

# LEFT GATEKEEPERS THROUGH THE NEW LEFT: MONITORED REBELLION PART II

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BY [BRUCE LERRO](#) / [PERSPECTIVES](#)

I wrote this article almost four years ago in reaction to the public's claim to be inconvenienced by Oakland protesters stopping traffic on the freeway of Interstate 880 in Oakland in solidarity with the two black men shot and killed by police in Louisiana and Minnesota. The point of that article was to show that bystanders' ideas of where violence starts, when it starts and who the perpetrators of violence are betrays an adherence to a liberal social contract theory rooted in Locke, Hobbes and Rousseau. Even those who claim to be "non-violent" are trapped in social contract theory. At the end of the article I argue for a political-economic understanding of where, when and who is responsible for the violence.

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Given the recent police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, the subsequent torching of police stations and the shutting down of bus lines, we will surely hear even greater howls from bystanders that they are being inconvenienced, that their rights are being infringed on, they had nothing to do with the violence and that the police are a

neutral force. All these claims are rooted in the same social contract theory that becomes increasingly moth-eaten as capitalism continues to disintegrate. -BL



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Orientation

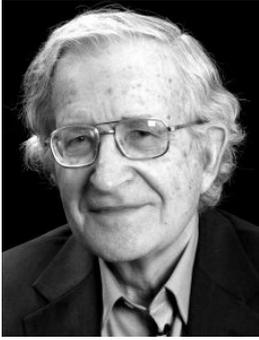
[In Part I of this article](#), I raised some questions about the uneven distribution of media coverage (radio, newspapers, magazines) between leftists, social democrats and anarchists on the one hand, and Leninists on the other. The social democrats and the anarchists receive the most media attention. Next, I showed how the social democrats and the anarchists can be grouped into a single category of “New Left,” while Leninists represented the “Old Left”. I looked for patterns in their differences as I compared them across thirteen categories.

In the second half of Part I of the article, I discussed the machinations of a CIA front group in the 1950’s and 1960’s called the *Congress for Cultural Freedom*. The purpose of this organization was to keep communism from spreading into Europe by drawing anti-Stalinists into their organization, writers and artists, to make the case against communism through books, movies and modern art produced by non-communist left.

In Part II of this article, I explore the presence of other organizations today that perform the same monitoring function, except that Left Gatekeeping is directed primarily within Yankeedom. In the second half of this article I identify the characteristics of a left organization that would *threaten* the Left Gatekeepers. I complete the article by revisiting the characteristics of the New Left I laid out in Part I and show how its theory and practice can work quite well with the goals and purposes of liberal foundations, think tanks, political campaigns and mainstream media. As it turns out, the Left Gatekeepers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century use the New Left to do their monitoring of any kind of movement that has any independent aspirations from the Democratic party. These organizations perform a very similar role as the *Congress for Cultural Freedom* played in the 50's and 60's. The leftist patron saints I named at the beginning of Part I are all unintentionally being used as tools of the Left Gatekeepers today.

#### Stratospheres of the Ruling Class

William Domhoff is a political sociologist who spent his entire life as a social scientist tracking empirically how the ruling class rules. Two of his books that detailed this were [\*The Powers that Be\*](#) and [\*Who Rules America?\*](#). Domhoff found that the three most powerful organizations in the United States are the National Association of Manufacturers, The Business Roundtable and the Rockefellers' group, The Council on Foreign Relations. These organizations rule through eight descending levels, culminating in the control of both the Republican and Democratic parties.



"Like the Cold War liberals of the 1950s, Chomsky is a dogmatic and relentless critic of any kind of state socialism and does not make a distinction between communists and fascists..."

The first level is through university trustees and the setting up of foundations and grants. The second level are the think tanks which represent conservative, centrist and liberal viewpoints. More on this later. From the think tanks come policy discussion groups which develop public relations campaigns. Out of these public relations campaigns come reports, testimonies, books and newspaper editorials. From these are drawn "opinion leaders" who speak regularly to mass media. Policy discussion groups also lead directly to lobbyists and these lobbyists control the political candidate selection, whether they are Republican or Democrat. Lastly, there is the pageantry of elections where the public gets to vote. The important thing to notice is how passive both political parties are. They are the creatures of the upper levels, both liberal and conservative.

Most pertinent to Left Gatekeeping are the think tanks. Conservative think tanks include the Rand Group, American Enterprise Institute, the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, the Center for Strategic and International Studies, the Hoover Institute and the Manhattan Project. A centrist think tank is the Brookings Institute. Liberal think tanks include the Center for American Progress, the Ford Foundation, the Economic Policy Institute and the Center for Economic and Policy Research. [These are all establishment-funded and recognised think tanks, thereby automatically able to inject viewpoints and personnel into governmental policy. A left

think tank, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS), produces important policy papers, but is largely ignored by the media gatekeepers and the political establishment as a whole.—Ed]

While the *Congress for Cultural Freedom* has supposedly dissolved, the ruling classes have learned quite well the importance of controlling alternative visions to capitalism through think tanks, media and selected personalities. Their goal is to exclude any serious organizing of a socialist movement independent of the Democratic Party.

But if the Old Left died with the fall of Stalin as I argued in Part I, what do the ruling classes have to worry about? The truth is that the Leninist tradition has not died out, especially outside the United States. It continues to be present in Cuba, in parts of South America, in Europe and in parts of Asia. *The job of the liberal think tanks in the United States is to either censor them or vilify them.* How do they do this? By indirectly supporting the Old Left's competition – the social democrats and the anarchists of the New Left.

Liberal Think Tanks, Media, and Left Patron Saints as Left Gatekeepers

In his powerful research paper, [Left Gatekeepers](#), Bob Feldman created a [flow chart](#) with ruling class powers such as Council of Foreign Relations, Trilateral Commission, the CIA, with the Carlyle Group at the top. The funding for liberal think tanks comes from the Rockefellers, Carnegie, and Soros. The Ford and MacArthur Foundations establish grants for left liberal news and media sources such as Mother Jones, the Nation Magazine, Z magazine, AlterNet, Fair, NPR, Pacifica, and Democracy Now.

The funding of any leftist organization depends on the organization's willingness to "play ball" if it expects to get regular funding. In his paper, Feldman asks:

*"Are the interests of the people being served by dissidents who are being*

*subsidized by the very agencies of the ruling class whom they should be exposing? What does it say about the motivations behind the left establishment ideological warfare against conspiracy researchers, and their adoption of an increasingly watered-down analytical view which fails to look closely at the inner power structures and conspiracies of the ruling elite”?*

What is Left Gatekeeping?

The purpose of both the CIA, the upper classes and the entire Left Gatekeeping organizational apparatus is to combat communism, whether at home or abroad. Left gatekeeping is a practice by the ruling class of setting up organizations, foundations and think tanks which funnel money into leftist organizations that are:

1. To the left of Leninism (anarchism)
2. To the right of Leninism (social democracy, and New Deal liberals)

They do this in order to infiltrate independent working-class movements, whether Leninist or not. This is the job of the CIA and FBI. The second purpose is to indirectly fund what is perceived as *the weaker and less threatening tendencies of the left for the purposes of isolating the Leninists*. This is the job of foundations, think tanks, the policy making discussion groups and the political campaigns. Thus DSA, Jacobin magazine, Socialist Alternative and Global Exchange will always find a welcoming ear on the radio waves and journals of the Left Gatekeepers. Noam Chomsky, proclaimed anarchist, can come onto *Democracy Now* whenever he wants. But Michael Parenti, who will defend the Soviet Union or China and who is quite capable of matching Noam Chomsky, rarely gets on the air. Then, in election years, without too much nudging, DSA, Jacobin and Socialist Alternative will, one way or another, collapse themselves safely inside the Democratic Party. The rightward turn of the Green Party was orchestrated so that they limited themselves to campaigns in “safe states”. This

way the Democratic Party will have no competition coming from the Left.

Left Gatekeeping in Action: Let's Get Personal

In 2002 Naomi Klein made a wonderful documentary with Avi Lewis called "[The Take](#)". The movie was about workers taking over bankrupt factories and running them without bosses. This was followed by a well-researched and popular book of hers called [The Shock Doctrine](#). It described the destruction of economies around the world by a neoliberal economic policy founded by the "Chicago Boys". A book or so later, she wrote [This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate](#). In this book she uses the term "capitalism" in a manipulative way. The word "capitalism" is provocative for selling the book. However, the book does not criticize capitalism as a system, but only the more neoliberalism version of it. So we are left to wonder, is she a Keynesian or is she a socialist?

Naomi Klein could have gone all over the world in a follow-up to her documentary and described workers' self-management projects. She could have linked that to the workers' councils that were present and operating in Russia from 1917-1921 and in Spain from 1936-1939. But this was perhaps not a project that a publisher would be interested in or a think tank or a foundation might support or promote. So, Naomi Klein swings the gate between sympathy towards anarchism (worker occupations) and New Deal liberalism.

**Cornel West** is another critic who gives his followers mixed messages. In non-election years, he promotes a social democratic program. In most election years he bows to the "lesser of two evils" scenario and tells his followers to vote for the Democrats. Whether or not he promotes the Democrats or the Greens depends on *who is running* as a Democrat. So, for him, if he likes the person, which party the person is in is not so relevant. From a structural Marxist viewpoint, it doesn't matter who is running as a Democrat. The Democratic

Party is a ruling class party and whoever the individual may be is irrelevant. West also swings the gate between social democracy and New Deal liberalism.

Noam Chomsky swings the gate in a way similar to Naomi Klein. In election off-years, besides criticizing US foreign policy, he will promote anarchism by writing forewords to anarchist books. However, during election years his anarchism seems to disappear, and we will be told that the Republican Party is the most dangerous party in history, and we *must* vote for a Democrat. Chomsky swings the gate between anarchism and New Deal liberalism. Like the Cold War liberals of the 1950s, Chomsky is a dogmatic and relentless critic of any kind of state socialism and does not make a distinction between communists and fascists. Christopher Hedges also equated Antifa to the Proud Boys as equally dangerous in that both advocate armed conflict. *All these unwitting Left Gatekeepers share the characteristics of the New Left in Table A in Part I of my article.*

Who do the Left Gatekeepers Censor and Vilify?

Any organization that is clearly for the working class. This doesn't mean unions necessarily. In the business unionism of the United States from the 50s onward, union leadership lost all sense of vision, of fighting for workers to manage the workplace. Union dues were spent by the leadership on promoting voting for the Democratic Party rather than on organizing workers. Union bureaucrats were much more at home with Democratic politicians than they were with their own members. One organization that we predict will not ever make the news at either NPR or the Pacifica radio station is [Labor Notes](#). Labor Notes has been in operation for 40 years. It tracks working class struggles around the United States from the point of view of the rank-and-file. Their goal is to "put the movement back in the labor movement."

Another enemy of the Left Gatekeepers is the formation of a

working-class party that is independent of both political parties. In his [article](#) on our website, Joe G. Kaye has nicely identified all the reasons a working-class party has not been formed in the United States. However, he has not included the machinations of the ruling class – the foundations, think tanks, etc. Despite whatever good intentions they may have, DSA, Jacobin, Socialist Alternative on the right, and anarchists Noam Chomsky and Michael Albert on the left, all are colluding in keeping a working-class party from forming when they invite us every four years to vote for the "lesser of two evils".

Whatever their shortcomings, Leninist parties all over the world have had some success in Russia, China and Cuba in organizing socialism at a national level and sustaining it over decades. Despite their political "authoritarianism" (essentially an upper-class, western-centric notion), they have done very well in reducing poverty, raising the literacy rate, and providing inexpensive housing, (not to mention free higher education and full universal healthcare—Ed). Leninist parties will always be condemned. The social democratic parties of Denmark, Sweden and Norway have also done well but *only because their social democratic movement was a separate party* and did not try to influence a ruling class party like the Democrats, as DSA has done here. While social democracy in these countries has not been condemned by the Left Gatekeepers, they are ignored as examples of how to be socialist and also produce a high standard of living. An independent socialist party terrifies the Left Gatekeepers.

The third group to be disinvited is any New Left group that is anti-Zionist. US foreign policy is very dependent on having a friendly base in the Middle East and we can rest assured that any group that is pro-Palestinian such as the [ANSWER](#) coalition will be attacked as being anti-Semitic. There is good reason why the scholar Norman Finkelstein has never been able to receive a full-time teaching position because of his defense

of the Palestinians. The entire New Left must get a permit paper from [AIPAC](#), the most powerful lobby for Israel in Yankeedom.

Another group targeted by the Left Gatekeepers are organizations that actively support anti-imperialism. Any Pan-African movement leaders like Gaddafi in Libya will be condemned as "authoritarian dictators", mouthing CIA positions. The African People's Socialist Party in Yankeedom would also be dismissed.

Furthermore, on an international level, any organization or media outlet that show the slightest sympathy to nations deemed an enemy of the United States will be targeted. The Left Gatekeepers will have no problem with anarchists who condemn both US foreign policy and the "authoritarian" governments of Russia, China and Iran. But any news source that reports some sympathy for Russia, China, Iran, Cuba or Venezuela are deemed enemies. It is very important to the Left Gatekeepers (whether inside or outside the CIA) that the left in the US toe the party line about its perceived enemies.

So, for example, it is impossible to say that that yes, China has an authoritarian government (by Western definitions) and yes there is a deep class structure and yes, it is state capitalist. Nevertheless, the Chinese state has raised the standard of living for [hundreds of] millions of people and internationally it is doing what Marx said what was best about capitalism: developing the productive forces through building the New Silk Road. China is also going off the dollar, as is Russia, and they are backing their economies in gold. We think that any nation-states or states that attempt to break the domination of the Yankee empire is worth critically supporting. But for the Gatekeepers and their new left pawns, this is too much.

News sources that defend countries that challenge Yankees' foreign policy will be harassed. This is the case for New

Eastern Outlook, Russian Times, The Greanville Post, TeleSUR, or [VenezuelAnalysis](#).

Lastly any group that suggests the United States has been and is capable of assassinations and false-flag operations at home or abroad will be labelled "conspiracy nuts". This is certainly what happened and is happening to the 911 Truth Movement.

Strange Bedfellows: Is the New Left a Pawn of the Left Gatekeepers?

In this last section I want to show how easily the beliefs of the new left can mesh with the foreign and domestic policies of the Left Gatekeepers. First, when the New Left uncritically rejects the state socialism of the former Soviet Union or the current state capitalism of China (or formally known as "Socialism with Chinese characteristics"), it cuts itself off from the Yankees' greatest international rivals and it makes sympathetic collaboration impossible. Secondly when the New Left championed identity politics at the expense of social class, it lost the most powerful force for stopping the capitalist system—class struggle—the working-class production of surplus value in the workplace. Organizing around race and gender does not have a concrete site in which surplus value is produced. As far as gender goes, however real "patriarchy" is, a women's revolution against men is very far-fetched since it runs against evolutionary psychology's sexual selection strategies.

When the New Left throws up its hands and says capitalism can go on forever, it deprives itself of understanding the weak points of the system and how it could be overturned. The Left Gatekeepers are thrilled with the 50-year wild-goose chase dissecting language, psychology, and sexuality, none of which are threats to capitalism. It would be one thing if the New Left approached political democracy with its own party. However, the New Left never built its own party and so it has been trapped for 50 years inside the Democratic Party. With

the possible exception of the anarchists, the New Left ignored democracy, in the *economic* sense of democracy, in the workplace. Being trapped inside the Democratic Party is the ultimate aim of the Left Gatekeepers.

When the New Left rebels against social evolutionary visions of progress domestically, it renounces the expectation that capitalism live up to its promises to use science and technology to reduce the work hours while creating a better life for all. It walks away from the prospect that socialism must be based on *abundance*, not on redistributing scarcity more evenly. With the exception of Murray Bookchin and his followers, when the New Left embraces the ecology movement *it treats ecology as separate from political economy*, as in the case of Earth First. Ecological spiritual interventions of the 1980s and 1990s treat nature as separate from capitalism. It also loses the Promethean spirit of humanity as a higher form of nature. When New Leftists renounce the nation-state for localism or "small is beautiful", these decentralized movements are much easier for the Left Gatekeepers to control. [Or the capitalist state numerous repressive forces.]

When the Club of Rome tells us that the Earth has a limited carrying capacity, it looks to the size of the population in peripheral countries as a problem. Instead of understanding that these countries have larger populations because they have a resource base in agriculture, they are seen as irrational. In reality, like all agricultural societies, they have more children because more children mean free labor. If peripheral countries were allowed to industrialize, their populations would shrink. (In general, affluence and feminist advances shrink family size; this has been seen even in nations such as Italy where familism remains a strong value, and where big family clans have long been a core of the culture from local to regional and national levels Italy's birth rate is today same as Germany (8.6/1000 people), well below that of Canada, Switzerland, Denmark, France and the US). By telling these

countries they have to do with less, the Left Gatekeepers deny peripheral countries their right to the fruits of modern capitalism. Fewer people in the periphery means less competition for wealth.

Internationally, when the New Left becomes anti-western and throws itself into tribal primitivism, eastern mysticism or Wicca, it loses the potential for an *organized liberation theology* within the major churches. As this anti-westernism spreads around the globe, it opens the door for the Left Gatekeepers' promotion of religious fundamentalism. This keeps science and engineering from developing in peripheral countries. That is dangerous for the Left Gatekeepers because these scientists might discover new forms of energy harnessing that might undermine the resource base of western capitalism.

In the arts, the Left Gatekeepers are delighted when the New Left rejects representational art and considers socialist realism too constraining. Abstract expressionism doesn't depict existing social reality or how social reality could be. It describes *psychological rumination* that is cut off from social issues. The Left Gatekeepers tell abstract expressionists – “by all means, throw paint on the canvas, you rebel you!”



A Jackson Pollock masterpiece or a 6-year old tantrum with a brush?

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The same goes for personal appearance. In my article [\*Is Shocking People Revolutionary\*](#), I explain how infinite personal expression may be psychologically satisfying to some but it also creates distance between the middle class, who might be curious about this, and the 40% of the working class for whom this seems quirky or weird.

While pot smoking and LSD tripping may be relaxing and mind-transforming in small doses, too much of this is a loss of organizing potential. I could not organize anyone who was high on pot or in the middle of an acid trip. The CIA gatekeepers knew exactly what they were doing when they flooded black communities with hard drugs in the early 70s. The New Left

began with an interest in Reich's [Mass Psychology of Fascism](#). But many disappeared into the rabbit hole of individualist psychology, whether it be primal scream or gestalt psychology. The feminist cry "the personal is political" soon became the belief that the personal is all there is. For close to a century of psychological manipulation of Gatekeepers, see Adam Curtis documentary [Century of the Self](#), especially Part III.

## Conclusion

The purpose of this article is not to suggest that the non-Leninist left is the passive victim of the CIA, foundations, think tanks and lobbying groups. After all, these organizations did not create the New Left out of nothing. The New Left created its own politics and culture in reaction to real social struggles of the 1960s. It is instead to say that once these politics and culture were created, especially in the late 1960s, they were massaged, sculpted, cut, pasted and smoothed over to also meet the needs of the Leftist Gatekeepers. It is to say:

1. there is real documentation in the present and past that shows that most leftist groups were, and are, being monitored and controlled by Left Gatekeepers;
  2. that there is an implied profile of the kind of leftist groups that are the enemies of the Left Gatekeepers;
  3. that in the light of the current crisis in capitalism and the coronavirus, it is more urgent than ever to embody, organize and spread a political-economic movement along the profile in line with the enemies of the Left Gatekeepers.
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### Strange Bedfellows? The New Left and Their Left Gatekeepers

| New Left Tendency<br>Social Democrats, anarchists, New Deal<br>Liberals  | Category of comparison   | Benefit to the Left Gatekeepers  |
|--|--|--|
| Rejection of Soviet Union or China   | Socialist countries to emulate   | The link between restive populations in the US and the US's greatest rivals is broken  |
| Race relations, gender relations (not class)   | System of stratification<br>Focus  | The most powerful organization against capitalism in the workplace is broken: workers production of surplus value  |
| No - it could go on forever Can only be changed by voluntary action  | Are there inherent contradictions of capitalism that will drive it to termination? | Loss of a sense of how to understand capitalism as a system<br><br>Distraction by language (structuralism, Foucault, postmodernism)  |
| Representational democracy for social democrats<br><br>Participatory democracy for anarchists  | Importance of political democracy  | Representative democracy in a two-party system ties the left to the Democratic Party<br><br>Thinking of democracy as only political keeps people from organizing economic democracy in the workplace |
| Against progress<br>Romanticism - what came earlier in time was better<br><br>Idealizing tribal societies within the US and around the world | Patterns in social evolution: domestically   | Keeps leftists from expecting that science and technology be used to create more material wealth<br><br>Acceptance of having less  |
| Cultural withdrawal, anti-western<br><br>Support of the simplicity of tribal societies   | Patterns of social evolution: internationally                                      | Religious fundamentalism in peripheral countries keeps science and engineering from discovery of new forms of harnessing energy that might undermine the resource base of western capitalism         |
| Rejection of working-class culture for beat poets, happenings, youth, abstract expressionism   | The arts   | Less depictions in representational art in relationship to the misery of working conditions<br><br>Individualist art is a withdrawal from social engagement  |
| Personal becomes political Altered states: pot, LSD<br><br>Personal relationships should be microcosms of the world to come                  | Relationship between personal and political  | Loss of organizing potential<br><br>Less likelihood of being organized when on pot or tripping on LSD<br><br>Keep leftists fighting micro-battles which have little to do with large scale politics  |
| Sympathetic to Freudian Left: Fromm, Horney Reich (white left)<br>Franz Fanon (black left)   | Attitude towards psychology  | Individualist therapy separates the individual from group membership which promotes social change  |
| They worked with organized religion (MLK)<br>Eastern mysticism (New Age)<br>Feminist Wicca   | Religion and spirituality  | Small scale spirituality keeps religious leftism from arising in large churches  |
| Going back to nature   | Attitude towards ecology   | Loss of the Promethean spirit that humanity is a higher form of nature   |
| Anarchist localism<br>Small is beautiful Decentralization  | Political scale  | Decentralized groups are easier to control   |
| Expressive hippie clothing<br>Wearing clothes of native country in Africa (black left)   | Appearance   | Creates alienation between flower children<br><br>Exotic appearance and the working class<br><br>Distance between African Americans and African cultural products.                                   |
| Earth has limited carrying capacity people need to learn to do with less   | Growth and population  | Peripheral countries will not have a right to the fruits of modern capitalism<br><br>Fewer people living on the periphery means less competition for wealth for left gatekeepers                     |

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Bruce Lerro** has taught for 25 years as an adjunct college professor of psychology at Golden Gate University, Dominican University and Diablo Valley College. He has applied a Vygotskian socio-historical perspective to his four books: From Earth-Spirits to Sky-Gods: the Socio-ecological Origins of

Monotheism, Individualism and Hyper-Abstract Reasoning Power in Eden: The Emergence of Gender Hierarchies in the Ancient World Co-Authored with Christopher Chase-Dunn Social Change: Globalization from the Stone Age to the Present and Lucifer's Labyrinth: Individualism, Hyper-Abstract Thinking and the Process of Becoming Civilized He is also a representational artist specializing in pen-and-ink drawings. Bruce is a libertarian communist and lives in Olympia WA.

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*This bloodsoaked monster is probably the most evil person on planet earth <https://t.co/nGq2H1EPHt>*

*– Ben Norton (@BenjaminNorton) [April 9, 2020](#)*

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What about you? Time to push back against the corporate oligarchy.

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