

WE MUST VOTE: TINY IS POWERFUL

It has been months in the making.
That is what gives this essay its value...

Value, you said? Which value?

exchange value
usage value
market value
abstract value?
added value
surplus value
resale value

or

symbolic value
hidden value
personal value
transformative value
poetic value

As an artist, of course, what I am really after is the transformative value of poetic value.

To steer the world away from its daily pusillanimity, to give it the courage to dream, to believe it can save itself, to support its march towards liberation.

Y'all, there is a major roadblock across the way to poetic value, however! Its name is familiar, although it is often dressed to fool the public: e.g. a politician - to deceive the most/least perceptive observer: e.g. a fraud. Also dressed to kill, as in 'shamelessly over the top', or simply as in 'die, you, bastard'.

Gessed the true moniker?

Dare not to face it?

the MALE gender it is!

The male gender as exclusive builder of value, that is.

Among a myriad of marxist, para-marxist, post-marxist critiques of Karl-der-Bärtige's writings, there is a relatively recent one which is articulated by a woman who, because she is a powerful theorist of feminism, wants to go beyond macho marxism, the capital-labour theory or the critique of value, on the one hand - the appropriation of women by men or capitalism as patriarchy, on the other.

Roswitha Scholz, an other German thinker, (author of "the Sex of Capitalism"), comes up with the following equation:

MALE WORK = VALUE

not only because, she says, capitalism relies on a form of patriarchy where man creates value and woman procreates (my shorter version), but also because such a dissociation is a prerequisite for valorisation and vice-versa, valorisation is a prerequisite for dissociation. They are consubstantial, affirms Roswitha. Capitalism is one mode of exploiting this dissociation to the exclusive, fullest benefit of its leadership: men, denying women access to what it defines as economic value and abstract work, leaving them to hold the emotional bag of a very messy world!

Right away, I can hear my TINYisPOWERFUL partners object to the use of such an abstract generality as Man or Woman. They ask me where do men and women of color exist in this scheme? And I answer: they don't. They never really did in the capitalist version of value, except as property. Can I add, as 'living property', forced to participates in the making of value. One of them would push the analysis further and elaborate on the special place of Black women particularly, as laborers in the creation of value. And they would be right. Their question would force me and the group to actualize all the notions contained in capitalism. Very quickly we would raise a flood of questions, answers to which would but erode all aspects of the edifice. At the end, capitalism would appear obsolete. Obsolete to the point of irrelevance. Unless we rename it 'terminal capitalism' ... and get very busy working on new ways.

However, let us go back to the Scholz equation:

MALE WORK = VALUE

to hammer the nail deeper in the coffin of macho capitalism. And to remember that the dissociation in value/dissociation rides on the sexist premise of an otherwise arcane economic theory which enforces, against all evidence and contemporary disclaimers, that

FEMALE WORK = DOMESTICITY

cleaning up house
managing household
bearing children
raising children
feeding children
cooking for men
doing dishes
answering the phone
sewing buttons (and medals)
treating men's metaphysical and professional vertigo(s)

[This list is a quote (with some additions) from the writing of Colette Guillaumin, French feminist and sociologist - 1934-2017.]

* * *

If the men, white or of color, afflicted with vertigo(s) were shoemakers, baristas, artists, barbers, farmers, mechanics or chiropractors, teachers, landscapers ... that would be one thing. But they are mostly white, high-ranking politicians, prime ministers or presidents ... self-appointed dictators or delusional billionaires ... That's an other thing altogether.

My contention is that it is critical for the future of the world that all shoemakers or landscapers, farmers or barbers, who may well have metaphysical or professional vertigos, not forget the sense of *their values* and the momentous significance of *domesticity*. Because these two: values and domesticity also belong in a very unique sort of business: TINY BUSINESS.

My work with TINYisPOWERFUL has been constant for the three years since its inception. It has been propelled and enhanced by all the human qualities I have found and so much appreciated in the TINY BUSINESS owners I met and mingled with. Their kindness, their patience, their attention, their science, their respect and self-respect regarding work and the tools of their trade, their sense of place and social responsibility in the city, the neighborhood, their street ... are exemplary. Not speaking of their business savvy. The odd thing though is that, speaking strictly for myself, although I much appreciate what I have received, I may still not know, as a member of TINYisPOWERFUL, what to bring to all this talent, add to all this civility. My visits, before covid, were mostly short. Owners never have extra-curricular time. I often left their shop frustrated for having been too superficial. That is, until the day I began to understand that civility, patience, attention, respect and more, are all qualities manly capitalism lacks thoroughly! Furthermore, if you just let me add efficiency, performance and steadiness to the list, I will show why, although they are principally assigned to men, these three qualities are irrefutably feminine, taught to young boys and girls by their mother, always.

Here it is, then: to be the successful owners of a TINY BUSINESS, man or woman, one has to have all the qualities of a woman. What is now called the Care Culture is founded primarily on human assets belonging to women. Plus, the advantage women have over men, procreation, is beyond whichever values men jealously hatch and botch ... Could it be serendipitous, then, that the upcoming elections will pivot around who is to legislate on the right of women to control their own individual freedom to bear a child: vertigoed white males, watching power escape them or ...

WE MUST VOTE