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## The Comedy of Trump

By Andrew Stewart  
April 8, 2016



The candidacy of Donald Trump, somewhat despite and somewhat because of his ridiculous mugging and antics, strikes me as one of the greatest cartoons presented to the American public in some time. Perhaps this is due to my own Oscar the Grouch skepticism as an 85-year-old woman trapped in the prison of a 30-year-old man's body, complete with an attraction to Billie Holiday and Douglas Fairbanks and disgust at any music produced in this century, but I think this man is a fascinating and very public example of the ruling class getting exactly what they asked for.

At the outset, let me be clear, I find his racism, sexism, xenophobia, and personal history of union busting repellent. But I also find any Sanders supporter who says they are going to hold their nose and vote for Clinton to protect us from the Donald slightly *more* repellent. The former First Lady has more gallons of blood spilled from racist imperial violence on the cuticle of her

pinky finger than Trump does on both hands. Her pillaging of Haiti and Libya alone is the stuff of a bacchanal that would make the Marquis de Sade blanch. Well-intended hyperventilating pwogwessives, to quote Alexander Cockburn, have already been having a fit whenever I point this out. But it is not my fault that my sense of morality and decency stands when I am dealing with Democrats as strongly as it does when I deal with Republicans. In reality it is just a case of moral hypocrisy on the part of Democrats who are so high on their horse about corporatized neoliberal feminism they are delusional enough to think the woman who decimated Welfare, said you can be a feminist and anti-choice at the same time, pigeonholed black children as super-predators, and supported lunatics who sodomized Muammar Gaddafi with a knife is anywhere near Eleanor Roosevelt. Wake up, kids, she is in fact much closer to Eva Braun than you realize. And just to be clear, I am voting for a woman in this election because I am a feminist, it just so happens that Jill Stein is a medical doctor, a parent, and a gentle person who has one of those funny things I heard my priest call a soul when I was in Catholic school way back in the twentieth century.

No, what I find so hilarious about Trump is how his campaign is tearing the Republicans apart. The Democrats are fundamentally and forever hijacked by the business class through this ridiculous super-delegate system. The Republicans are not because they always were intending to remain the party of the businessman, the parliamentary equivalent of a country club soiree that bars the entrance of minorities, women, and poor people. In that sense, they never saw any reason to hijack their party the way the Democrats did.

But then something pretty ridiculous happened. They re-branded themselves as a populist party by way of the astro-turfed Tea Party movement, the whole Ron Paul revolutionary cadre, and a few other steps that, in the short term, allowed them to be intransigent in the face of Obama. This was not unlike when Barry Goldwater did the same thing in 1964, setting the stage for the Southern Strategy that gave us the Nixon presidency and all the abominations that went with it. But the key difference, which they obviously did not grasp, was the fact that white privilege and the Cold War did not work in the same way it did in 1964. When Goldwater was campaigning, he was courting the white supremacist that did not want to de-segregate schools and the hawks that wanted to drop an atomic bomb on the Vietnamese. But under Obama, what exactly was there to do but peck at the periphery of a system that was already unjustly tilted towards not just minorities but everyone who is poor? What the Republicans did not do, probably due to an anti-Communism that has become general stupidity, is think in the vulgar Marxist terms of class warfare and understand the populists they flooded their ranks with were in fact not gunning for black people as much as rich people.

Take for example the classic Republican talking point about “entitlements” and all that anti-social safety net stuff. Once you get past the certainly racist shell, you actually find at the soft center not a criticism based on race as much as class, an argument for economic fairness and equal opportunities for all Americans. These talking points are framed by the Republicans to target black and brown people, but if you replace the phenotype descriptor with an economic one, change it to entitlements for bankers, you have the main talking points of the Sanders campaign and Occupy Wall Street! This is not to suggest that these people are not prone to white supremacy, they have those tendencies, but the tendencies come from despair and misunderstanding class warfare. They have been indoctrinated to believe in race war rather than

class war. But the economic downturn is very quickly making the delusions of white supremacy loose their realness, the feeling that the dream is tenable. The Matrix has ceased to prove to be convincing to them.

How do I know this? Simple.

For years the myth of white supremacy was class mobility, the idea that a white person could go through education, get a good job, and live a middle class lifestyle. While this was occurring, black and brown people were doomed to their apartheid status of barely-subsisting poverty, having as their horizon maybe ascending to the management of a fast food restaurant if they were lucky and a municipal or state job if they were blessed. But now that delusion is all over. Tail-end Baby Boomers like my parents are seeing their kids unable to ascend to the middle class.

What bothers me about Chris Hedges and his recent writing is not so much his moralizing, though he is prone to that, as much as his inability to articulate that all his doom-saying about where white people are going to end up in the next few years due to class warfare is exactly where black and brown people have been living for the past several centuries in America. It is not that there are no jobs for white people, it is that management of a fast food restaurant is becoming their horizon also. The privatizing of municipal, state, and federal jobs by neoliberal capital has made that blessed job even more unlikely for white people. The Liberal dream was that white supremacy would collapse and we would all be free. The neoliberal nightmare is that white supremacy is collapsing and we all are being made to live in apartheid, but, rather than an apartheid of ethnicity, an apartheid of class.

Doubt me on this? Just take a look at the financial investments of the Bushes and the Clintons. One of the major things they are now putting their money into is private water sources. They are doing this because they know climate change is going to seriously imperil our water supplies and make us live in a society not unlike the nightmares of MAD MAX. They are quite cognizant of this and so are investing to protect the well-being of their children and grandchildren. The recent apathy and lack of action towards the water supply in Flint, Michigan was a test run of the wider apathy that they hope will occur when we all have a compromised water supply.

And so Trump, the union-busting, casino-franchising, loudmouth Looney Toon who cannot be stopped, has become the symbol of a great portion of our country's class warfare anxieties. He is rude, crude, oafish and obscene. But his base is the working people that will prove to be essential when we make the decision, to quote Rosa Luxemburg, between socialism and barbarism.

And we already know Clinton favors the latter. All you need to look at are her investments.