

problem is the expense. Right now, only higher-income readers can afford ebook readers and ebooks. Kindles, for example, cost at least \$100 each, and ebooks cost about \$10, beyond the budget for those living in poverty.

In a state where the ratio of students to librarians is nearly 5,500 to 1, Deasy’s outright dismissal of the importance of libraries and books, combined with policies that exacerbate the problem, throws into clear relief his role in the neoliberal dismantling of public education.

--Robert D. Skeels

achievement gap than our belief about the ability of youth.”

More to the point, Deasy’s flippant remark that electronic format books would soon replace libraries has no grounding in reality. Such

A table in Krashen's essay shows that only four percent of people with household incomes under \$30,000 own ebook-readers, and that percentage remains constant for the nineteen months prior to publication of this essay. Krashen's conclusion is equally revealing. The cost of ebook readers and ebooks makes them much less available to students from high-poverty families and under-funded school libraries (And it is usually not possible to share ebooks). Ebooks are allowing the print-rich to get even print-richer.

It isn't surprising that people who get doctoral degrees from Cracker Jack boxes, or worse, and purchase them from convicted criminals like Robert Felner in exchange for six figure grants, might be unaware of such research. More cynical readers might be tempted to suspect Deasy's deep ties to monopolistic software moguls like Bill Gates and technobabble charlatans like Tom Vander Ark as possible explanations for his

intentional razing of school libraries in favor of profitable, but income exclusive, ebooks. Those things said, one would like to think the head of one of the largest school districts in the country would have a grasp of the basic fundamentals surrounding pedagogical issues and would be immune from pandering to his deep pocketed associates. Given the frightening lack of capacity of California's schools, outlined in "The Train That is About to Hit," published by the Institute for Democracy, Education, and Access (UCLA), Deasy's notion of "let them eat ebooks" borders on criminal.

Research emphatically refutes Deasy's assertion that "libraries would be irrelevant soon as books will move to electronic format." In a state where the ratio of students to librarians is nearly 5,500 to 1, Deasy's outright dismissal of the importance of libraries and books, combined with policies that exacerbate the problem, throws into clear relief his role in the neoliberal dismantling of public

education. Of course that's Deasy's capacity, he wasn't brought in by the Broad/Gates/Walton Triumvirate to fix LAUSD. He was brought in to destroy it. Collectively we need to reject Deasy's false narrative and demand he spend our funds on libraries and classrooms, not he and his fellow administrators' lavish lifestyles. Collectively we need to fight the privatization of public education!

Krashen's writings can be found at www.sdkrashen.com/articles/kindelization.pdf.

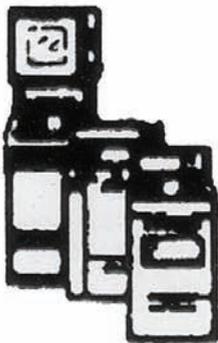


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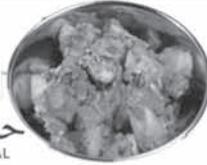


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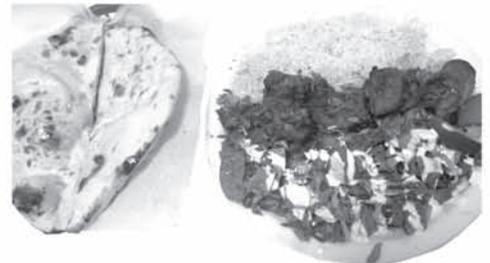
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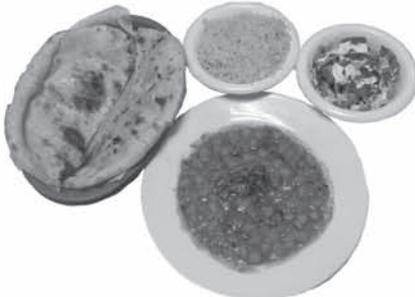
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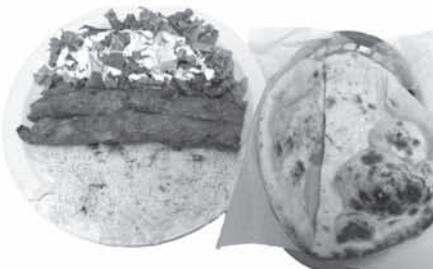
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MELINA PARIS

Entering the little white house on 3rd Street just off Alamitos Avenue in Long Beach, you are instantly presented with hospitality. This little house feels like home yet it's a small and thriving restaurant called Steamed. Walk inside and you are greeted warmly by the personable team behind the counter or the always cheerful and gracious Stephanie Carlough, who opened Steamed with her husband Bryan in April.

From the vintage picture-framed quotes on the walls celebrating vegetarianism by the likes of Einstein and Tolstoy, to the thick wooden tables and pitchers of cucumber or lemon water there for the taking, books placed on shelves next to your dining space and local artists' pictures on display, you really are at home. As you enter Steamed the aroma of home cooked food though is the sensory tonic that immediately envelops you.

All offerings are organic and the restaurant receives fresh produce daily from various local farms. The menu is small, favors Mexican fare and salads and offers many choices and variations. They have no problem modifying a dish to your liking; the mark of a smart and conscientious restaurateur.

Two of us chose the Mediterranean Quesadilla. It is served with either black or pinto beans and a choice of Jasmine or Basmati rice. This item was among the offerings which seemed to contain the most varied ingredients. It includes steamed spinach, melted Feta cheese, walnut based pesto, tomatoes, cucumbers, Kalamata olives, and red onion with the option of whole wheat, white or corn tortillas. This dish was robust in flavor and the olives really jazzed it up. I ordered mine without the tortilla or cheese and chose to combine the two bean choices, since each sounded very delectable. So it was served to me as a "quesadilla in a bowl." Voilà,

I loved it! The idea to combine the beans offered an enhanced mingling of tastes.

My friend had hers with the whole wheat tortilla and Jasmine rice. At her suggestion we topped our quesadillas with the green salsa we were served to give it that refreshing Greek feeling of zest and tang. What a great idea that was. This condiment is made fresh daily and you can get it mild, medium or hot. For those who like it hot and full of flavor you're in the right place. The base ingredients are cilantro, parsley, garlic, jalapeño, lemon, salt and tomato. To increase the heat they layer 1, 2 or 3 different types of seasonal chili into the salsa. You can actually taste *each* of the ingredients in this salsa; it's amazing. Choose thoughtfully but no matter what the choice, your taste buds will be invigorated.

My two other companions both had the Wilted Spinach Salad. It comes with gently steamed spinach, melted Feta, walnuts, and is topped with Mediterranean cucumbers, tomatoes and red onions on a bed of rice. As one friend commented, the cheese melts really well with the spinach because of the under bed of rice which also makes this dish truly a *meal*.

Served with our meal were glasses of flavored water in lavender mint, crisp and refreshing to your palate, and watermelon orange, delicately sweet and quenching. You can bring your own beer or wine if you choose, but they will soon be serving organic, locally made beers and wines. I am quite certain the spirits will be just as distinctively pleasant as their food.

Since this was a special event, what better

reason to finish our meal than with ice cream. This treat is supplied by a local artisan, *Ice Cream for Crow*. It's vegan-friendly with a cashew base so it still has a creaminess to it. A wide variety of flavors are offered, depending on what is popular and what has been freshly prepared that week. We requested two kinds: Coconut Pineapple--very tropical and refreshing like a Piña Colada; and a flavor we hadn't heard of before, Lacuma. We were told by Eileen, the restaurant's "ice cream lady" who happened to be there, that this is a South American super food, extremely high in antioxidants and polyphenols. It tastes like a chocolate, caramel and coffee blend, rich but interestingly light at

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the same time. Very good. None of us could stop eating Lacuma! Likely stoked from our wine we swiftly got into a spirited discussion of potential ice cream blends to try, hearing gossip of other combinations that haven't gone over so well.

At Steamed they work hard to please their customers and support the local business community. All of the items such as dishware, utensils and glasses have been purchased through local Thrift stores and garage sales. They compost everything and have it picked up and taken to local gardens. Customers can purchase anything they sell on the menu for their own use at home. If you don't have time to hit the market after your delicious meal you can purchase garlic, lemons, fresh basil and more to take home with you. They want to be a Venue Outlet for local farmers. In conveniently providing locally farmed fresh produce for the public to purchase they extend the practice of eating local and supporting community gardens and farms beyond their doors, thereby sharing the gift of pure and healthy food for everyone.

Steamed happens to be the go to place for locals who don't generally care to eat out; something patrons often mention to Stephanie. If you're craving a nourishing home cooked meal but don't want to cook, this is your place. They held their official grand opening in August, a magnificent event that featured a robust buffet. At 7 PM about 50 guests were present, and by 8:30 there must have been three times that number. This serves as a good indication of things to come for the little white house on 3rd street.

They appear to have the recipe for success. Dining at Steamed is an experience in the enjoyment and bounty of wholesome, well-prepared food that is literally alive with flavor and goodness. But it is also a warm and welcoming atmosphere where you are well taken care of. Add in their support of local artisans, vendors and Thrift stores, and their highly sustainable business practices such as composting and purchasing from local farms, and you have the ingredients for an exciting new business model.

"It is my view that the vegetarian manner of living by its purely physical effect on the human temperament, would most beneficially influence the lot of mankind." - Albert Einstein

Steamed is located at 801 E. 3rd Street in Long Beach. Hours: Sunday 12-5 PM, Monday-Thursday 11:30-8:30, Friday and Saturday 11:30-9:30. You can also find them on Yelp.

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LONG BEACH MUSIC SCENE: PANTHER HEART

GREGGORY MOORE

They have only a few songs recorded, and they're hard to catch live, but Panther Heart is nonetheless one of the more interesting audiovisual acts in the LBC, a project Christopher Lyles founded to conflate his auditory and visual art-making.

The first Panther Heart show took place at Koos in 2008 and featured Lyles solo on looped lines of harp (his primary instrument) and accordion, the music complemented by his paintings and projections.

But the project was destined not to remain a solo venture, as friends in the Long Beach music scene took enough of an interest to come on board, which evolved the music into a more elaborate—though still pretty much whisper-quiet—sound.

That changed somewhat ear-

lier this year, when Panther Heart emerged from a sort of hibernation for a show at Zephyr Vegetarian Café with an expanded lineup—including Lisa Narinian (glockenspiel and more) of Lowly Lisa and the Rollie Pollies, Jose Serna (guitar) and Pam Gartner (keys) of The Clouds, Pat Whatley (guitar), and Guillermo Gomez (cello)—and a broader, at times even muscular sound that nods in the direction of Sigur Rós, as well as the most expansive visual element the project has yet produced.

"It takes us a while to plan a show because it's very conceptual," says Lyles. "We're trying to create an experience."

That experience is fixing to find its greatest breadth and immersion yet, as Panther Heart works deliberately but diligently on its first full-length, *Panther Heart Defeats the Dire Wolf*, as well as the overture EP that will appear first, *Panther Heart and the Legend of the River Ghost*.

The story of the EP and full-length is set in an ancient forest, where a traveler who drifts into

the wrong territory is drowned by its residents. His pained spirit becomes trapped in the river, and a wolf who drinks from the waters imbibes the man's spirit and is driven to murderous madness. "It's about interpersonal relationships," says Lyles, "in that sometimes we do really hurtful things to each other that get passed on from person to person."

Accompanying the records and the live shows that go with them will be a film and an installation piece. "I'm excited [that] now I don't feel I'm cheating on my music or cheating on my visual art," Lyles says. "We've finally found a balance, and Panther Heart [now better] serves its original purpose."

It's still a while yet until the records drop, but in the meantime Panther Heart can be found doing the occasional show, and a smattering of recordings are available. Right now Facebook is your best bet to hear the music and to keep abreast of their shows, as their official Website (pantherheart.com) is under construction.

"We don't play a lot," Lyles



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says. "I don't really like to think of us as a band; we're more of a project. ... I can never see us playing at [e.g.] Alex's Bar. We have to make sure that we don't play a show just to play. ... And I think people who come need to be coming for us and know what they're in for. Otherwise they might not have the patience for us."

Whether patience is always a virtue is debatable, but in the case of Panther Heart, there's no question.



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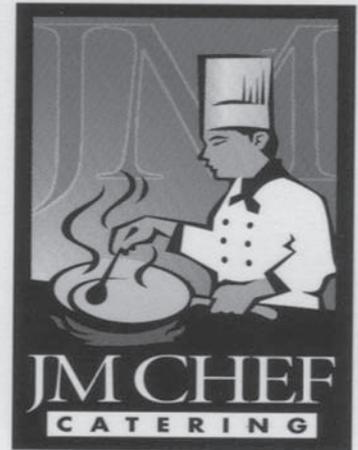
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