

The Divergent Self

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In the months since my initial release of my original essay “Statism and Ableism” onto the Anarchist Library, my life has changed in ways not necessarily for the better. I have been evicted, nearly murdered and outright lynched, subjected to vicious homophobia, ableism, and transphobia, and my outlook on life has changed radically since then. I believe my initial analyses in the “Statism and Ableism” essay are incomplete, and in need of expansion. This paper is a joint product of Rayne the Cat and I. Let’s begin.

Society favors able-bodiedness and able-mindedness over disabled bodies and minds because able-bodies and minds are better able to meet the needs of production and capital. This analysis can also extend to selfness itself in a way. What I mean by this is that as one grows up, the developing and still fragile sense of self is moulded, contained, and shaped by school, by socialization, and by various other forms of indoctrination and acculturation to the needs and values of society at large, not always to the benefit or self-interest of the self.

These needs and values are those related to the continued expansion of the capitalist economic system and all that implies. Capitalism is a system based off of exponential growth and exploitation, and needs able-bodied and able-minded workers to procure and produce what capital wants and desires. This by necessity implies a demand-set close to the average or to the “norm” so to speak, and thereby outlaws and marginalizes people outside of the norm, of the “average.” If you standardize the people, ie the workers, you standardize the results of their labor. By standardizing the producers, you standardize the production, so to speak.

It is thereby easy to see how this process, what I call the process of “worker-rearing,” is fundamentally ableist to its rotten core. To define worker-rearing in more succinct terms, it goes like this: The rearing and raising of children to be part of the labor force, or to somehow further the process of exploitation and exponential growth that is capitalism. I’m sure much has been written on this subject before, so I won’t go into much detail here. The sole purpose of this essay is to explore how childrearing itself, at least in modern day capitalist societies, is fundamentally ableist.

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