

The Social Artist

A landscape photograph of a green field with a utility tower, a stream with a tree stump, and a cloudy sky. The scene is framed by a white border.

Structure

Child Care

TTIP

Summer 2015

The SOCIAL ARTIST

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Editorial

Some decades ago Jo Freeman's essay "The Tyranny of Structurelessness" circulated widely in the women's movement, and was much discussed in the UK and elsewhere. Women form a hefty 50% of the population. Yet despite the social and political changes of the last century, women remain a 'minority' group, allowed to participate in public affairs only to the extent that they follow the rules laid down by the men's organisations. Perhaps, thought the women in the peace, liberation and green movements of the late twentieth century, perhaps women have better ways of setting about things. Men are often confrontational, and seem happy with military-style leadership where the lower ranks comply unquestioningly with the orders issued by the top ranks of the pyramid of power. Women do things differently. They discuss matters gently from all angles, sharing opinions, listening to each other and taking time to come to a consensus. That, at least, was the theory, and it served well enough when the purpose of the gathering

was to share ideas and improve our understanding of the world in which we live. But things started to fall apart when it came to planning practical actions, to agreeing on who would do what, how to set about preparations, what resources were available and how they were to be used.

Structure is crucial in any organisation. Whether in a small voluntary group organising fund-raising for a charity, or whether it is a business or the affairs of state in a national government, or a transnational body like the TTIP (*see page 29*), structure is vital. If the decision-making process cannot be identified, dominant and powerful characters hold sway over a powerless and frustrated majority. When it comes to the economy as a whole, ignorance about how the rules and structures are constructed allows the economically powerful to dominate. And where power is wielded irresponsibly, war, poverty and environmental destruction follow.

In a lecture delivered in 1916, at the height of World War I, Rudolf Steiner pointed to the necessity for all to seek out the truth. “Knowledge of the whole picture always serves the whole of mankind. Portions taken out of context always serve the egoism of individual groups.”¹ A century later, despite the strenuous efforts of seekers after the truth, the broad mass of humanity are lulled by an educational system and the mass media into a fatal laziness, inattention and gullibility, allowing secretive groups to continue their devious manipulations of the truth. In the absence of thoughtful study of public affairs leading to knowledge of how the structures and organisations of the political, economic and cultural spheres work, a little bit of the truth can be made to seem to be the whole truth. And that is exactly what happened in the UK General Election. The fear and uncertainty of the ‘Precariat’ was skilfully played upon by the press and media. People were made to believe that tuition fees and the bedroom tax could be abolished, the NHS retained and welfare services provided, but only on condition that everyone works harder to create the economic growth necessary to cover these costly luxuries. Trident and other ‘defence’ systems, on the other hand, can be afforded because they create jobs and create mayhem which has to be repaired through the creation of further jobs.

Exactly the same tale was told during the Depression years of the 1930s. The new technologies, the resources, the skills and knowledge and the need is there - but where is the money to come from?

Douglas had the answer. During the First World War he studied the practical workings of the financial system within the economy. Before war broke out there was never enough money for essential new projects which would benefit the community as a whole. When war was declared, money was to be had in plenty. People could now be employed in making tanks and guns, uniforms and all the necessary support services for the massive destructive project, creating prosperity for all. But when peace came there was no money for reconstruction, workers were laid off and trade stagnated, because the financial system was not based upon sound common sense principles. Douglas predicted the Depression years long before they happened, making the elementary observation that finance – money – is a man-made system which does not have to dictate policy:

“Money is only a mechanism by means of which we deal with things – it has no properties except those we choose to give it. A phrase such as ‘There is no money in the country with which to do such and so’ means simply nothing, unless we are also saying ‘The goods and services required to do this thing do not exist and cannot be produced, therefore it is useless to create the money equivalent of them.’ For instance, it is simply childish to say that a country has no money for social betterment, or for any other purpose, when it has the skill, the workers and the materials and plant to create that betterment. The banks or the Treasury can create the money in five minutes, and are doing it every day, and have been doing it for centuries.”²

Douglas wrote those words in response to a general public mood of questioning as to how the Great War had happened, and why the peace looked set to bring unprecedented poverty amidst plenty. His books, published by mainstream publishers from the early 1920s onwards, were studied throughout the English-speaking world, and far beyond. Hence by the 1930s a politically and economically knowledgeable movement presented a powerful challenge to the world-wide business-as-usual warmongering elite. Informed debate was carried to countless homes through groups studying Douglas' books, mass meetings and the close reading of *The New Age*, *The Social Crediter*, *the New English Weekly* and other weekly broadsheets. As a result, in 1935 a well-informed electorate in Alberta elected a Social Credit government with a mandate to free the resource-rich economy of Alberta from external financial

controls. For the full story of the ability of finance to frustrate the will of the people, see *Understanding the Financial System: Social Credit Rediscovered*, available from www.douglassocredit.com .

The banks, backed by the forces of government, have controlled finance for centuries. It is not a closely guarded secret. And yet, as the debate before, during and after the General Election in the UK demonstrates, men and women know less about how the political process works, how access to money incomes is determined, where money comes from or who creates policy in welfare, education, international affairs, health and the economy as a whole than they did in Douglas' day. As long as individuals fail to live with intention* (see Maria Lyons' article in these pages of Spring 2015) a tyranny of structurelessness will continue to reign supreme.

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¹ Rudolf Steiner *The Karma of Untruthfulness: Secret Societies, the Media, and preparations for the Great War*, Vol.1, Rudolf Steiner Press (2005)

² Clifford Hugh Douglas, *The Control and Distribution of Production*, (1922) p9-10.

God of Gadgets

Murray McGrath

Head bowed, eyes down,
Frantic thumbs, furrowed frown.
This crucifix I bow to you,
My loving duty I will do.
I'll worship gizmos, this I vow.
Connect me, swipe me, link me now.
Someone will call email or text,
I'll call them back, one click,
who's next.
I matter now, at last I know.
My gadget tells me, it is so.
Oh God of Gadgets I trust thee,
My hope and joy, technology.

My gratitude will overflow,
With faith in you, I truly know
That all the world's in touch with me.
What more in heaven could there be?
But wait! - the battery's running low
I need a plug, I need to go
To save my soul, I'm feeling sick
I have to have a top up quick
Oh no! A power cut, not alive
Without my phone I can't survive.
Is this my life, is this my fate?
How could I get in such a state?

The Tyranny of Structurelessness

Jo Freeman (1970)

During the years in which the women's liberation movement has been taking shape, a great emphasis has been placed on what are called leaderless, structureless groups as the main — if not sole — organizational form of the movement. The source of this idea was a natural reaction against the overstructured society in which most of us found ourselves, the inevitable control this gave others over our lives, and the continual elitism of the Left and similar groups among those who were supposedly fighting this overstructuredness.

The idea of “structurelessness,” however, has moved from a healthy counter to those tendencies to becoming a goddess in its own right. The idea is as little examined as the term is much used, but it has become an intrinsic and unquestioned part of women's liberation ideology. For the early development of the movement this did not much matter. It early defined its main goal, and its main

method, as consciousness-raising, and the “structureless rap group” was an excellent means to this end. The looseness and informality of it encouraged participation in discussion, and its often supportive atmosphere elicited personal insight. If nothing more concrete than personal insight ever resulted from these groups, that did not much matter, because their purpose did not really extend beyond this.

The basic problems didn't appear until individual rap groups exhausted the virtues of consciousness-raising and decided they wanted to do something more specific. At this point they usually floundered because most groups were unwilling to change their structure when they changed their tasks. Women had thoroughly accepted the idea of “structurelessness” without realizing the limitations of its uses. People would try to use the “structureless” group and the informal conference for purposes for which they were unsuitable out of a blind

belief that no other means could possibly be anything but oppressive.

If the movement is to grow beyond these elementary stages of development, it will have to disabuse itself of some of its prejudices about organization and structure. There is nothing inherently bad about either of these. They can be and often are misused, but to reject them out of hand because they are misused is to deny ourselves the necessary tools to further development. We need to understand why “structurelessness” does not work.

Formal and Informal Structures

Contrary to what we would like to believe, there is no such thing as a “structureless” group. Any group of people of whatever nature that comes together for any length of time for any purpose will inevitably structure itself in some fashion. The structure may be flexible; it may vary over time; it may evenly or unevenly distribute tasks, power and resources over the members of the group. But it will be formed regardless of the abilities, personalities, or intentions of the people involved. The very fact that we are individuals, with different talents, predispositions, and backgrounds, makes this inevitable. Only if we refused to relate or interact on any basis whatsoever could we approximate structurelessness — and that is not the nature of a human group.

This means that to strive for a structureless group is as useful, and as deceptive, as to aim at an “objective” news story, “value-free” social science, or a “free” economy. A “laissez-faire”

group is about as realistic as a “laissez-faire” society; the idea becomes a smokescreen for the strong or the lucky to establish unquestioned hegemony over others. This hegemony can so easily be established because the idea of “structurelessness” does not prevent the formation of informal structures, only formal ones. Similarly “laissez-faire” philosophy did not prevent the economically powerful from establishing control over wages, prices, and distribution of goods; it only prevented the government from doing so. Thus structurelessness becomes a way of masking power, and within the women’s movement it is usually most strongly advocated by those who are the most powerful (whether they are conscious of their power or not). As long as the structure of the group is informal, the rules of how decisions are made are known only to a few and awareness of power is limited to those who know the rules. Those who do not know the rules and are not chosen for initiation must remain in confusion, or suffer from paranoid delusions that something is happening of which they are not quite aware.

For everyone to have the opportunity to be involved in a given group and to participate in its activities the structure must be explicit, not implicit. The rules of decision-making must be open and available to everyone, and this can happen only if they are formalized. This is not to say that formalization of a structure of a group will destroy the informal structure. It usually doesn’t. But it does hinder the informal structure from having predominant control

and makes available some means of attacking it if the people involved are not at least responsible to the needs of the group at large. "Structurelessness" is organizationally impossible. We cannot decide whether to have a structured or structureless group, only whether or not to have a formally structured one. Therefore the word will not be used any longer except to refer to the idea it represents. "Unstructured" will refer to those groups which have not been deliberately structured in a particular manner. "Structured" will refer to those which have. A structured group always has formal structure, and may also have an informal, or covert, structure. It is this informal structure, particularly in unstructured groups, which forms the basis for elites.

The Nature of Elitism

"Elitist" is probably the most abused word in the women's liberation movement. Correctly, an elite refers to a small group of people who have power over a larger group of which they are part, usually without direct responsibility to that larger group, and often without their knowledge or consent. A person becomes an elitist by being part of, or advocating the rule by, such a small group, whether or not that individual is well known or not known at all. Notoriety is not a definition of an elitist. The most insidious elites are usually run by people not known to the larger public at all. Intelligent elitists are usually smart enough not to allow themselves to become well known; when they become known, they are watched, and the mask over their power is no longer firmly lodged.

Elites are not conspiracies. Very seldom does a small group of people get together and deliberately try to take over a larger group for its own ends. Elites are nothing more, and nothing less, than groups of friends who also happen to participate in the same political activities. They would probably maintain their friendship whether or not they were involved in political activities; they would probably be involved in political activities whether or not they maintained their friendships. It is the coincidence of these two phenomena which creates elites in any group and makes them so difficult to break.

These friendship groups function as networks of communication outside any regular channels for such communication that may have been set up by a group. If no channels are set up, they function as the only networks of communication. Because these people are friends, because they usually share the same values and orientations, because they talk to each other socially and consult with each other when common decisions have to be made, the people involved in these networks have more power in the group than those who don't. And it is a rare group that does not establish some informal networks of communication through the friends that are made in it.

Some groups, depending on their size, may have more than one such informal communications network. Networks may even overlap. When only one such network exists, it is the elite of an otherwise unstructured group, whether the participants in it want to be elitists or not. If it is the only such network in

a structured group it may or may not be an elite depending on its composition and the nature of the formal structure. If there are two or more such networks of friends, they may compete for power within the group, thus forming factions, or one may deliberately opt out of the competition, leaving the other as the elite. In a structured group, two or more such friendship networks usually compete with each other for formal power. This is often the healthiest situation, as the other members are in a position to arbitrate between the two competitors for power and thus to make demands of those to whom they give their temporary allegiance.

The inevitably elitist and exclusive nature of informal communication networks of friends is neither a new phenomenon characteristic of the women's movement nor a phenomenon new to women. Such informal relationships have excluded women for centuries from participating in integrated groups of which they were a part. In any profession or organization these networks have created the "locker room" mentality and the "old school" ties which have effectively prevented women as a group (as well as some men individually) from having equal access to the sources of power or social reward. Much of the energy of past women's movements has been directed to having the structures of decision-making and the selection processes formalized so that the exclusion of women could be confronted directly. As we well know, these efforts have not prevented the informal male-only networks from discriminating against women, but they have made it more difficult.

Because elites are informal does not mean they are invisible. At any small group meeting anyone with a sharp eye and an acute ear can tell who is influencing whom. The member of a friendship group will relate more to each other than to other people. They listen more attentively, and interrupt less; they repeat each other's points and give in amiably; they tend to ignore or grapple with the "outs" whose approval is not necessary for making a decision. But it is necessary for the "outs" to stay on good terms with the "ins." Of course the lines are not as sharp as I have drawn them. They are nuances of interaction, not prewritten scripts. But they are discernible, and they do have their effect. Once one knows with whom it is important to check before a decision is made, and whose approval is the stamp of acceptance, one knows who is running things.

The criteria of participation may differ from group to group, but the means of becoming a member of the informal elite if one meets those criteria are pretty much the same. The only main difference depends on whether one is in a group from the beginning, or joins it after it has begun. If involved from the beginning it is important to have as many of one's personal friends as possible also join. If no one knows anyone else very well, then one must deliberately form friendships with a select number and establish the informal interaction patterns crucial to the creation of an informal structure. Once the informal patterns are formed they act to maintain themselves, and one of the most successful tactics of maintenance is to continuously recruit

new people who “fit in.” One joins such an elite much the same way one pledges a sorority. If perceived as a potential addition, one is “rushed” by the members of the informal structure and eventually either dropped or initiated. If the sorority is not politically aware enough to actively engage in this process itself it can be started by the outsider pretty much the same way one joins any private club. Find a sponsor, i.e., pick some member of the elite who appears to be well respected within it, and actively cultivate that person’s friendship. Eventually, she will most likely bring you into the inner circle.

All of these procedures take time. So if one works full time or has a similar major commitment, it is usually impossible to join simply because there are not enough hours left to go to all the meetings and cultivate the personal relationships necessary to have a voice in the decision-making. That is why formal structures of decision-making are a boon to the overworked person. Having an established process for decision-making ensures that everyone can participate in it to some extent.

Although this dissection of the process of elite formation within small groups has been critical in perspective, it is not made in the belief that these informal structures are inevitably bad — merely that they are inevitable. All groups create informal structures as a result of interaction patterns among the members of the group. Such informal structures can do very useful things. But only unstructured groups are totally governed by them. When informal elites are combined with

a myth of “structurelessness,” there can be no attempt to put limits on the use of power. It becomes capricious.

This has two potentially negative consequences of which we should be aware. The first is that the informal structure of decision-making will be much like a sorority — one in which people listen to others because they like them and not because they say significant things. As long as the movement does not do significant things this does not much matter. But if its development is not to be arrested at this preliminary stage, it will have to alter this trend. The second is that informal structures have no obligation to be responsible to the group at large. Their power was not given to them; it cannot be taken away. Their influence is not based on what they do for the group; therefore they cannot be directly influenced by the group. This does not necessarily make informal structures irresponsible. Those who are concerned with maintaining their influence will usually try to be responsible. The group simply cannot compel such responsibility; it is dependent on the interests of the elite.

Jo Freeman

Originally published in 1970, revised in 1984

For the full version see:

Bureau of Public Secrets, PO Box 1044,
Berkeley CA 94701, USA

[http://www.bopsecrets.org/CF/
structurelessness.htm](http://www.bopsecrets.org/CF/structurelessness.htm)

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The Opposite of Structurelessness

Frances Hutchinson

“Thus structurelessness becomes a way of masking power, and ... it is usually most strongly advocated by those who are the most powerful (whether they are conscious of their power or not). As long as the structure of the group is informal, the rules of how decisions are made are known only to a few and awareness of power is limited to those who know the rules.” In making this observation in her historic article on structure, procedure and organisation, (see page 24) Jo Freeman raises a fundamental question requiring our most urgent attention. It is not simply a question of how we choose to conduct a voluntary society in our local community, but of how our rights and obligations are settled within a world economy now seemingly beyond our comprehension or control.

“TTIP or Democracy?” asks Michael Meacher in a recent edition of *Resurgence and Ecologist*, (Issue 290 May/June 2015 pp14-16) “You can’t

have both.” He cites the effects of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism through which the proposed TTIP will protect corporate power from democracy within nation states. He cites examples where the ISDS has already been used. Canada was sued by the Ethyl Corporation for banning the chemical MMT, produced by Ethyl, considered by Canada and the US to be a dangerous toxin. “Canada was forced to pay huge compensation, and reversed its ban.” Other examples are cited. If it is a ‘good thing’ that corporate power should have absolute control over the political economy in which we currently live and work and bring up our children, all we have to do is to sit back and chunter quietly under our breath whilst continuing to work-for-money under the wage-slavery system, whilst shopping until we drop to keep the economy on the course of progress. If, however, we want to carry on the dedicated work of Alan Armstrong and the countless contributors

to these pages since the 1930s, it is absolutely necessary to search out the truth about the structures operating to render democracy an empty sham at local, national and international levels.

The first question to answer is – what is The Economy? The answer is quite simple: The Economy is a man-made game super-imposed upon society and its natural resource base. The game is based upon three premises.

1. The initial allocation of ownership of property is taken for granted, *i.e.*, some players own physical resources such as land, buildings, machinery and so on, whilst others, having nothing to sell but their labour, are effectively out of the game (they can make trouble but have no power and so do not ‘count’).

2. The game is facilitated through the man-made financial/money system.

3. And the rules of the game are determined by the most powerful players in the last round of play.

In short, the world economy of the twenty-first century has evolved into a zero-sum game in which the players use local communities and the resources of the natural world as playing counters whilst they seize power from one another to declare themselves overall winner. The Penguin Dictionary of Economics describes a ‘zero-sum game as “... a game in which one player’s gain is equal to another player’s losses, whatever strategy is chosen. The players can only compete for slices of a fixed cake: there are no opportunities for over-all gain

through collusion. The sum of gains will always equal the sum of losses, the whole summing zero.”

The world economy which encompasses all aspects of life on this planet has evolved over little more than a century. Pockets of industrialisation existed, but over the world as a whole 80% of people were born on self-sufficient farms, where children learned that cooperation was more productive than self-interested competition. Even in urban areas, children played by the roadside, chanting traditional rhymes in long-established patterns. games flowed in a natural progression, one following another as the mood took the group. The question of who had ‘won’ and who had ‘lost’ in the playing of the games was of little interest. Play was a social occasion, a chance to test one’s personality as an individual and to learn the rules and roles of operating as a social being. The fun was in the playing, in the process, not in the end result. Through games children learned to work together, developing the social skills they would need to participate in the adult community. By contrast, the games of the twentieth century fostered the desire to win, at the expense of other players, preparing children to operate in a very different world.

The Story of Monopoly

Monopoly is an excellent teaching aid for the development of the TTIP-type mentality. Where individuals maximize their own benefits and minimise their own (financial) costs, community, kin, friends, family and locality are eradicated from the surreal, but all too real, world of

competitive fantasy. Monopoly enables people to be everywhere and nowhere at the same time, ignoring social and environmental reality. All that counts is staying in the game, playing to win, and forcing opponents (other people) off the board. Since its reproduction by Parker Bros in 1935, the game has been a best seller. Available in 80 countries, billions of little green houses have been sold, and the person who has never heard of the game is regarded as a curiosity.

But although the game has been translated to portray the familiar street names of the towns and cities of many different countries, there the concession to the locality of culture ends. Players buy and sell land and buildings without regard to the local culture of the region where they operate. Players compete as ‘rational economic men’, seeking personal gain, free from any restraints of practical responsibilities which might balance their claims of rights. Geography, ecology, flora, fauna, folkways, everything relating to place and community is eradicated. The game is played in a timeless continuum, where people are neither sick nor old, where there are no children to be cared for and questions of food, fodder and the careful tending of the land do not arise. As a teaching aid for the ‘real world’ of the all-powerful global capitalist economy, Monopoly is excellent. As a blueprint for operating in the non-fantasy world of the natural economy and the real-life community, it is terrifying.

Wherever you live in the world today, the chances are that your local hills and mountains, fields and shorelines, and

the centre of your home town or city are owned by speculative investors. The original version of Monopoly was designed as a teaching aid to illustrate the inherent flaws in monopoly control of land. The idea was to move beyond mere protest and towards practical alternatives. The alternative, socially responsible, view of landholding, and proposals for a Single Tax based upon land ownership originated in the work of the American economist Henry George.

Progress and Poverty

“You make the laws and own the currency, but give me the land and I will absorb your wealth and render your legislation null and void. Give heed to the land question” (Henry George 1839 – 97).

A powerful speaker, Henry George was moved by the evidence of dire poverty amidst affluence in the New York of the 1860s. His observations caused him to turn his journalistic talents to the relationship between private property in land and the necessity for labourers to subsist on wages offering no more than a ‘bare living’. *Progress and Poverty* (1879), his major publication, has been translated into many languages, while his proposals to replace taxation of labour with taxation of privately owned land still attract the attention of reforming legislators in many countries.

In an address in 1889 at Toomebridge, County Derry, Ireland, George drew a distinction between production and creation. People may hew coal from the rocks, catch fish in the seas, bring

together timber, stone and iron to shape a house, produce cloth from the wool of sheep or the fibre of plants, and produce crops by tilling the soil. Labour on the land brings forth the necessities of life, but it does not *create*. God is the Creator of all, and gives equal use of the land to all. No individual can justly claim the right to own the reservoirs of nature, or seize the property of others created from their own labour upon the land.

Incomes derived from ownership of property in land were, according to George, *unearned* incomes deriving from social change such as occur when a city expands, causing a many-fold rise in the value of nearby land. In these circumstances, speculation for private gain prevents the land from being used to benefit the community as a whole. Yet it is from the community as a whole that the rising value of land occurs. A tax on land at or near its full rental value would, George argued, reduce the price of land. The tax would rise as the value of land rose, and fall as it fell, eliminating the motivation to speculate in land. Land would be held for its use-value, not for speculation on its scarcity-value.

However, under the Georgist system, owner-occupiers of homes, farms and other properties who make improvements would not have to pay higher taxes because their improvements are benefiting the community. Farmers who improve their land would benefit, while commercial speculation in land would be discouraged, opening up the possibility for interspersing agricultural zones near cities. Under the present system it pays farmers to sell to ‘developers’ who make

huge profits. A Georgist system of land taxation can be introduced gradually, following informed public debate on the issues involved. The *Landlords’ Game*, from which *Monopoly* was later devised, was designed to stimulate such informed debate, the essential to creating the political will necessary for reform.*

George’s proposals have been implemented in various countries. Pittsburgh and several other American cities have, since the late 1980s, started to raise the taxes on land whilst lowering those on buildings, following the Georgist proposals. In Denmark the Justice Party held the balance in the coalition government of 1957, using their position to tax land values while reducing income tax along Georgist lines. These schemes have the effect of strengthening local economies, and demonstrate the continued interest in Henry George’s work.

The early Georgist games circulated in the USA and the UK in the first decades of the twentieth century under various titles and drawing upon the streets, buildings and landholdings of the local city. Their creators held profound faith in the human capacity for practical action based upon reasoned argument. The games followed a common pattern, and were designed to be played in three phases. *Monopoly* was developed from stage one of the *Landlords’ Game*, where the effects of the greedy, selfish pattern of landholding is demonstrated. The later two phases, which form games in themselves, are much more demanding. They demonstrate the potential for communities to regain access to land. It

is ironic that a game first devised to move away from the evils of monopoly land holding should have come to serve the continued exploitation and degradation of the land.

At the outset of this essay, we noted the three basic premises upon which the World Economy is based. Although the times were very different when the *Landlords' Game* was first devised, it remains a sound teaching tool for

considering all three of the basic premises upon which the practical workings of the World Economy are based, as mentioned above. Such a debate is essential if the political will necessary for reform is to be effectively generated.

*See the Social Art Page of www.douglassoccredit.com for the rules, board and playing pieces of the English version of the original *Landlords' Game*, entitled mysteriously *Brer Fox and Brer Rabbit*.

Who Controls the World

This link was sent to us by Connie Fogal, a much-respected contact in Canada. We include her introduction..

<http://www.globalresearch.ca/who-really-controls-the-world/5445239>

This is a really important explanation of who controls the world, i.e., the money mafia rulers.

All over the world this debt based money system is creating poverty and enslavement. Once you know what is really happening and who is in charge, reading mainstream commentators and politicians who blame the people for debt is sickening. It is important that we help others to know it is not themselves who create the poverty but rather the money powers who impose debt via interest rates, which debt grows exponentially and is impossible to pay off.

It is important to understand it does not have to be that way. A central bank like we have in our Bank of Canada which

has the power to put money into the system with no or very little interest debt is the answer. (This requires the will of the government which Canada currently does not have) .

Political leaders have been killed for trying to implement debt free money, as was Gaddafi in Africa, and Kennedy in USA. We must know this is what is happening in order to stop it. We have to have courage to say no and install leaders with courage. Greece is now trying.

Watch for next e-mail from me re renewed effort in Africa. This is important so we can know that leaders of courage do emerge. We have the power to control this madness. The power lies in our knowledge and our statement that we KNOW, and will not support anyone who refuses to restore this power to the public good .

Connie

The Midas Touch

Frances Hutchinson (1988)

COMMUNITY life has, since the industrial revolution, been dominated in Great Britain by the demands of the economic system to the virtual exclusion of other social considerations. Child rearing, home and family care have continued to play an essential part in meeting the needs of individuals. But the economic system has registered only the costs of breakdown and remedial actions. In the same way as economists have only recently, and marginally, come to account the destruction of the environment and the exhaustion of the earth's scarce resources, the development of affective and social skills through traditional forms of home and family care has been taken for granted and subtly devalued.

Males and feminists alike have, for their different reasons, combined to underplay and undermine the significance of family care in introducing new members to the social community of human beings. The strength of the backlash against this erosion of family life can be seen in the vigour of the growth in support for fundamentalist religions. Beyond those narrow confines, home care, child care and the traditional skills of mothering have been denigrated and debased. Parenting and child care have been demoted to a spare time activity outside working hours, to be delegated wherever possible to low paid substitutes. In this way, traditionally male concern with production of statistically verifiable material wealth

has been accepted as the sole significant form of human activity. The need for love, care and affection is appreciated only at the point of personal breakdown, when expensive specialists are consulted.

Traditionally feminine concerns have so far eluded the androcentric comprehension which dominates all forms of academic and educational structures in society. The psychologists — and there have been many of them, and of both sexes — who record the infant's ambivalence towards its mother could, perhaps, with more accuracy be said to be recording the results of the untypical mother's ambivalence towards her child. Mothering in human beings is a socially sensitive activity, and Western society has, since the onset of the industrial revolution, placed the rearing of children under peculiar constraints.

Taking the lead from classical economists, backed up by cynical psychologists, we in the West have come to doubt the sincerity of those who offer love and affection. The ideal role model of the tender and caring mother — or father — has been replaced by the young, fit, healthy, role-playing, 25 year old male, in economic employment and without ties or responsibilities. By contrast, the woman who cares, be it for an elderly relative, a child — her own, or that of another who has suffered mental or physical abuse, — or her sick or disabled husband, child or parent, is designated a person of low status, her needs ignored

in terms of community support, and her economic independence removed from any guarantees. Following the industrial revolution, family life has come to be curiously dependent upon wage earning, that is, upon the economic rewards to labour as a factor of production.

The reward given to labour bears no relationship whatsoever to the economic needs of the family. Further, it takes no account of the work involved in household tasks, work which recent International Labour Office estimates show consumes at least as many working hours as are spent in paid employment. This supportive work is acknowledged to be essential in servicing the workers, that is, in attending to their essential needs for food, clothing, shelter and leisure. The very existence of labour, an essential factor of production in economic terms, is dependent upon the satisfaction of those needs. Housework is, however, excluded from economic calculations in the same way as nature's gifts are assumed to be free, simply because they do not occur as a result of financial considerations. A mother does not — normally — wait to be paid to look after her baby. Yet it is this very absence of economic motivation which demotes an activity in Western eyes. 'If a job is worth doing, it is worth being paid to do it', is the current rule of thumb. As a result, mothering and caring generally are classed as menial tasks, to be delegated to others wherever possible for a financial consideration.

It is, however, becoming clear that child-rearing practices based on the economic needs of the parents are giving grounds for concern. Parents return from

work to tackle household and child care responsibilities in their 'spare' time, often many miles away from otherwise supportive grandparents. In attempting to side-step the demands of children for attention and affection, busy parents offer the passive and undemanding viewing of television rather than embark upon traditional forms of interactive play, talking and reading together. The significance of the incalculable numbers of hours of shared activity of children and adults spent in the recounting of nursery rhymes, tales and games combined with routine household tasks, has been seriously undervalued. These activities, essential in the formation of self-esteem and self awareness, have fallen into disuse in many families. So, too, have forms of children's free peer group play in streets and open spaces near to home. Traffic and other modern dangers have eroded ancient childhood rights, restricting in an unprecedented way children's freedom to develop a sense of personal awareness, place and community. The middle-aged and elderly of today, from even the most inner city areas, can recall childhood excursions to open countryside and areas of woodland in the company of siblings and friends, and an ease of access to shops and houses of relatives in nearby streets which is rarely possible today. The resultant frustration and alienation demonstrated in adolescent behaviour stems directly from this absence of an early sense of belonging to family and to community.

Human beings are more than mere units of labour, cogs in the economic production machine. Material wealth is very limited as a means for satisfying human wants.

Labour saving devices have not, according to recent studies, cut down the number of hours devoted to housework. They have, in fact, increased the total number of hours of work in the home, as expectations have been raised and the machines themselves require attention. Further, the time spent earning money to pay for the machines has increased, as have other associated expenses. Rudolph Bahro, the West German 'Green', has presented a vivid image in commenting that 'today we spend ten times as much energy for a worker to be able to sit in front of the TV in the evenings with his bottle of beer as we needed in the eighteenth century for Schiller to create his life's work'.

The ability of the earth to tolerate the ever expanding demands of human beings for continued economic growth is being seriously brought into question in terms of the exhaustion of the finite resources of the earth, and the as yet only partially understood effects of the pollution of the land, seas and atmosphere. It may be time to look more seriously at the development of the human intellect and the human community, as a substitute for the continued demand for material wealth. In reality, consumer commodities have never been more than a means to an end, as King Midas found out so long ago.

Despite the wisdom of the ancients, material wealth remains the predominant pre-occupation of our time. Few would fail to wince at the idea of handing a highly priced Ming vase to a person with no conception of its value, who might well drop it, or throw it in the dustbin. Yet many a human infant's life chances are far less well protected than those of a Ming

vase. Attempts are made to patch up some of the most disastrous mistakes in child care, and the expensive services of highly-trained specialists may be lavished upon children whose lives have been shattered by parental neglect, physical, mental or sexual abuse. But beyond this largely futile gesture, society on the whole places a low value on child care and spends few resources in the preparation of, and support for, adults in their responsibilities as parents. If anything, the economic system has quietly encroached upon and undermined the status and skills of those who do attempt to care.

It may be time to look more seriously at the development of the human intellect and the human community, as a substitute for the continued demand for material wealth.

Some would, however, accept that each human infant is indeed more precious than the most expensive vase on earth. When one considers that fifty per cent of a child's intellectual potential is developed before the age of five years, and that the foundations are laid in those early years for his or her artistic and emotional life, the lack of training and support in parenthood is astonishing. This deprivation applies not only in inner city areas, where temporary accommodation and a background of unsettled family life has been inherited by successive generations of parents since the early days of the industrial revolution. Parents in the affluent professional classes enter parenthood in a haze of equal ignorance, ignorance which they themselves would consider horrific in a fellow professional embarking upon a professional task. With

smaller families, and geographic mobility which has split the extended family, it is not at all uncommon for a couple's own baby to be the very first they have ever held in their hands, and for their knowledge of the needs of a toddler or young child to be virtually non-existent. So bemused have we become with the significance of economic growth that we fail even to consider the allocation of resources to the care and nurture of infants and young children. In a haphazard way families have little option but to choose between a series of unsatisfactory strategies in deciding their child care methods. Where both parents wish to remain in economic employment, the parents may decide to pay for the child to be cared for by a non-family member during working hours. The primary duty of this stranger, brought into the child's life on a temporary basis, is to oversee the physical welfare of the child. The relationship between the family and the stranger will cease when their services are no longer required, even where a strong bond may have developed between the child and the carer.

If, on the other hand, parents decide that their child needs continuity of care and affection, and that home and family should weigh more heavily than purely financial considerations, the family faces a further series of unexpected hurdles.

There is considerable pressure upon women in particular to consider that child care is no more than a matter of providing for the physical comfort of an infant up to the age of five years. Beyond that age it is considered that children are off the parents' hands, as they enter formal schooling, and embark on the processes

of training to themselves become units of labour in the economic machine. With the trend towards smaller families, women are encouraged to think that parenting is no more than a minor hiccup in the working life of an adult, taking up a mere 3% of a normal working life. Nothing could be further from the truth. A child is a lifetime's commitment, altering the relationships between the parents, grandparents, siblings, not to mention the child itself, within the family and the community. A child forms a unique link between present and future generations. Further, a child requires a sense of place and personal identity if it is to develop into a mature and responsible adult, willing and able to work with others for the good of the community, and capable of actions beyond the narrowest pursuit of adolescent self-interest.

Perhaps it is time to look again at the fragmentation of family and community life which has resulted from the pursuit of pure materialism, and to consider forms of training for child care and design of communities based on more truly human, as opposed to economic, values. Women who have remained in the home and in the community may well prove to be a most valuable, and hitherto undervalued, source of knowledge and associated with child care and homemaking. There is, however, increasing economic pressure militating against the dissemination of these traditional skills. It may be necessary to mount a new conservation campaign to prevent the total extinction of human values in Western society.

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Book Reviews

Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture

by Juliet B Schor

Scribner 2004 pb £9.99

ISBN: 978-0684870564

Consumerism expert Juliet B. Schor has written what should be a must-read for every new parent, seasoned parent, aunt, uncle, and grandparent. *Born to Buy: The Commercialized Child and the New Consumer Culture* frightened me, and it will you, too.

“American children are deeply enmeshed in the culture of getting and spending, and they are getting more so,” writes Schor, a professor at Boston College. “The more they buy into commercial and materialist messages, the worse they feel about themselves, the more depressed they are, and the more they are beset by anxiety, headaches, stomach aches, and boredom.”

Here is what Schor found, based on various studies and her own survey of 300 children (ages 10 to 13) in the Boston area:

Children are becoming shoppers at an earlier age. It is estimated that children aged 6 to 12 visit stores two to three times per week.

More children go shopping every week than read, go to church, participate in youth groups, play outdoors, or spend time in household conversation.

Children’s top aspiration now is to be rich. Forty-four percent of kids in the fourth through eighth grades now report that they daydream “a lot” about being rich.

Nearly two-thirds of parents report, “My child defines his or her selfworth in

terms of the things they own and wear more than I did when I was that age.”

One study found that nearly two-thirds of mothers thought their children were brand-aware by age 3, and one-third said it had happened by age 2.

Recently, my usually sweet and gentle 6-year-old boy got in my face about something he saw on television and wanted me to get for him. After watching a Saturday morning cartoon program, my son stormed into the kitchen and demanded that I take him to a certain fast-food restaurant so he could get a toy that was in a kid’s meal. He stood there with his hands on his hips, asking: “When are you going to take me? How many times have you taken me?” Then he had the audacity to answer the question for me: “Zero times, Mommy, zero times,” he said, forming two fingers into the shape of a zero.

Clearly, my son had lost his mind. Usually I just ignore it when my kids nag me for stuff. But there was something in my son’s manner that morning that made me take notice. He was product-possessed, and after I stopped fuming, I got scared. I turned my son around and ordered him to go shut off the television. In fact, I went a step further. After that incident, I have severely limited his and his sister’s television watching.

In *Born to Buy*, Schor outlines the numerous tactics that advertisers are using on our kids, many of which turn them into disrespectful tykes and teens. For example, there is an “anti-adult bias” in the commercials. “It’s important to recognize the nature of the corporate

message: Kids and products are aligned together in a really great, fun place, while parents, teachers, and other adults inhabit an oppressive, drab, and joyless world,” Schor says. “The lesson to kids is that it’s the product, not your parents, that is really on your side.”

There is the practice of “trans-toying,” or turning everyday items into playthings. “Child development experts worry that this trend leaves little space for imagination, as every item in the environment becomes a toy,” Schor writes. How many times have you heard your kid say, “I’m bored”? What he or she really means is: You need to buy me something that will entertain me because I can’t possibly be put upon to be creative. Schor concludes that kids who are overly involved in the values of consumerism become problem children. “The prevalence of harmful and addictive products, the imperative to keep up, and the growth of materialistic attitudes are harming kids,” she says.

People-parents-are under siege. And what’s at stake isn’t just a depletion of our assets to buy what our kids are brainwashed to believe they need. What’s

at stake is the well-being of our children.

Advertisers and marketers are turning our children into materialistic monsters. And sadly, we are aiding and abetting the enemy. We let the enemy into our house when we allow our children to watch endless programming surrounded by a steady stream of messages that communicate they aren’t worthy- a somebody-without certain products. We deliver our children to the enemy every time we choose to entertain them by shopping.

I hope *Born to Buy* will motivate you to fight back, because our children - my children - weren’t born to shop.

From “Material Girl and Boy” by Michelle Singletary, *The Washington Post*, November 14, 2004, ©2004 The Washington Post Writers Group. Excerpted with permission Michelle Singletary is a personal finance columnist for *The Washington Post*. She discusses personal finance on National Public Radio’s *Day to Day* program on Tuesdays and online at www.npr.org.

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Obituary

Alan Armstrong

21st July 1933- 24th April 2015

Born in Scotland, Alan Armstrong was Chairman of the Social Credit Secretariat (SCS) from the death of Donald Neale in April 1997 until May 2001. Following a long illness, he died recently in Edinburgh.

After his National Service in the Air Force, and a period working in London as a radar fitter for BOAC, Alan spent several years travelling through Europe and Africa,

working at various jobs, including farm labouring, lorry driving and as a deckhand on a Norwegian coaster. He settled in Scotland, becoming a leading figure in the Scottish tourist industry as Marketing Director of the Scottish Tourist Board and co-founder of the Marketing and Design Agency Limited. His imaginative flair for organisation was apparent in the many schemes he initiated and saw through

to completion. His knowledge of Scottish history led him to become an active member of the Scottish National Party and a firm believer in an independent Scotland. From 1989, as Convener of the Campaign for a Scottish Assembly, he initiated discussions with the Scottish political parties, churches, and a range of representative organizations to establish the Scottish Constitutional Convention seeking to develop a framework for devolution.

Through his involvement in practical politics Alan started to explore alternatives to the mainstream thinking on socio-economic matters which was so plainly failing to alleviate poverty amidst plenty whilst causing unprecedented social and environmental problems. He first became interested in Social Credit after reading an essay entitled *The Builder* (published in 1934) in which the author, Hugh McDairmid suggested that C.H. Douglas "... will rank as the greatest of all Scotsmen". Alan had never heard of Douglas or the world-wide Social Credit movement of the 1920s and 1930s. With characteristic determination, he set about ferreting out the truth of the matter by study reading several of Douglas' books. Although he found them hard going, he recognised the significance of Douglas' books and decided to retire early in order to take a course in economics so that he could compare the orthodox position with Douglas' analysis and prescription for change. An "intelligent, inquiring and hard-working student", he graduated from Heriot Watt University in 1993 with a first class degree in economics and the conviction that Douglas was correct and economic orthodoxy was wrong.

At that time Donald Neale was Chairman of the Social Credit Secretariat set up by Douglas to carry on his work after his death

in 1952. Noting that Alan was publically active in campaigning for a Scottish parliament, Donald Neale was inspired to suggest he attend public meetings on monetary reform organised by the Social Credit Secretariat. Alan quickly became actively involved in the organisation, working on articles and reviews for *The Social Crediter*. Together, with Donald, he planned to launch a campaign for radical monetary and economic reform. After graduating, Alan set about writing *To Restrain the Red Horse: The URGENT Need for Radical Economic Reform*. Published in 1996, the book provides an excellent and very readable description of the debt-money system, how it is the root cause of social and environmental malaise, and how the writings of Douglas and others on the workings of the world financial system provide the basis for the study of alternatives.

Alan Armstrong was the ideal person to take up the editorship of *The Social Crediter* and bring Social Credit into the twenty-first century. When he assumed Chairmanship of SCS he used his networking skills, seeking to bring together a range of politicians, academics and activists in the office premises rented in Edinburgh. He had an amazing talent for organising practical and effective action firmly based upon sound theoretical foundations. Guided by Donald Neale in the initial stages, a legacy enabled him to plan the launch of an international economic reform campaigning organization. Alan was a very shrewd judge of character. A skilled organizer, with a fine sense of humour, he always had time for the people he met along the way. At the Secretariat we have missed him sadly during the years of his illness, and our sympathy goes out to his wife Cindy and their two sons,

Social Credit literature currently available in print or online.

Over the century (virtually) since Clifford Hugh Douglas first put pen to paper, a vast literature on the subject of Social Credit has appeared in print. Douglas' own works were translated into many languages, and most of his books can still be bought over the internet.

The Political Economy of Social Credit and Guild Socialism

Frances Hutchinson and Brian Burkitt, (2005)
£12.99

Down to Earth:

A Guide to Home Economics

Frances Hutchinson (2013) £5

The Grip of Death:

A study of modern money, debt slavery and destructive economics

Michael Rowbotham £18

Understanding the Financial System: Social Credit Rediscovered

Frances Hutchinson (2010) £15

What Everybody REALLY Wants to Know About Money

Frances Hutchinson £12

Asses in Clover (Fictional dystopia)

Eimar O'Duffy (2003) £11

This Age of Plenty

A new conception of economics: Social Credit

Louis Even (Pilgrims of Saint Michael)

The Social Artist

The quarterly journal is freely available electronically. For both print out and read only versions see www.douglassocialcredit.com.

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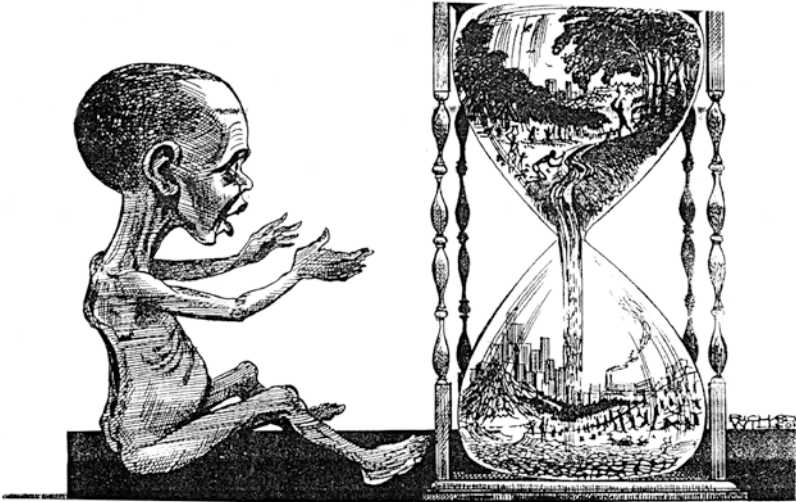
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**If we want to achieve a different society
where the principle of money operates equitably,
if we want to abolish the power money has over people historically,
and position money in relationship to freedom, equality, fraternity ...
then we must elaborate a concept of culture
and a concept of art
where every person must be an artist ...**

Joseph Beuys *What is Money? A Discussion*, Clairview Press, 2010.

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The Social Artist is a quarterly journal dedicated to breaking the boundaries between Christian Social teaching, Anthroposophical Social Renewal, and the institutional analysis of money as presented by the Social Credit movement.