

## OPPOSITION TO SOCIALISM

Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. is a representative secular liberal in declaring that “Karl Marx got a bum rap.” Postmodern liberals overall inverted the main traditional ideals of American literature: Affirmation of (1) the spirit over the flesh in the individual; (2) idealism over materialism in society; (3) self-reliance over collectivism in government; (4) spiritual and legal equality. In opposition, Atheists are materialists who do not believe in the spirit; Postmodernists affirm the flesh rather than the spirit; liberals replaced the ideals of equality and merit with prejudices in favor of select groups (themselves); Socialists are group thinkers whose U.S. congressional representatives unanimously passed a massive health care bill without reading it (2010). “It covers the surface of society with a network of small complicated rules...and stupefies a people...reduced to be nothing better than a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd.... I know of no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America.” (Tocqueville, 1835)

Modernists (1909-1960) were politically diverse and tolerant of dissent, from William Carlos Williams on the far left to Ezra Pound on the far right. Williams and Pound were good friends. Though they were innovators in aesthetics, most Modernists were conservatives in politics--Republicans even, including Gertrude Stein. Postmodernists are all secular liberals inclined to Socialism and contempt for dissenters, as exemplified by the most elitist Postmodernist novelist, John Barth: “Distressing as the fact is to us liberal Democrats, the commonality, alas, will *always* lose their way and their souls.” Cormac McCarthy counters: “Those who are afflicted with this notion are the first ones to give up their souls, their freedom.” Currently academic liberals refer to “late capitalism” as if Socialism is a foregone conclusion.

Puritans at Plymouth: “And for men’s wives to be commanded to do service for other men, as dressing their meat, washing their clothes, etc., they deemed it a kind of slavery, neither could many husbands well brook it.” (William Bradford on failure of communism, 1623). “The worst wheel of the cart makes the most noise.” (Franklin) “Dependence begets subservience and venality, suffocates the germ of virtue, and prepares fit tools for the designs of ambition.” (Jefferson) “The disposition of all power is to abuses.” (Cooper) “The less government we have, the better—the fewer laws, and the less confided power.” (Emerson) “[Socialism] steals from the people, without its knowledge, the power of choosing its own rulers.” (Hawthorne) “I saw that the State was half-witted...and I lost all my remaining respect for it.... The character of the American people has done all that has been accomplished, and it would have done somewhat more, if the government had not sometimes got in its way.” (Thoreau) “Today it is not big business that we have to fear. It is big government.” (Wendell Phillips)

“I was a Socialist for two weeks but when a couple of Socialists assured me I had no right to think differently from any other Socialist and then quarreled with each other about what Socialism meant, I ran away.” (Stephen Crane) “Don’t go around saying the world owes you a living. The world owes you nothing. It was here first.” (Twain) “You cannot help the poor by destroying the rich.... You cannot further the brotherhood of man by practicing class hatred.” (Abraham Lincoln) “One thing is sure until there are rich again everybody will be poor.” (Gertrude Stein) “Socialism never took root in America because the poor see themselves not as an exploited proletariat, but as temporarily embarrassed millionaires.” (Steinbeck) “The kind of person who can persuade himself that the world would be completely happy if everyone denied himself a vast number of free decisions, is the same kind of person who could persuade himself that in early life he had been thwarted and denied all free decisions.” (Wilder) “Things in our country run in spite of the government not by aid of it.” (Will Rogers) “The best things and best people arise out of their separateness; I’m against a homogenized society because I want the cream to rise.” (Frost) “For every ill in human life God made a cure, and it would all work out right some day if the reformer will only let it.” (Cather)

“All working political systems, even those professing to originate in moral grandeur, are based upon and operate by contempt of human life and the individual fate.” (Katherine Anne Porter) “What you wanted was the minimum of government, always less government.” (Hemingway) “It seems to me that the totalitarian people use people...just for their own power.” (Faulkner) “Only men who confuse themselves with God would dare to pretend in this anguished and bloody era that they know the exact road to the

promised land.” (Adlai Stevenson) “You can fool too many of the people too much of the time.” (Thurber) “There is, I believe, a threat when industrialism is linked to a political doctrine which has as its goal the subjugation of the world.” (Ellison) “I’m pro-American and the radical political involvements seem to tend elsewhere.” (Kerouac) “The Young Communist League, particularly, of which I attended three or four meetings... struck me as being quite insane.” (Stegner) “Communism is the opiate of the intellectuals, no cure except as a guillotine might be called a cure for dandruff.” (Clare Boothe Luce) “You cannot observe people through an ideology. Your ideology observes for you.” (Philip Roth)

“Life is unfair.” (John F. Kennedy) “Nowadays I’m certainly not ready to advocate a tightly organized planned economy.... I’m in deadly fear of people with too much power.” (Arthur Miller) “Anything important is never left to the vote of the people.” (Rogers) “Never underestimate the power of the State to act out its own massive fantasies” (DeLillo) “When fanatics are on top there is no limit to oppression.” (Mencken) “Invariably the most dangerous people seek the power.” (Bellow) “It’s leveling everything by decimating what works.” (John Irving) “I am hard-pressed to see an instance where the intervention of government led to much beyond sorrow.” (David Mamet) “It is capitalist America that produced the modern independent woman.” (Camille Paglia) “Are we total pussies?” (David Foster Wallace)

## EQUALITY

“Americans are so enamored of equality that they would rather be equal in slavery than unequal in freedom”; “While democracy seeks equality in liberty, socialism seeks equality in restraint and servitude.” (Tocqueville, 1835) “The egalitarianism that [Jesus] preached was anything but the political egalitarianism that we know today, and it is thus absurd to call Him, as many do, the Father of Socialism. What He had in mind was not political or economic equality, but simply the equality of man before God.” (Mencken) In *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919) Sherwood Anderson defines the monomania of secular liberals: “The moment one of the people took one of the truths to himself, called it his truth, and tried to live his life by it, he became a grotesque and the truth he embraced became a falsehood.” By demanding equality of outcomes, imposing double standards, privileging some while demonizing others, suppressing merit, censoring dissent, and institutionalizing sexism and racism, liberals turned the ideal of Equality into a falsehood and made themselves grotesque. “Not all horses are equal. A few were born to win.” (Twain) “No one enjoys being equal.” (David Mamet) “Nothing is equal.” (John Irving)

Michael Hollister (2014)