

BULLSHIT BRIGADE: NOW WITH MORE NYT BULLSHIT [ACTION ITEM INCLUDED]

The New York Times editorial board pumped out another “Dems in disarray” piece, just in time to cover for some obstructive and intransigent centrists. This is my unending surprised face.

THE VERY GLOBALIZED FORCES MANIPULATING THE ANTI-GLOBALIST PRESIDENT

Donald Trump has generated the support of angry white voters by claiming to oppose “globalists,” a racialized term for the downsides of globalization. But in reality, the friendly and adversarial oligarchs behind Trump’s policy choices are using the tools of globalization to purchase influence over him.

THE SLOW DEATH OF NEOLIBERALISM: PART 4C CONCLUSION

Control the capitalists or they control you.

THE SLOW DEATH OF NEOLIBERALISM: PART 4B

Neoliberal theories are great for elites but they are cruel to the rest of us, and they make us worse people.

THE SLOW DEATH OF NEOLIBERALISM: PART 4A THE NATURE OF THE PERSON

Corporations are the perfect person in neoliberal theory. The elites see themselves as the best because they were selected by the market, Naturally they should rule the world.

WHAT BECOMES OF THE BROKENHEARTED DEMS AND CLICKBAIT COMPLICIT MEDIA WHO GOT US HERE?

Will Rogers very famously said:

| "I am not a member of any organized

political party. I am a Democrat.”

That was made sometime in the 1930's I think, but it is enduringly true.

So, where will the Democratic party go now that they have had their ass handed to them by Trump? Who will lead the Democratic party going forward?

The calls are already ringing out. Liz Warren! Bernie Sanders! Keith Ellison (Sanders has even issued an email ask as to Ellison)! But there is a serious money people and Clintonian push for Howard Dean. Which is truly mind numbing.

Howard Dean is moldy cheese that needs to be taken out with the next non-recycle trash dump. He did neither himself, nor the party, any favors in the 2016 election clownshow cycle. Seriously, in the 2016 election cycle, Sarah Palin may have been more reserved and credible than Howard Dean.

Dean's 50 state op got Obama elected in 2008, but he is smelly garbage now. Screw this always retread manure. Dean needs to dry up and go away.

And the Democratic Party needs to extricate their head from their ass and move to the future.

New blood. Dems CANNOT be the same old constantly revanchist assholes every time they lose bigly. And, boy did they lose bigly.

The Dem go to kleptomaniacs like Debbie Wasserman Schultz and Rahm Emanuel not only did not help the party expand but set it back in serious ways in places like MO, KS, AZ and the entire United States.

And, while we are at it, the high holy "Senator Professor Warren" ain't immune either. She had a moment and a shot, and she cowardly whiffed. Maybe it is something she just truly did not want, and, if so, fine. But don't tell me that someone that is little more than a year younger

than Hillary, and who consciously forfeited both her, and Bernie's, shot in 2016, will be the Democratic holy savior in 2020.

Don't do that. This is the same ignorant reset idiocy that got Democrats here today. That time is done. If Democrats do one thing ever, it ought be to build the bridge for the young's of the United States to clean up the shithole we left them. Liz Warren and Bernie Sanders can be a huge part in doing that. But only as bridge builders, not as the man or woman who will be the avatar in 2020. We need them terribly, but not themselves as the embodiment of the future. That kind of thinking is the idiocy of the past.

There is a future. Although CNN's Jeff Zucker and Trump/Breitbartism's Steve Bannon are brothers in clickbait cuck arms that birthed, literally, President Trump, and will not easily give up their money raking news cycles.

The "new normal" is that CNN, MSNBC, NBC, CBS, ABC, New York Times, Washington Post, and an endless roll call of dying, wimpering subservient media jackasses, who rode Trump's clickbait train to a place in hell, will find it's new Stockholm Syndromed place and start lecturing us how it is all good and just a "function of normal democracy". It is already occurring, just watch any Wolf Blitzer on CNN or Chris Matthews on MSNBC moment. They are getting climax happy legs on Trump and Giuliani fascism as we speak.

That is one vision, and the early reality, of what the "press" will do in the coming Trump Presidency. The competing vision, which is what I hope and ascribe to, is that the media extricates their heads from their asses and brings real scrutiny to try to mitigate the hell they helped gestate. Are there enough Brian Stelters and Jay Rosens to get us there?

The brokenhearted Dems have some serious soul searching to engage in. So do the currently unapologetic and furiously rationalizing media and "pundits" who so helped get us here.

"Balanced" is NOT fair. Honest is fair. Accurate is fair. Truth is fair. Putting on panels of bickering loud mouthed bought and paid for political assholes as "news coverage" is NOT fair. Nor is it "balanced" news. Jeff Zucker makes Roger Goodell look like a piker in terms of the pantheon of American assholes.

While the media, especially cable, has a circle jerk field day congratulating themselves over their "wall to wall coverage", and "looking forward to the transition", just remember how the Trumpism and fascism germinated. Not shockingly, it germinated the same way it always has. When the gatekeepers of a rational society become more about themselves and their money than their jobs representing society.

There is a lesson here, too, for the Dems in media interaction. You got played and hosed royally. Don't be the brokenhearted, be the, for once, party that learns from its mistakes and failures, and does better.

Just once, do this. If you can.

UPDATE: Commenter GK James posted something below that I think crystallizes much of what I was trying to say far better than I did, even if from a slightly different perspective.

Sure, but doesn't that effectively absolve the demos that does the choosing? Aren't Democrats up against a larger problem, one that they've had to wrestle with since Reagan? How do you advocate a progressive worldview when the majority of an aging, increasingly atomized, entertainment-addicted population doesn't want that? It's easy enough to say, after the fact, that Clinton should have focused more on those disadvantaged by globalization, or that, had they only chosen Sanders, the Democrats would have won. But recall that, without moving to the center, Bill Clinton would never have made it. A lousy bargain in retrospect, but not a

crazy one at the time.

Yes, the DNC needs new blood. But assuming someone is found who can articulate a crisp clear message of what Democrats stand for—and who's telegenic, personable, and entertaining to boot—how would that change the stranglehold that Republicans have on state governments, state legislatures, and the US Congress? The clear majority likes the status quo, having no problem with gerrymandered districts, voter suppression, or bought-and-paid-for legislators who enjoy an incumbency rate of 90%+. And the infotainment complex is likely to help keep it that way by making sure that its customers are never overtaxed by complicated thoughts. There will still be people, adults, who read, think, and have constructive ideas about matters of public import, which they'll express in complete sentences. But they'll be increasingly outnumbered and marginalized in a Twittered world.

Can't argue with that, and don't know the answers to the questions. But the Democratic party, if it is to continue (and I think it must), has to start finding those answers quickly.

IN LATEST RUSSIAN PLOT, WIKILEAKS REVEALS HILLARY OPPOSES ISDS

The Intelligence Community is still not willing to say that WikiLeaks is a Russian agent. Which

makes sense, because some files in recent leaks have countered the claimed Russian narrative about Hillary.

9/11: A STORY OF ATTACKS, HORROR, VICTIMS, HEROES AND JINGOISTIC SHAME

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, 2001 is now 15 years in the mirror of life. Like the two Kennedy assassinations, the Moonshot and a few other events in life, it is one of those “yeah I remember where I was when...” moments. Personally, being on west coast time, I was just waking up thinking all I had was a normal morning court calendar. When my wife, who gets up far earlier than I, shouted at me to rub out the cobwebs and watch the TV because something was seriously wrong in New York City. She was right. It was a hell of a day, one of unspeakable tragedy and indescribable heroism. It was truly all there in one compact day, unlike any other, save maybe December 7, 1941.

2,996 people lost their lives, and their families and history were forever altered in the course of hours on an otherwise clear and beautiful day in Manhattan. Most were simply innocent victims, but many were the epitome of

heroes who charged into a hellscape to try to salvage any life they could. There were other heroes that altered their lives in response, and either died or were forever changed as a result. One was a friend of mine from South Tempe, Pat Tillman.

No one can speak for Pat Tillman, and, save for his family, those who claim to only prove they never met the man. All I can say is, I wish he were here today. The one thing that is certain is he would not give the prepackaged trite partisan reaches you are likely to hear today. It would be unfiltered truth. Which the US did not get from its leaders after September 11, 2001, and is still missing today.

Instead of rallying and solidifying the oneness of the American citizenry that was extant immediately after September 11, 2001, the Bush/Cheney Administration and GOP told us to go shopping and that we needed to invade Iraq, who had nothing whatsoever to do with 9/11. It was a fools, if not devil's, errand and a move that threw away an opportunity for greatness from the country and exploited it in favor of war crimes and raw political power expansion and consolidation.

Instead of gelling the United States to make ourselves better as the "Greatest Generation" did sixty years before, America was wholesale sold a bill of goods by a determined group of unreformed and craven Neo-Con war criminals left over from the Vietnam era, and we were led down the path to a war of aggression that was an unmitigated disaster we have not only not recovered from today, but are still compounding.

The 2000's will prove to be a decade of American shame when history is written decades from now. Not from the attacks, but from our craven response thereto. So, pardon me if I join Colin Kaepernick and choose not to join, every Sunday, just because the Madison Avenue revenue generating NFL of Roger Goodell cravenly exploits it, the jingoistic bullshit of rote dedication to a racist National Anthem. Also,

too, shame on opportunistic and Constitutionally ignorant whiny police unions who scold free speech and threaten to abandon their jobs in the face of it.

But
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Taking
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States

, nee the world, to a forever war on the wings of a craven lie is universally recognized, condemned and scorned, right?

No. The Neo-Cons are unrepentant and still trying to advance themselves on the lie that their once and forever war justifies more than their prosecution and conviction in The Hague. Here is a belligerent and unrepentant Dick Cheney passing the torch of evil to his spawn Liz Cheney in the august pages of the Wall Street Journal:

We are no longer interrogating terrorists in part because we are no longer capturing terrorists. Since taking office, the president has recklessly pursued his objective of closing the detention facility at Guantanamo by releasing current detainees—regardless of the likelihood they will return to the field of battle against us. Until recently, the head of recruitment for ISIS in Afghanistan and Pakistan was a former Guantanamo detainee, as is one of al Qaeda's most senior leaders in the Arabian Peninsula.

As he released terrorists to return to the field of battle, Mr. Obama was simultaneously withdrawing American forces from Iraq and Afghanistan. He

calls this policy “ending wars.” Most reasonable people recognize this approach as losing wars.

Times may change, but the bottomless pit of Cheney lies and evil do not. As Charlie Savage pointed out on Twitter, the two terrorists the Cheneys refer to were actually released back to the “field of battle” by Bush and Cheney, not Obama. Was Obama involved in the story? Yes, he would be the one who actually tracked them down and killed them.

And then there is the failure to learn the lessons of the failed torture regime Bush and Cheney instituted as the hallmark of the “War on Terror”. Our friend, and former colleague, Spencer Ackerman has a must read three part series over the last three days in The Guardian (Part One, Part Two and Part Three) detailing how the CIA rolled the Obama Administration and prevented any of the necessary exposure, accountability and reform that was desperately needed in the aftermath of the torture regime and war of aggression in Iraq. It will take a while, but read all three parts. It is exasperating and maddening. It is also journalism at its finest.

And so, as we glide through the fifteenth anniversary of September 11, what are we left with from our response to the attacks? A destabilized world, an ingraining of hideous mistakes and a domestic scene more notable for jingoism and faux patriotism than dedication to the founding principles that America should stand for.

That is not what the real heroes, not only of 9/11 but the totality of American history, died to support and protect. In fact, it is an insult to their efforts and lives. If America wants to win the “War on Terror”, we need to get our heads out of our asses, quit listening to the neocons, war mongers, and military industrial complex Dwight Eisenhower warned us about, and act intelligently. This requires a cessation of

adherence to jingoistic and inane propaganda and thought, and a focus on the principles we are supposed to stand for.

IN ATTEMPTED HIT PIECE, NYT MAKES PUTIN HERO OF DEFEATING TPP

In an remarkable hit piece NYT spent over 5,000 words yesterday trying to prove that all of WikiLeaks' leaks are motivated from a desire to benefit Russia.

That of course took some doing. It required ignoring the evidence of the other potential source of motivation for Julian Assange – such as that Hillary participated in an aggressive, and potentially illegal, prosecution of Assange for being a publisher and Chelsea Manning for being his source – even as it repeatedly presented evidence that that was Assange's motivation.

Putin, who clashed repeatedly with Mrs. Clinton when she was secretary of state,

[snip]

In late November 2010, United States officials announced an investigation of WikiLeaks; Mrs. Clinton, whose State Department was scrambled by what became known as "Cablegate," vowed to take "aggressive" steps to hold those responsible to account.

[snip]

Another person who collaborated with WikiLeaks in the past added: "He views everything through the prism of how he's

treated. America and Hillary Clinton have caused him trouble, and Russia never has.”

It also required dismissing some of the most interesting counterexamples to the NYT’s thesis.

Sunshine Press, the group’s public relations voice, pointed out that in 2012 WikiLeaks also published an archive it called the Syria files – more than two million emails from and about the government of President Bashar al-Assad, whom Russia is supporting in Syria’s civil war.

Yet at the time of the release, Mr. Assange’s associate, Ms. Harrison, characterized the material as “embarrassing to Syria, but it is also embarrassing to Syria’s opponents.” Since then, Mr. Assange has accused the United States of deliberately destabilizing Syria, but has not publicly criticized human rights abuses by Mr. Assad and Russian forces fighting there.

As I have noted, there is a significant likelihood that the Syria files came via Sabu and Anonymous from the FBI – that is, that it was actually an American spy operation. Even aside from how important a counterexample the Syrian files are (because they went directly contrary to Putin’s interests in protecting Assad, no matter how bad they made Assad’s western trade partners look), the provenance of these files and Assange’s current understanding of them deserve some attention if NYT is going to spend 5,000 words on this story.

But the most remarkable stunt in this 5,000 screed is taking Wikileaks’ efforts to show policies a great many people believe are counterproductive – most importantly, passing trade deals that benefit corporations while

hurting real people, but also weakening other strong hands in climate change negotiations – and insinuating they might be a Putinesque plot. This bit requires editorial notes in line:

From November 2013 to May 2016, WikiLeaks published documents describing internal deliberations on two trade pacts: the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would liberalize trade *[ed: no, it would protect IP, the opposite of liberalizing trade]* between the United States, Japan and 10 other Pacific Rim countries, and the Trade in Services Agreement, an accord between the United States, 21 other countries and the European Union.

Russia, which was excluded, has been the most vocal opponent of the pacts *[this is presented with no evidence, nor even a standard of evidence. I and all of America's TPP opponents as well as TPP opponents from around the world must redouble our very loud effort]*, with Mr. Putin portraying them as an effort to give the United States an unfair leg up in the global economy.

The drafts released by WikiLeaks stirred controversy among environmentalists, advocates of internet freedom and privacy, labor leaders and corporate governance watchdogs, among others. They also stoked populist resentment against free trade that has become an important factor in American and European politics. *[Here, rather than admitting that this broad opposition to these trade deals shows that Putin is not the most vocal opponent of these pacts – contrary to their foundational assumption in this section – they instead portray a wide spectrum of well-considered activism as unthinking response to Putinesque manipulation. And note, here, a news*

outlet is complaining that ordinary citizens get access to critically important news, without even blushing? Also note the NYT makes no mention of the members of Congress who were also begging for this information, which makes it easier to ignore the profoundly anti-democratic nature of these trade agreements.]

The material was released at critical moments, with the apparent aim of thwarting negotiations, American trade officials said. *[In a piece obscuring the unpopular and anti-democratic nature of these trade deals, the NYT gives these sources anonymity.]*

WikiLeaks highlighted the domestic and international discord on its Twitter accounts.

American negotiators assumed that the leaks had come from a party at the table seeking leverage. *[That anonymity again: NYT is protecting some bitter trade negotiators who've invented a paranoid conspiracy here. On what grounds?]*

Then in July 2015, on the day American and Japanese negotiators were working out the final details of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, came what WikiLeaks dubbed its "Target Tokyo" release.

Relying on top-secret N.S.A. documents, the release highlighted 35 American espionage targets in Japan, including cabinet members and trade negotiators, as well as companies like Mitsubishi. The trade accord was finally agreed on – though it has not been ratified by the United States Senate – but the document release threw a wrench into the talks.

"The lesson for Japan is this: Do not expect a global surveillance superpower to act with honor or respect," Mr. Assange said in a news release at the

time. "There is only one rule: There are no rules." *[That the US spies on trade negotiations was of course not news by this point. But it is, nevertheless, worthy to point out.]*

Because of the files' provenance, United States intelligence officials assumed that Mr. Assange had gotten his hands on some of the N.S.A. documents copied by Mr. Snowden.

But in an interview, Glenn Greenwald, one of the two journalists entrusted with the full Snowden archive, said that Mr. Snowden had not given his documents to WikiLeaks and that the "Target Tokyo" documents were not even among those Mr. Snowden had taken.

The next paragraph goes on to note that the same NSA documents focused on climate negotiations between Germany and the UN, which seems to suggest the NYT also believes it is in petro-state leader Putin's interest for the US attempts to dominate climate change negotiations to be thwarted, even as Assange describes US actions as protection petroleum interests, which of course align with Putin's own.

In other words, as a central piece of evidence, the NYT spent 11 paragraphs repackaging opposition to shitty trade deals – a widely held very American view (not to mention a prominent one is most other countries affected) – into something directed by Russia, as if the only reasons to oppose TPP are to keep Russia on an equal shitty neoliberal trade footing as the rest of us, as if opposing the deals don't benefit a whole bunch of red-blooded Americans.

That's not only logically disastrous, especially in something billed as "news," but it is very dangerous. It makes legitimate opposition to bad (albeit widely accepted as good within beltway and I guess NYT conventional wisdom) policy something disloyal.

NYT's argument that Putin was behind WikiLeaks' NSA leaks doesn't hold together for a lot of reasons (not least that those two topics are probably not what Putin would prioritize, or even close). But it also has the bizarre effect, in a hit piece targeting Assange and Putin, of making Putin the hero of the anti-TPP movement.

And yet, NYT's three journalists don't seem to understand how counterproductive to their "journalistic" endeavor that argument is.

Update: Oy. As Trevor Timm notes, NYT worked with WL on the TPP release.

SECURITY, TERRITORY AND POPULATION PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Security, Territory and Population is a collection of lectures given by the French thinker Michel Foucault at the College of France in 1977-8. Foucault describes the lectures as a work of philosophy, defined as "the politics of truth" (p. 3), a term which itself seems to require a definition. This creates two difficult problems for the reader. First, philosophy is hard. It involves carefully picking things apart, examining each element, putting the pieces back together, and then picking them apart from some other perspective, examining the new set of pieces and reassembling. It's hard work, and it makes for difficult reading.

Second, these are lectures, not a polished work prepared for publication with the aid of editors and the time it takes to smooth out analysis. Foucault says that these lectures are part of a long program of study, of which other books and sets of lectures are parts. The earlier books include *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality* for certain, and others as well. These

are polished works, and they give an idea of the general program.

In this book, Foucault wants to talk about what he calls "bio-power" which he describes as "... the set of mechanisms through which the basic biological features of the human species became the object of a political strategy, of a general strategy of power..." Note that I did not use the word "define", but the word describe. We should understand this book and *The Birth of Bio-Power* which I plan to take up next, as tentative explorations, and not as a formal philosophical explication.

I haven't written about *Discipline and Punish* or *The History of Sexuality* (except briefly), but I don't think that will be a problem. The last three books I've written about, *The Great Transformation*, *The Origins of Totalitarianism* and *The Theory of Business Enterprise*, raise a similar set of issues. In each one of these books, we saw a massive change in the lives of the working people in Western Europe and the US beginning with the Industrial Revolution. These changes have produced amazing wealth for a few people, and have completely revamped the day-to-day lives of the vast group of working people. How exactly did these changes happen? Was there some great clamor for 12 hour work days in deep-pit mines? Did working people spontaneously decide to put their children to work in spinning mills at the age of 8? Was the demand for coal and cheap shirts so great that these things seemed like fair exchanges to the people whose lives were affected?

Polanyi seems to suggest that the changes were driven by economic duress both from the early capitalists and from the government. Arendt talks about the collapse of earlier social structure, and a combination of economic insecurity and random violence coupled with an appeal to nationalism and scape-goating of the Jews. Veblen doesn't directly discuss the mechanisms of change but he does say that the industrial age demanded new structures to

achieve maximum efficiency. Polanyi says that society resists these massive changes, and Veblen seems to agree. Arendt says that the people can be changed by a combination of force and rhetoric. I realize these are gross simplifications, but they are offered to show that these writers lead us to the problem Foucault wants to talk about. Foucault says that he is not interested in a theory of power, but that his investigations have the potential to expand into a discussion of major social trends.

Third, the analysis of these power relations may, of course, open onto or initiate something like the overall analysis of a society. The analysis of mechanisms of power may also join up with the history of economic transformations, for example. P. 2.

Human beings are a species, and in large groups can be understood and manipulated by those who have studied the species. In *Discipline and Punish*, Foucault gives us an early example:

[T]he ideas of crime and punishment must be strongly linked and '... follow one another without interruption.... When you have thus formed the chain of ideas in the heads of your citizens, you will then be able to pride yourselves on guiding them and being their masters.' Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, at 102, quoting J. M. Servan, *Discours sur l'administration de la justice criminelle*, 1767.

It reads just like Ivan Pavlov's theory of classical conditioning. We are much more refined than that now, of course. Almost every day we read a new theory about ourselves as a species. These insights are used by business to boost sales, by politicians to gain their own ends, and by each of us for our own purposes. For some of us, it is enough to know that. For Foucault, it was a signal that we need to think more

clearly about power.

One good question might be, how did neoliberalism become the dominant discourse, not just of general societal power but of control over the self. Freedom is the most important thing in neoliberal rhetoric, but if we have to work to live, how free are we? If we have to take whatever is on offer as wages and employment, how free are we? People have internalized neoliberalism as a tool of self-discipline, and at such a deep level that they cannot even recognize it as an ideology. They think it is the natural way life should be, and anyone who questions it is anathema. This leads us to think about governmentality, which I discussed very briefly here, and which Foucault discusses in some detail in this book.

I believe that theory is important. The right wing is winning because so many people believe in neoliberalism, including a large number of Democrats. Kuhn points out that scientists can't even do analysis without a theory with which to understand the observations they are making. I don't think theories about societies or individual human behavior can ever have the kind of certainty we can get in the physical sciences, because as humans, any theory becomes an object of study and then of change. Even so, we can't understand our society without some kind of theory. Foucault says that philosophy is about the politics of truth. Is neoliberalism a truth? What are the points about it where we can push back against the idea that it is a truth? Identifying those points is one of the goals of this series of lectures and of the next set, collected as *The Birth of Bio-Politics*.

In this post, I suggested the beginnings of a theory for the left. The same kind of analysis can and should be applied to that proposal. But that's for the future. As I work my way through these books, I will try to remember that every proposal has points of struggle, as Foucault calls them, points that are contested. Let's start with the recognition that for many people,

neoliberalism has successfully concealed the
points of struggle from the people whose minds
it has colonized.