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The Dark Truth of Globalization: Shock doctrine, Disaster Capitalism; Year Zero from
Ground Zero: Neoliberalism: The New Gods and The New World Order

Globalization has been misunderstood. The term is used as a catchy slogan more than a human ideal. We, the public have been spoon-fed an idea of free-markets, opening global exchange to enable the continued and expanded democratic process. We witness as ‘virtual wars’ consume the Middle East from the safety of our North American homes while eating Big Macs watching Sony televisions. The world’s environment and population are becoming increasingly unstable. Clashes of culture, religion, natural disasters and perpetual war have opened a market for a hazy, anthropomorphic union of politics and corporate agendas. Their doctrine is disaster capitalism and business is good. To the New Gods of global finance, shock doctrine is the New World Order. These New Gods exploit earth’s most disposable and accessible resource, human beings. We have embraced Information Communication Technology and given it the power to influence every aspect of our lives. This technology is used against us; we are scrutinized, surveilled and data-mined. My research into the general subject of globalization has led

me to the discovery of some very specific dark truths. These dark truths have been hiding in plain sight for almost fifty years. This essay will sound like unbridled conspiracy theory, but the facts within have been substantiated. I will attempt to delineate the advent of globalization, known today as neoliberalism. Simply put, “Neoliberalism is a mad utopian doctrine foisted on modern society by an unholy alliance of economists, businessmen and technocrats”.¹ It is essentially a privatized government complex with the full support of the U.S. military following a corporate agenda.

To understand shock doctrine, it begins with two key players. The first is Milton Friedman, author of neoliberalism. The second is the CIA, distributor of neoliberalism. A brief history is necessary to understand this bizarre symbiosis. It has forever changed the economic landscape, and is altering the course of human history.

Milton Friedman (1912-2006), won a “Nobel Prize (1976; for his research on consumption analysis, monetary history and theory and the complexity of stabilization policy. for his economic theories”.² His early career spanned from early implementation of war tax (WWII) for the Federal government, to financial advisor to Chilean dictator Augusto Pinochet (in power from 1973 to 1990), and four decades teaching economic theory in American academia. He served as chief economic advisor to several presidents and administrations. With the help of the CIA and the Chilean government, Friedman opened the Chicago School of Economics. He personally trained young Chilean-born economic theorists, sponsored by the Ford administration. The graduates returned to

¹ Connell, Raewyn & Dados, Nuir, “Where in the World does Neoliberalism come from?” 2014. p.120

² Google: <https://nobelprize.org/prizes/economic-science/1976/friedman/milton/>

South America to serve in every level of leadership as economic reformists and theorists. It seemed viable that the CIA reshape the South American economy using an American-made playbook. First in Chile, then moving from one bloody coup to the next. From Chile, Uruguay, Argentina, Venezuela to Brazil. From despot to dictator, each coup would be bloodier than the last. These coups put the Southern Cone under totalitarian control fully sanctioned by the U.S. government. Fear, murder and torture were responsible for over 150 000 dead or missing since the Chilean coup of Pinochet, seizing power from elected President Allende in 1973. “Los Chicago Boys” and Friedman’s economic policy would spread like a virus. “The shock of the coup prepared the ground for economic shock-therapy, the shock of the torture chamber terrorized anyone thinking of standing in the way of the economic shocks”.³ Using regional instability, U.S. sponsored economic policy allowed Friedman’s neoliberal reform be tested in the real world. The neoliberal approach to economic reform was a three-tiered tactic:

The global free-market rulebook, in the U.S. form the agenda for the [neoliberal] movement. First, governments would remove all rules and regulations standing in the way of the accumulation of profits. Second, they should sell off any assets they own that corporations could be running at a profit. And third, they should dramatically cut back funding of social programs.⁴

What this amounts to is effectively privatizing governments. Cutting back on social programs and selling assets to corporate bodies did not remedy Chile’s economic crisis. It worsened it dramatically. It caused displacement, unemployment and huge inflation almost overnight. Dissent was silenced with murder and torture. Friedman’s promise to

³ Klein, Naomi, “The Shock Doctrine; the Rise of Disaster Capitalism.” p.87

⁴ Klein, Naomi, “The Shock Doctrine” p.65

Pinochet was that, with privatization, the economy would self-regulate within six months. It took almost thirty years, and would be flouted at the 'Chile Miracle' by Friedman, his acolytes and the CIA. The sad truth of this 'miracle' is summarized as neoliberal tactics take root beyond the Southern hemisphere, and the new globalization reforms economies worldwide. Klein deftly deconstructs neoliberal reform as it takes hold of the world after taking hold of South America;

[...] Chile under the Chicago School rule was offering a glimpse of the future of global economy, a pattern that would repeat over and over again, from Russia to South Africa to Argentina: an urban bubble of frenetic speculation and dubious accounting fueling super-profits and frantic consumerism, ringed by ghostly factories and rotting infrastructure of a developing past, roughly half of the population excluded from the economy altogether; out of control corruption and cronyism; decimation of nationally owned small and medium-sized businesses; a huge transfer of wealth from public funds into private hands; followed by a huge transfer of private debt into public hands [...] shock-therapy style reforms have been the crack cocaine of financial markets ever since. ⁵

Shock doctrine compared to the "crack cocaine" of financial markets accurately conveys the neoliberal addiction to power and profit.

This real-world victory of neoliberal economic reform was kept out of the public eye as it unfolded in South America. The CIA backed regimes were to maintain 'plausible deniability'. If America was made aware that the massive bloodshed was sponsored and sanctioned by the U.S. government, accountability and criminal action

⁵ Klein, Naomi, "The Shock Doctrine" p.101

would have been the consequence for those in power. “Though sanctioned by successive administrations in Washington, the U.S. role in these dirty wars had to be covert, for obvious reasons”.⁶ It must be understood, globalization was not about opening trade across the planet, it was about controlling it; a new mercantilism. “The desire for godlike powers of total creation is precisely why free-market ideologues are so drawn to crises and disasters. Non-apocalyptic reality is simply not hospitable to their ambitions”.⁷ Disaster Capitalism will be implemented on U.S. soil when the “Jihad attacks McWorld”⁸ on September 11, 2001.

YEAR ZERO/ GROUND ZERO

I can still remember the first time I saw it. On every channel broadcasting live, I saw Tower One in flames, smoke billowing into the sky. I watched the second tower hit by a passenger jet. I remember in vivid detail as the plane seemed, for a moment, to occupy the same space at the same time as the super-structure then explode through the other side. I watched the news as a third plane sped towards the Pentagon. I watched human beings throw themselves from windows eighty stories up to avoid immolation. The revulsion, horror and emotional conflict reached a peak, when inexplicably an avalanche of fire and steel and broken glass collapsed like pyroclastic flow into the city streets below. The second tower followed suit. I remember grabbing for the phone and calling New York, all circuits were busy. Then, like a recipient of shock therapy; I became displaced in space and time. I barely remember leaving the house that day.

⁶ *ibid* p.47

⁷ *ibid* p.24

⁸ Barber, Benjamin, “Jihad vs. McWorld.” *Academic Writing, Real World Topics*. 2016. p.255

9/11 was Year Zero for America. I was not alone. Hundreds of millions of people suffered the same shock and psychic paralysis as I. The American narrative was forever interrupted. My friend survived but so many did not. What I and so many saw as a cataclysmic disaster, the Bush Administration, Friedman and a select few saw an unprecedented opportunity. “The Bush Administration was able to pull off what it could only dream of doing before 9/11: wage privatized war abroad and build a corporate security complex at home”⁹. It was an easy sell, the nation was in shock and was all in, the ‘War on Terror’ unleashed an endless cycle of war-for-profit, “a world-view that has harnessed the full force of the U.S. military machine in the service of a corporate agenda”¹⁰. As demonstrated in his prescient article “Jihad vs. McWorld”, Benjamin Barber delineates that both sides of the spectrum of globalization serve to meet the same end, the death of capitalism. “Caught between Babel and Disneyland, the planet is falling precipitously apart and coming reluctantly together at the same time”¹¹. The holy war waged by the Islamic extremists and the home grown capitalists “who are, in a word, radicals”¹², both serve the neoliberal ideal. The more complete the disaster, the more profit is attainable.

The U.S. immediately entered the ‘Forever War’ in the Middle East. It began as a ‘Shock and Awe’ campaign where coalition forces tested their refined precision warfare. Reporters documented witnessing high-yield missiles twisting through intersections to find their targets. “Technological mastery removed death from our experience of war. But

⁹ Klein, Naomi, “The Shock Doctrine” p.17

¹⁰ *ibid* p.17

¹¹ Barber, Benjamin, “Jihad vs. McWorld.” *Academic Writing, Real World Topics*. p.255

¹² Postman, Neil, “Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change.” p.4

war without death – to our side – is war that ceases to be fully real to us: virtual war”.¹³ The Iraqi casualties were in the tens of thousands over a matter of days but on the news we watched guided missiles streaming through exhaust vents then pixelating out on detonation. What we did not see was women and children blown to bits, civilians filed away as ‘collateral damage’. What we did not know was aerial reconnaissance pre-selected targets from the safe distance of drones, “[and] targeters [...] would evaluate the designated point of impact [...] according to four grades of collateral damage. Legal and moral evaluation of the targets was also built into the computerized operation”.¹⁴ Please take special note of the fact that moral evaluations were run by a computer. By what parameters would a ‘moral’ algorithm calculate the loss of human life? How could a computer program assess what is ‘moral’ and ‘immoral’ collateral damage?

As witnesses and spectators our collective revulsion to “the shifting and chaotic phantasmagoria of wartime [memories]”¹⁵ was no longer a factor. “The Western public came to think of war as laser surgery. Displays of this kind of lethal precision first awakened awe; now they are expected. We routinely demand perfection from the technology that surrounds us, our mobile phones, computers and cars. Why not war?”¹⁶ Saftar Ahmed agrees with Michael Ignatieff of the West’s perspective and safe distance from the visceral terrors of war;

Thus, our visual memory of Operation Desert Storm [...] invasion of Iraq in 2003, compared to the experience of watching a video game

¹³ Ignatieff, Michael, “*Virtual War, Kosovo and Beyond.*” p.5

¹⁴ Ignatieff, Michael, “*Virtual War*” p.100

¹⁵ Bowie, Thomas G. Jr., “Memory and Meaning: The need for Narrative: Reflections on the Symposium: Twentieth Century Warfare and American Memory.” *Academic Writing, Real World Topics.* p.313

¹⁶ Ignatieff, Michael, “*Virtual War*” p.92

than of witnessing war [...] planes and drones whose pixelated footage of exploding targets provide an abstract simulacrum of war.¹⁷

This simulacrum of war was a direct result of 9/11. Islamophobia raged across America. U.S. citizens were identified by the public as the ‘enemy’, people were attacked in the streets, mosques covered in graffiti, Muslim shops destroyed. As the ‘Forever War’ raged on it became more personal, less virtual. Soldiers were being killed by IED’s (Improvised Explosive Devices) almost daily, suicide attacks and unclear enemies caused psychic injury to soldiers and viewers. The war had no narrative, none of it made any sense. Though the media clamored for public opinion, but “in doing so turned patriotism into a sordid if not lethal emotion”.¹⁸ Many soldiers returned home only to commit suicide, the nation grew weary of witnessing the endless atrocities, sharing the trauma (from a distance) with the boots on the ground. “Psychological blurring can bring historical blurring, not only for individuals but perhaps also for a nation that experiences war year after year”.¹⁹ Is it possible all of America began to suffer from a form of PTSD? The media, also serving corporate interest, began to generate a more family-friendly view of the war, “the popular lexicon has adopted the term of “fake news” and attributed it to Trump, yet it should be attributed to neoliberalism”.²⁰ We all know that we are being lied to via the mass media, we just don’t know how much we are being lied to.

From Year Zero to today, an endless campaign of half-truths and flat out lies has served the agenda of corporate government;

¹⁷ Ahmed, Safdar, “Father of No One’s Son: Abu Ghraib and Torture in the Art of Ayad Alkadi.” *Academic Writing, Real World Topics*. p.337

¹⁸ Postman, Neil, “Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change.” p.1

¹⁹ Bowie, Thomas G. Jr., “Memory and Meaning: The need for Narrative.” p.337

²⁰ Marshall, Wesley C., “The Trump administration and the Neoliberal Project.” *Theory in Action*. p.62

Neoliberalism has given rise to a post-truth society in which fake news and disasters – real or created – are intended to create a smoky hall of mirror through which society must attempt to interpret reality. Such a world results directly from a government elite whose overarching goals – the dominance of the world’s greatest banks – are [so] anathema to the common man.²¹

Wesley clearly defines the goal of neoliberalism, control of the world’s greatest banks. To illustrate the effectiveness of the neoliberal campaign to hide the real agenda of the globalization movement, follow the money. Keep in mind, these figure are over a decade old.

To cite just three statistics that show the scope of transformation [from Year Zero], in 2003, the U.S. government handed out 3 512 contracts to perform security functions; in the twenty two month period ending in August 2006, the Department of Homeland Security has handed out 115 000 such contracts. The global “homeland security industry”, economically insignificant before 2001 – is now a 200 billion dollar sector. In 2006, U.S. government spending on Homeland Security averaged \$545 per household.²²

These, as mentioned are early figures of the kind of profits generated from the closed loop of industry involved in the ‘War on Terror’, they are staggering statistics. New numbers of the same interests by today’s standards have surely multiplied ten-fold. The new corporate government performs “violence which moralizes itself as justice and which is unrestrained by consequences”.²³ War, plague, natural disasters are all very biblical allusions, yet all lie at the core of the true shape of globalization. What must be

²¹ Marshall, Wesley C., “The Trump administration and the Neoliberal Project.” p.62

²² Klein, Naomi, “The Shock Doctrine” p.15

²³ Ignatieff, Michael, “*Virtual War*” p.163

understood is that globalization is not about “[liberating] people from the tyranny of place”.²⁴ ICT’s are giving voice to the unheard, but these technologies are carefully monitored by privatized security sectors. Globalization is not opening niche markets and crossing cultural divides, as Cowen describes as “diversifying the menu”. People blithely assume that the internet is the home of a new democracy, opening the idea “of what kinds of freedoms are possible within the modern world”.²⁵ This is an illusion. We have been sold a null hypothesis, Barker argues that if you are with the Jihad or the McWorld, “Our secular identities have been corrupted, neither race nor soul offers us a future that is other than bleak, neither promises a polity that is remotely democratic”.²⁶ The violent race and the corrupted soul, the blind, obedient and stupid world is all in the service of neoliberalism;

Neoliberalism has always been vulgar, and as much and as such, most could easily imagine some unidentifiable and organic increase in America’s anti-intellectualism as being behind the willful ignorance we see today. But dumbing down the population, and making them greedy, fearful and stupid, is indeed a pillar of neoliberal though conversion [...] neoliberalism isn’t an ideology at the service of an overt political project, but rather nihilism at the service of a hidden political project.²⁷

Wesley clearly states that the ideology of neoliberalism is defined as “nihilism at the service of a hidden political project”. The smoky hand that comes from the sky and shapes the world is not conspiracy theory, it is the neoliberal project in motion. As you can see, Milton Friedman and the CIA have sealed the fate of humanity. This shadowy

²⁴ Cowen, Tyler, “Trade Between Cultures.” *Academic Writing, Real World Topics* p.266

²⁵ Cowen, Tyler, “Trade Between Cultures.” p.265

²⁶ Barber, Benjamin, “Jihad vs. McWorld.” p.255

²⁷ Marshall, Wesley C., “The Trump administration and the Neoliberal Project.” p.66

organization known as the neoliberal movement has changed the face of globalization; in its infancy maybe a world of synthesis, as imagined by Cowen, was possible. Corporate agenda and simply human greed have given birth to this corporate and political super-power. The neoliberals “project[ing] an ability to overcome all forms of scarcity and transcending any constraints associated with earthly existence”.²⁸ These are the new mythical, faceless Gods of our time. According to Joseph Campbell, neoliberals meet the criteria for transcendence into the echelons of divinity;

The main motifs are the same and they have always been the same [...] Every mythology has grown up in a certain society in a bounded field. Then they came into collision, and they amalgamate, and you get a more complex mythology [...] What is a myth? The dictionary definition of a myth would be stories about Gods. So then you have to ask the next question, what is a god? A god is a personification of a motivating power or value system that functions in human life and in the universe.²⁹

The neoliberals have indeed transcended. They fit Campbell’s definition of gods, beyond myth, shaping human life. They feed from chaos and create human suffering of biblical proportions. Neil Postman articulated the dangers of embracing technology and power we do not understand. We have “a common tendency to think of our technological creations as if they were God-given”.³⁰ Joseph Campbell argues that we have given our technology the title of God. Both perspectives argue the same point. The information age and its trappings serve an agenda we do not understand. We insist that with the Digital Age we

²⁸ Thorne, Kym, “Does History Repeat? The Multiple Faces of Keynesianism, Monetarism, and the Global Financial Crisis.” *Administrative Theory & Praxis*. p.313

²⁹ Campbell, Joseph, “*The Power of Myth*.” p.22

³⁰ Postman, Neil, “Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change.” p.4

would no longer be alone in the world; but we are only users and groups. We are addicted to the information and think it is vital to our continued existence. We have deified technology, but the new Gods use our technology against us. It is used as surveillance and to finesse the market. Every keystroke is logged and monitored and sold back to us based on intelligence generated by our on-line patterns. But we are all aware of this. With the 'War on Terror' we signed the Faustian Contract. We waved our privacy rights in the name of fighting evil. The very same evil that allegedly caused 9/11. The same evil that whipped the average American into an Islamophobe, mob tactics used against anyone wearing a turban, mosques covered in hate-filled graffiti, fire-bombing Muslim owned businesses, racial profiling at airports, and so on and so on.

This essay is an expose of the true face of globalization. A diversified menu, or cultural synthesis, according to Cowen is 'globalization-lite'. Barber's "Jihad vs. McWorld" is a much scarier evaluation of globalization but illustrates only that the two opposing forces serve the neoliberal agenda, more chaos, more profit. Neil Postman warns us to be wary of emergent technology, but we were not. Naomi Klein writes a daring challenge to the economic regime, often using torture as a metaphor for economic reform. This is accurate. Joseph Campbell is a celebrated author who identifies the 'Power of Myth', however we have elevated technology and economics above mere mythologies into the realm of the Gods. Donald Trump, possibly the scariest president since Nixon and the stupidest president since Eisenhower is the poster-boy for the neoliberals, consider this; "As opposed to considering the 2016 election a terrifying reflection of an ignorant and retrograde population that has reached a critical mass in the United States, we see it as the absolutely terrifying continuation of the global neoliberal

project”.³¹ As a testament to disaster capitalism I challenge the reader to follow the cleanup of the California wildfires, in which Trump (allegedly) has a personal vested interest in recovering from the ‘natural’ disaster massive amounts of fertile real estate. The fact that the U.S. government now owns Google should raise red flags for every person on-line everywhere. The internet is originally a military design, and now serves the U.S. military for global and domestic surveillance. The technology of the Digital Age we so actively seek out and embrace does not serve our best interest. It serves the agenda of the neoliberals.

Our world is run by governments that are run by corporations that run full-scale military operations. As I hoped to make clear, this is the truth of globalization, not rampant conspiracy theory. The following almost puts a face to the New Gods of our world as it is today:

[...] what has emerged as a powerful ruling alliance between a few very large corporations and a class of mostly wealthy politicians with hazy, ever-shifting lines between the two groups [...] Russia, “the oligarchs”, China, “the princelings”, Chile, “the piranhas”, the U.S. “the pioneers”. Far from freeing the market from the state, these political elites have simply merged, trading favors to appropriate precious resources previously held in the public domain – from Russia’s oil fields, China’s collective lands to the no-bid reconstruction work in Iraq.³²

How do we free ourselves from the tyranny of the neoliberal agenda? I found one possible answer in the ‘Unabomber Manifesto’, his manifesto was published by several major American newspapers under duress, but is a prescient call to the revolution:

³¹ Marshall, Wesley C., “The Trump administration and the Neoliberal Project.” p.59

³² Klein, Naomi, “The Shock Doctrine” p.24

The continued development of technology will worsen the situation. It will certainly subject human beings to greater indignities and inflict greater damage to the natural world [...] We therefor advocate a revolution [...] this is not to be a political revolution. Its object will be to overthrow not the government but the economic and technological basis of the present society.³³

The Unabomber was accurate with his public challenge to overthrow economic and technological powers, not the government. What he did not know when writing his manifesto that the economic and technological powers would ‘buy’ the government. Taking inspiration from a sociopath to illicit social change seems illogical, “Where do we draw the boundary between transgression and pathology? When does “thinking outside the box” shade over into mental illness?”³⁴ The shock doctrine and disaster capitalists will not be held accountable for the death and misery that is the fertile setting for their expansion. Clearly, this group are beyond a collection of sociopaths, their drive to dominate the global market is psychotic. The difficulty of finding any logic in the Age of Reason is that where you seek logic, you find only logistics.

Ultimately, there is no system to rebel against. We are each and all parts of the very machine that is stripping us of our humanity. The neoliberals hover in a pantheon high above us, shaping the world without our consent or knowledge. We pray to them with every nickel we earn. We pay homage to them every minute on-line. Every dollar spent is a eulogy. To defy them is self-defeating, one would have to vanish from the economy entirely, buy nothing, earn nothing ad infinitum. How could this be done when we are all, by design, consumers? But how can we allow this to continue, a corporate,

³³ Heath, Joseph & Potter, Andrew, “*The Rebel Sell, why culture can’t be jammed.*” p.135

³⁴ Heath, Joseph & Potter, Andrew, “*The Rebel Sell.*” p.137

government and military agenda that feeds on the planet's most accessible and disposable resource, human beings? Where is the logic in the Age of Reason? These are the people who are covertly shaping economic policy and form the momentum behind globalization. Where are they? Who are they? If we somehow found them (by following the money) and dared to challenge them, would we simply 'disappear' like Augusto Pinochet's dissidents? In America in today's regime, would we experience "extraordinary rendition" and end up in a military prison in Cuba? Is fighting economic reform domestic terrorism?

These are all questions without answers but questions that must be asked. To not question the world around us, to not look deeper at the world meticulously presented to us is willful ignorance and intentional blindness. Postman reminds us that the great philosopher Socrates told us "the unexamined life is not worth living".³⁵ We all carry a responsibility to seek out the truth.

If we burned the whole world to the ground, the neoliberals would emerge from their palatial bunkers hidden in the deep Arctic or on the dark side of the Moon. They would simply issue a global no-bid reconstruction contract to one of their subsidiaries.

It seems that we are far past the point of no return. The mad utopians of the neoliberals now overtly shape global economic policy.

This is the dark truth of globalization.

³⁵ Postman, Neil, "Five Things We Need to Know About Technological Change." p.1

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