



Connecting the Dots

by John Stepling on [Wrong Kind of Green](#)



Capitalists are no more capable of self-sacrifice than a man is capable of lifting himself up by his own bootstraps.

- Vladimir Lenin (1)

Many on the left seem to have forgotten that capitalism is actually bad. That the reason the planet sinks under the weight of pollution and militarism is because of capitalism. Nothing that works within the capitalist system is going to save anyone and will only reinforce the existing problems and



further the suffering of the poor and disenfranchised.

Now allow to me first start with a few observations on writers published by leftist sites, in this case *Counterpunch*, actually. Louis Proyect titles [his piece](#) as a question, "If Time Magazine Celebrates Greta Thunberg, Why Should We?" The answer is if TIME celebrates something, if corporate media celebrate someone or thing, the response should logically be INVESTIGATE and be suspicious. Which is what Cory Morningstar has done. But Proyect spends the entirety of his pointless article attacking Morningstar — go figure. He also lies. Morningstar does not attack Greta, she investigates the forces behind Greta. For a guy who wears his Marxism-like placard around his neck, you would think Proyect might grasp the distinction. Cory Morningstar is almost certainly the most important living journalist in the world.

And just by way of cursory correction, when Proyect writes, "*Just two months ago, (Jamie) Margolin joined other young people in suing Democratic Governor Jay Inslee and the State of Washington over greenhouse-gas emissions. Inslee depicts himself as a liberal, environmentalist governor. If Margolin is a Trojan Horse like Thunberg, her choice of a target hardly sounds like she is trying to make it in corporate, Democratic Party, environmentalist circles*", what he fails to recognize is that Margolin is already in the Democratic Party inner circles and served as an intern for Hillary Clinton.

But the bigger problem is that Proyect seems on board with all the activities of Thunberg and her cohorts. Proyect quotes Morningstar:

Today's climate emergency mobilization must be recognized for what it is: a strategically orchestrated campaign financed and managed by the world's most powerful institutions – for the preservation of capitalism and global economic growth. This is the launch of a new growth industry in the Global South coupled with the creation of new and untapped markets.

And then writes:

Yeah, who cares about icebergs melting and the Great Coral Reef disappearing? The real problem is capitalism—as if the two phenomena were not related.

The entire point of Morningstar's work is to bring attention to the fact that Capitalism IS related, not just related but the primary cause of planetary destruction. How does massive PR and billions of marketing stop the death of coral reefs? But again, class analysis is the issue (and perhaps an inability to read carefully). Thunberg has enlisted corporate billionaire backers (well, they enlisted her). That was the goal. If Proyect thinks the capitalists behind Thunberg are about to bring radical change and challenge the status quo, he is for a rude awakening. But then Proyect calls *Off Guardian* a conspiracy-minded site. Such provincial disdain is all too representative. But more on conspiracy theory below.

Allow me to link to [Morningstar's investigation of We Mean Business](#), a project that gets the Proyect stamp of approval (*We Mean Business*, not Morningstar).

I ask the reader to consider the facts. (hint: class analysis, the rich are not there to help anyone but themselves).

Then we have Kirkpatrick Sale and an [article](#) ("Political Collapse: The Center Cannot Hold") that might well have been written by the state department. In this hideously distorted piece Mr Sale also lies. The biggest of his falsehoods is that Venezuela is a failed state. Uh... maybe he has a different definition. But what Sale is really doing is excusing and providing cover for the Imperialist west. Yemen is listed as failed but the reasons for its failures are not really made clear. Global Warming? The correct answer is a vicious, several year long attack by the Saudi monarchy and the US and UK militaries. A genocidal assault that has resulted in mass death and pestilence (180,000 NEW cases of cholera were just reported by WHO). But Mr Sale never mentions that. Not a peep about western militarism. Not a single word. Nor about the orchestrated illegal covert CIA assault against Venezuela, and more recently and successfully, against Bolivia. Imperialism is not touched upon, even once.



Mr Sale writes:

At the moment, there are no less than 65 countries are now fighting wars—there are only 193 countries recognized by the United Nations, so that's a third of the world. These are wars with modern weapons, organized troops, and serious casualties—five of them, like Afghanistan, Libya, Syria, Somalia, and Yemen, with 10,000 or more deaths a year, another 15 with more than 1,000 a year—all of them causing disruptions and disintegrations of all normal political and economic systems, leaving no attacked nation in a condition to protect and provide for its citizens.

But he never explains the role of the US in any of this. Who made the weapons used in these wars? Well, the answer is largely the US, but also Russia, China, Israel and Brazil. But the vast majority are from the US. Also Syria was targeted by the US for a coup (referred to in polite company as regime change, a term created by the marketing arm of the Pentagon). Assad has openly been a target of the US. Who created and funded ISIS, in fact? Answer is the US and Saudi Arabia. Not a word about that fact either.

Here is another quote from Sale:

These include seven completely failed states—Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and Venezuela—and another seven that are on the edge—Guinea, Haiti, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Afghanistan, Chad, and the Sudan—plus 19 that are in an "alert" category, meaning that some but not all government functions have failed, 15 in Africa and 4 in Asia.

What do these nations have in common? They were targets of the Imperialist West (directly in the cases of Syria, Yemen, Somalia and South Sudan, and Iraq — not to mention the non failed Venezuela, or indirectly in the neo-colonial plunder of Congo, AFR, Guinea, and Haiti). And, as I pointed out, Venezuela is not failed, nor even close to failed. It's a perfectly functioning country under sanctions by the US. Another fact Sale omits.

Why is Libya not on that list? You know, Libya, where the US destroyed the African nation with the highest standard of living on the continent and reduced it to a slave market run by traffickers.

All in all Sale is either about room temperature IQ or just a liar or politically aligned with the State Department and Pentagon. I have no idea which but I do wonder why his tripe is appearing in a leftist site like *Counterpunch*. Proyect I understand, because he wears that placard announcing he is a leftist, and because he sort of is an editor at CP. Sale doesn't and isn't, so I really do wonder at why this reactionary non article is published by anyone this side of the CATO Institute?

But that brings me to the next point, which is the narcotic like effect that the entire Greta story has had on mostly middle aged white men. If you cannot but see the obvious stage-managed aspect of the Greta story, the marketing and image control involved, then you are blind or possibly caught up in the cult like thinking of much new green activism yourself. For one example, just look at the photo TIME used for its cover. Greta in an oversized sweater, sans make-up —how old does she look? 13, or 14 I'd say. Well, she is, in fact, 17. Her sister is 15 and looks much older and certainly clearly into puberty or even past it. Greta is being presented as the virgin symbol of purity. Now this will be called an attack on Greta — by Proyect anyway. But I am sure there are many others. It's not. She is simply the actor in all this (though actors are responsible for their choices, too). For her troubles she gets yacht rides and great dining with world leaders. Why wouldn't she sign on. But the rest of the phenomenon is, in fact, global capital usurping the green movements and activists globally. And the coup in Bolivia is against the indigenous peoples of that nation, many of whom are environmental activists as was President Morales. Which is why the smear campaign (by the same people who help manage Greta) was designed to undermine his environmental work. The biggest thing environmentally that Morales did was to throw out the US military.

But the white men of the West are channeling their disappointments (because capitalism disappoints, at the very least, nearly everyone but the top 3%) into something that resembles a fairy



tale narrative of a guardian flock protector (the white guy narrator) defending the honour of blond pre-pubescent teenager (in volkisch pigtailed and large sweater). Greta is the virgin queen of the environment. What happens when she gets a boyfriend? I'll be curious to see. Will the white middle-aged flock protectors feel betrayed? Seems possible. As my friend Hiroyuki Hamada noted, the white male defense of Greta is a reflection of patriarchy and that disappointments today are felt more acutely because they are more flagrant and there are fewer mitigating salves than in the past.

The point here is that why would any socialist or communist sign on to anything supported by the Royal Families of Europe, by global billionaires, and why can't they see that photo ops with Obama and the Pope are not just accidental. Nobody ever granted Berta Caracas a photo shoot in Vogue. A genuine activist today is at risk of death by the rising tide (rising fast) of fascism. Look at the heroic defense of Bolivia by the indigenous peoples of that nation. So many of whom have fought off western mining interests. And the same in Brazil where today there is a wholesale war on the indigenous. Or the vast western mining interests in Africa, and the forced displacement of entire villages to accommodate those interests — enforced by western security forces.

Much of the climate consensus seems aligned with the ruling class in a fear of a black and Asian planet, and one that is fuelled by the spectre of eugenics (making the world safe for white people). And lest you think that at all hyperbole, just spend some time investigating the activities of the Gates Foundation. It's curious to me why so many liberals froth in admiration of Gates.

Jimmy Wu writes:

Yet capitalism's reach extends much further than its economic effects; it also shapes our ideology and how we perceive our place in the world. Modern-day capitalism, with its unshakable faith in deregulated markets, privatization of the public sphere, and austerity budgets, has of course contributed to our financial misery, leading to mass hopelessness and anxiety. But far from being confined to economic policy, contemporary capitalism (often called "neoliberalism") also embodies a philosophical belief that self-interest and competition, not cooperation, should pervade every aspect of our lives. In short, our world is shaped in the image of the market. For those in distress, Margaret Thatcher's oft-cited mantra, "There is no such thing as society", sends the most disturbing possible message: You're on your own. (2)

This is the psychology of advanced capitalism. And Hollywood and mass media drive home in obsessively repetitious fashion that message of individualism. Of a ruthless individualism. In the recent *V Wars* (vampire wars) on Netflix, a doctor struggles valiantly throughout the first season looking for a cure. He fails. His only son abducted. In the last scene we see him, presumably months later, doing chin ups, his rock hard abs and bulging biceps glistening with sweat. He turns to face the camera and slings an AK 47 over his shoulder. He stares at camera; he is ready for season two. And the message is, don't be a panty waist doctor, they get nothing done. Be a violent sociopathic vigilante.

Richard Slotkin in *Gunfighter Nation* wrote: "1890, the moment when the landed frontier of the United States was officially declared 'closed', the moment when 'frontier' became primarily a term of ideological rather than geographical location."

That remains the principle shaper of consciousness in the US today.

Now one might ask why so many on the left view the Climate discourse without any class analysis. Do you not think that if Prince Charles is supporting a cause that one might be suspicious? I mean would he betray HIS class? Not fucking likely. Would Pierre Omidyar? Would Jeff Bezos, Richard Branson, or Bill Gates?? The answer is no, of course not, and yet I see people lining up to sign on board projects that are endorsed by millionaires and royals. Why? Well, because, partly, of what Jimmy Wu wrote. And I will add another quote from Wu's piece:

The psychological toll of this market-extremist thinking is ubiquitous and measurable. A long line of social science research has shown that unemployed people are much more likely



to become depressed; after all, under the reigning ideology, our self-worth is measured by our economic output. Moreover, since the market is (we are told) a level playing field, with no single actor appearing as the obvious coordinator, those who happen to be losers in this global scramble ostensibly have no one to blame but themselves.[sup]2[/sup]

The same logic applies to those throwing Maduro or Morales under the bus. Or for that matter Assad. Look, if you are a leader targeted by the US there must be a reason. And that reason is independence from the global neoliberal system — and independence is not allowed. Ask the people of Iran or the DPRK or Cuba. Ask Gaddafi. The US does not do things for moral reasons. They are not motivated by ethics or morality.

The rise of fascism is also a reflection of the same conditions that spawned the "Greta Defender" symptomatology.

Fascism is attractive to those who fear being identified as *losers*. Fascism provides a sense of belonging, of unity and purpose. American democracy does not. The ideological frontier that Slotkin noted is what defines the consciousness of most Americans, certainly white Americans. That rugged individualism that Hollywood continues to spew forth in cop shows and spy shows and lawyer shows and even doctor shows is one that is not real. There is no space, materially or psychologically, for Daniel Boone today. Most of the empty spaces of western America are [owned](#) by the federal government.

Most land overall is owned by billionaires. Sixty-one percent of the surface land of America is privately owned. And most of that is empty. The government owns around thirty percent. The working class owns nothing, essentially.

Blacks (13% of the population) own under 1% as of 2016.

But over the past decade, the nation's wealthiest private landowners have been laying claim to ever-larger tracts of the countryside, according to data compiled by the Land Report, a magazine about land ownership in America. In 2007, according to the Land Report, the nation's 100 largest private landowners owned a combined 27 million acres of land — equivalent to the area of Maine and New Hampshire combined.

A decade later, the 100 largest landowners have holdings of 40.2 million acres, an increase of nearly 50 percent. Their holdings are equivalent in area to the entirety of New England, minus Vermont. (3)

80% of the people live on 3% of the land.

Ted Turner owns over 2 million acres. John Malone over 2 million. Stan Kroenke owns over a million-and-a-half acres. The Hadley family, the Galt family, the Lee family...these are the owners of America's land. Or Anne Marion who owns the 260,000 acre Four Sixes ranch in Texas. Or the Collier family, or the Barta family in Nebraska. All own close to a million acres of land. There are essentially 75 families, maybe a few more, that own the vast majority of land in the U.S. Jeff Bezos owns half a million acres in Texas. The Irving family owns a huge percentage of Maine, or the Reeds, who own vast swaths of northern California and Oregon.

You and I own shit. We are the new serfs in the feudalism of advanced capital. So why defend those who represent the ruling class?

The racial disparity in rural land ownership has deep historical roots based not just in chattel slavery, but in the post-slavery period as well. After emancipation, black farmers tended to be tenants of wealthy white landowners working for sub-poverty wages and doing mostly subsistence farming. Average land ownership for black farmers peaked in 1910, according to the Agriculture Census, with about 16 to 19 acres. In contrast, black farmers owned just 1.5 million acres of arable land in 1997.



*In many cases, the land African Americans lost over the 20th century was expropriated in one form or another and not sold freely. In the 2007 documentary, *Banished*, filmmaker Marco Williams describes numerous examples of white mobs forcing out African-American farmers and taking their land. This outright stealing, intimidation, and violence had a devastating impact on black wealth ownership. (4)*

Just as white America feared black ownership of, well, anything, the white ruling class capitalists today fear the potential for a black planet. America has military bases in all the countries of Africa save one. France and Germany and the US continue to recolonize Africa. And now, the US is directing renewed attention to Latin America where they fear indigenous power and socialist movements.

The international financial institutions, all of them situated in Europe or the US, are the contemporary expression of colonialism, essentially. They discipline and punish the dark skinned peoples of Africa, South and Central America, and many Pacific Islands. And in many cases, too, those countries which were formally part of the Soviet Union.

If you want to grasp the work of Cory Morningstar, this is not a [bad place to start](#) for now.

One cannot separate climate change from imperialism. You cannot separate climate change from militarism. If change is going to try to correct global warming, or limit its impact (which honestly nobody knows) then one must learn to read how marketing works. One must question anything applauded by the Royal families of Europe, or by billionaires in general. Those billionaires will not betray their class, rest assured. The billionaires and corporate interests behind Greta Thunberg are not looking to help the poor and working class; they are looking for massive land grabs and further raids on pensions, social security, and what's left of working class and socialist movements. Maybe Proyect can connect the dots between the coup in Bolivia, the opposition in Venezuela (that failed state per Sale) and the big money orchestrating the Thunberg phenomenon. The ruling class stick together.

Conspiracy theory used to be reserved for invisible helicopters and such, now it's simply any class analysis. Anytime someone points out who is funding a project there are cries of *conspiracy theory*.

Why would any rational person look at the Greta phenomenon and not grasp that it is manufactured? There is a *lot* of money behind this girl. But the non-profit industrial complex, the UN, the World Bank and IMF — they don't do things altruistically. Capitalism is investment, not virtue. Capitalism created the crisis, it won't solve it. Greta also retweeted the now sort of infamous Minh Ngo tweet that was part of the smear campaign against Morales. She is linked and backed, additionally, by Purpose and Avaaz — both of whom are connected to US foreign policy in South America. But Morningstar has the details [here](#).

She also endorses and tweets support for Hong Kong colour revolution leader Joshua Wong (yet another US asset). She is, as Club de Cordeliers put it (on twitter), "the ruling class poster girl". And this is not even to get into her comments about holding disobedient leaders up against the wall. The infantilism of the western public is well prepared for child leaders. This is a canny gambit by the marketing apparatus and by all indications (and articles like Proyect's) it is working to perfection.

Greta is not anti-capitalist. She may say a few things that suggest, vaguely, an anti-capitalist sensibility, but the reality (which is what Morningstar provides) is that she works for big money, corporations and FOR capitalism.

You know when Greta gave her last speech in the US — at the UN, in fact — (where she flubbed her lines, saying creative PR and clever accounting. It was meant to be creative accounting and clever PR, but learning lines is tough) she sailed back to Europe. The captain had been flown in to sail the yacht on its return voyage. The whole thing is so ludicrous and idiotic that one really does wonder if the West is not in some trance state. The inability to read marketing as marketing is at this point inexcusable in someone self identifying as a leftist. The system sails along, like a billionaire's yacht, increasing profit at the expense of the everyone not of the top 2 or 3%. Greta



is a manufactured distraction, and all those protests that her campaign managed to generate are not to help stop war and exploitation. They are pretty much as meaningless as choosing to drive a Prius.

I will end with a quote from Cory Morningstar (from social media):

*You are about to get slammed by 2 globally orchestrated campaigns 1.
#GlobalGreenNewDeal 2. #NewDealForNature & People*

And when I say slammed - I mean slammed. Like a hammer over your head. Another campaign to assist both is #SuperYear2020.

Goal: obtaining the social license required to re-boot / save the failing global capitalist economy. To usher in a new unprecedented era of growth. The monetization of nature, global in scale (new/ emerging markets)(see past posts). That is, the corporate capture of nature. Those with money - will literally buy nature.

The pitch: The ruling class, corporations, capital finance - all those that have happily destroyed the planet in pursuit of relentless profit have learned their lesson. They have magically changed. Those that destroyed the biosphere will now save it. And save you. All they need is your consent. Forget that capitalism devours everything in its path. They can work around this inconvenient truth. But it's going to take everyone. There are no class divisions, we are all in this "together". Yesterday's capitalists are today's activists. Accept. Join hands.

1. "Letters from Afar", March/April 1917.
2. Jimmy Wu, "Capitalism is Dangerous for your Mental Health", *Medium*, 2019.
3. Christopher Ingraham, *Washington Post*, 2017.
4. Antonio Moore, *Inequality org*.