

Imposed Imbecility

Rob los Ricos

1999

Contents

The nuclear family – incubator for imbecility	3
Into the herd!	4
Deathwatch of the imbecile.	5

One of the greatest obstacles to overcome in the struggle against capitalism is the sense of dependency its methods of production have forced upon us. By forcing people to spend most of their time in productive, redundant, and unskilled labor, people must depend upon the specialized production of other workers to provide the food, clothing, shelter, and countless consumer gizmos that we're trained to want.

Prior to the era of industrial enslavement, most households and families were considered functional or not by that household's ability to be more-or-less self-sufficient. This has been true of societies from the time of nomadic bands through the ages of village communities. The dislocation of peasant populations by the various states during the (on-going) period of enclosure forced people into desperate poverty, into factory labour, and immigration to the newly-conquered colonies abroad. Both the rise of industrial capitalism and European conquest of the new world would not have been possible if not for the evisceration of peasant households. After all, why go abroad to seek one's fortune, why buy shoddy, mass-produced dry goods, when people are able to make almost everything they need themselves, and everything they need is available at home?

Living, in the days prior to industrial enslavement, was what people did throughout the course of the day; preparing food and things that would be necessary for one's comfort and survival in the future. This was often done under the supervision of a family member, and everyone would learn the basic skills they needed to provide for themselves. Now, however, people must make a living. We are coerced into making profits for corporations, and are also compelled to structure our lives around these labor activities. To make also means to force. Whereas life once flowed in gentle rhythms of light and dark, now we must jump according to the dictates of the clock, every moment of the day measured and portioned out according to some boss's demands. Our society jumps according to the rhythms of the factory, the school, or some other institution upholding the state or capital.

Most people accept this unquestioningly. Most people are not only unwilling to take a critical glance at these imposed conditions of their lives, but are actually incapable of doing so. All the institutions of power and privilege serve this purpose of enforcing a feeling of helplessness upon the masses. Their master stroke is achieved by convincing people to embrace their dependency as empowerment. Even the most intelligent, capable people of modern societies have fallen into this trap. They can't help it. They were trained to be self-repressing imbeciles since the moment of their birth.

The nuclear family – incubator for imbecility

All of us are born as free beings in a thriving, dynamic world of abundance. The totality of nature's plentiful banquet is ours for the taking, for sharing, for cherishing. This must be denied – at all cost – by the forces of the state and capital. Should we awaken to and demand our birthright, all industry and nation states would vanish, made irrelevant by our refusal to accept their limitations.

Unfortunately, the machinations of industry are so entrenched into our lives that the denial of our birthright begins at the moment of our births. Immediately we are subjected to the regimentation of numbers – weighed, measured, timed, classified, documented.

Once in the grasp of the nuclear family, we are shackled into the role we are expected to play all our lives – that of the helpless, drooling idiot. Someone to be looked after, cared for, spoiled,

tolerated, kept quiet, or busily distracted. The straightjacket called childhood enshrouds us and few of us escape its bonds during our lives.

In the times before the era of childhood, young people spent most of their time in the company of their families – mainly their parents and extended family. Infants are observant and intelligent. They could see what their parents did during the day: Cooking, grooming, creating things, working their gardens, foraging. By the time they were old enough to walk, they were capable of helping their families out, if only in minor ways. The more the young person grew, the more the person was able to contribute to the maintenance of the household, and the well-being of its members. This was a source of pride for the young person, and was not discouraged. Instead, the family would suggest and encourage youngsters to learn new skills and help out with more tasks as the youth grew stronger and gained experience. Embedded into extended families and others in their local community, it would require nothing but social opportunity for a youth to discover their own talents, abilities, and interests, and to find elders ready to nurture their development, and possibly even share resources in these efforts. Is it any wonder then that a person raised in this manner would be capable of starting their own household at the age of 13, 14, or 15? Having encountered few limitations other than their own physical and experiential development, these young folks could recognize when they were ready to move on to adulthood.

In the contemporary, conceptual prison of childhood, the child is protected from the demands of the real world. Pushed aside, ignored, and neglected, the child is prevented from being an autonomous person, and is instead treated like an imbecile. Taught to be quiet, still, and out of the way, the child is left dependent upon the family, or – more often – total strangers, who take great care to stop the child from growing, from realizing their abilities, from claiming their rightful places as living beings in a world of abundance.

The nuclear family is just the first method of repression the young person experiences. Later, the expectations of society are made manifest through the school system. This is just a training ground for the lifetime of meaningless drudgery to follow.

Into the herd!

The child is forced to undergo years of imbecility training. Total strangers shall prevent the child from developing opinions, from thinking independently, from thinking critically. Children are taught to be quiet, be still, to repeat what they are told, to obey unquestioningly, to speak only when spoken to. But the young person is full of energy and curiosity. To be still and quiet is unnatural, repulsive even. In having the discipline of school forced upon them, young people learn the most important of all lessons: those who behave in the most unnatural way are rewarded and praised. They also learn another lesson: deviations from expected behavior will be tolerated so long as one gives the appearance of fulfilling the authorities' expectations. Perhaps this is the most important lesson. In this way, the normal acting out of childhood energies is reified as rebellious, troublesome behavior. As the aging children grow past the point where they could have – in an earlier time – passed into adulthood, these same childish urges are still seen as rebellious behavior: talking out of turn, doing what adults do but prohibit their children from doing, not doing what they are told to do, doing things considered naughty or taboo. Imbecilic rebellion is allowable as long as the supposed rebel otherwise goes through the motions of fulfilling society's expectations.

This isn't a problem for almost everyone. Their heightened state of imbecility prevents them from challenging society's hold on their lives, from realizing their birthright.

After serving their sentence, the oldest children are paroled into the outside world. Here they will put into practice what they've learned – to obey without thinking and not challenge authority. Abhorred behavior is punished by sending the unruly child to a sexually segregated re-education center called jail. Here the old rules are once again emphasized: do as you're told, speak when spoken to, lights out and go to bed! The rules of imbecility are simple.

Imbecilic rebellion is mildly punished. More severe punishment is meted out for superseding the rules of imbecility, by ignoring the rules and making a greater imbecile of one's self, though it is tolerated with modest punishment if violations are committed for the sake of maintaining the role of imbecile. More severe is the penalty for suggesting that one's existence need not be imbecilic. True rebels are the actual danger to the forces of the industrial nation-states. Not only must unruly imbeciles pay for their thought crimes with their freedom or their lives, but they must endure denunciations by other imbeciles, who will subject them to abuse and humiliation in the process. More interested in kissing the ass that shits on them, rather than trying to stop the flow of shit over them, the imbeciles wail and gnash their teeth to think that anyone, any one person, anywhere, at any time, would dare to live outside the structures of domination which define the life of the imbecile. True rebels against imbecility are labeled as lazy, or haughty. They are rumored to think of themselves as being "better than" the true imbeciles. Or that "their shit don't stink," in imbecile-speak.

The rewards of imbecility are a heightening of the helplessness and impotence of the faithful. The more privileged members of the herd must be protected, secreted away behind secured barriers. Unable to perform even the most basic task, the most privileged imbeciles often obtain surrogate mothers to tidy up after them, to procure and prepare their meals, to make plans for their activities. These utterly incompetent fools are worshiped by other imbeciles, who fetishize and envy those who have achieved a greater state of imbecility. This gives the privileged a feeling of power. The implied power is sanctified by the herd, many of whom aspire to partake in this exclusive state of advanced imbecility. To prove their worth, the imbeciles must demonstrate their idiocy through ruthless obsequience to everything that diminishes human existence. Compassion is seen as weakness. Love as a matter of ownership. Annihilation is called progress. Anything that can be done to generate profit is justifiable. Mountains are leveled, rivers dammed, forests murdered, species of every sort of living thing obliterated, just to provide imbeciles their privileges.

Remember, the imbeciles can only survive by forcing the uninitiated, the under-privileged, even the few remaining free human beings, to provide for them. With their lives reduced to destitution, the marginalized can be bribed into becoming the armed enforcers of imbecility, ensuring the comfort and safety of the imbeciles of the world, and removing anything or anyone not being utilized for the never satiated demands of expansive imbecility.

Deathwatch of the imbecile.

A lifetime of loyal service to the continuance of imbecility is rewarded with the misery of gradually dying, in increasing pain. Their bodies have been ruined by their labours, by their exposure to lethal industrial processes and their by-products. They have poisoned themselves

with cigarettes, pharmaceuticals, liquor, horrid food, filthy air, stress, anger, hatred. The fortunate ones can then pay for the privilege of correcting and lessening the impact of this damage through medication, surgery, and the intervention of medical technology. These beaten-down, exhausted people do not demand that the people causing this damage accept responsibility for the harm they've caused. Nor do these sick and damaged people demand that the responsible parties and their methods of production cease to continue inflicting damage upon their descendants and the world in general. They are, after all, imbeciles. Indeed, many of these people's continued existence is dependent upon the continuation of the processes of industry which wrecked their bodies and their lives.

What is to be done about all these imbeciles? Those of us unwilling to perpetuate the domination of imbecility must break free of its grasp. We must learn to care and provide for ourselves, and invite others to share in our adventures in self-rediscovery. In this way, we can create a new cycle of expansive, life-enhancing existence, an undertow of liberation to pull back the tide of death-dealing industrial states.

Reject imbecility by embracing your own ability to meet your needs outside the sanctified disability of the imbecile. Claim your place as a person born into a world of abundance, band together with others who feel the same, and break free of domination and control by wealthy scum who depend on our subservience to provide their lives of extraordinary excess.

The Anarchist Library
Anti-Copyright



Rob los Ricos
Imposed Imbecility
1999

retrieved on 12/2/2022 from

<https://web.archive.org/web/20180502212248/https://roblosricos.wordpress.com/>

Author's note: i believe this was first published in a zine created by Brenton Geiker whilst i awaited sentencing in Eugene, Oregon - called "Fuck you, Bearden!" (The name of the judge for trial and sentencing.)

theanarchistlibrary.org