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About Verso

Verso Books is the largest independent radical publisher in the English-speaking world, with a list that encompasses trade and academic titles in politics, current affairs, history, philosophy, social sciences and literature.

Launched by New Left Review in 1970, Verso—the left-hand page—has offices in London and New York and publishes, on average, 90 books a year.


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Against Creativity
Oli Mould

From line managers, corporate CEOs, urban designers, teachers, politicians, mayors, advertisers and even our friends and family, the message is ‘be creative’. Creativity is heralded as the driving force of our contemporary society, celebrated as agile, progressive and liberating. It is the spring of the knowledge economy and shapes the cities we inhabit. It even defines our politics. What could possibly be wrong with this?

In this brilliant, counter-intuitive blast, Oli Mould demands that we rethink the story we are being sold. Behind the novelty, he shows that creativity is a barely hidden form of neoliberal appropriation. It is a regime that prioritises individual success over collective flourishing. It refuses to recognise anything – job, place, person – that is not profitable. And it impacts on everything around us: the places where we work, the way we are managed, how we spend our leisure time.

Is there an alternative? Mould offers a radical redefinition of creativity, one embedded in the idea of collective flourishing, outside the tyranny of profit. Bold, passionate and refreshing, Against Creativity, is a timely correction to the doctrine of our times.

Oli Mould is Lecturer in Human Geography at Royal Holloway, University of London. His work focuses on issues of urban activism, social theory and creative resistance. He is the author of Urban Subversion and the Creative City and blogs at tacity.co.uk.

Praise for Urban Subversion and the Creative City

“... A bold plea for truly creative urban thought and action ... Creative, that is, in a wide range of subversive but always social ways, and not only outside but against the softly suffocating hegemony of authorized versions of the Creative Cities script, in all its banal ubiquity.” Jamie Peck, Professor of Geography, University of British Columbia

“Thorough, engaging and critical in spirit, and packed full of theoretical insights and colourful examples of what the author calls ‘urban subversion’. Mould is keenly immersed in his subject matter, and his enthusiasm for it is both obvious and infectious. This is a book which every human geography and urban sociology student should read, and would enjoy at the same time” Robert Hollands, Newcastle University
The first intellectual biography of the life and work of John Berger

A Writer of Our Time
The Life and Writings of John Berger
Joshua Sperling

John Berger is one of the most influential thinkers and writers of postwar Europe. As a novelist, he won the Booker Prize in 1972, donating half his prize money to the Black Panthers. As a TV presenter, he changed the way we looked at art through Ways of Seeing. As a storyteller and political activist, he defended the rights and dignity of workers, migrants and the oppressed around the world. He remained a revolutionary up to his death in January 2017.

In A Writer of Our Time, Joshua Sperling places Berger’s life and work within the historical narrative of postwar Britain and beyond. The book explores questions that vexed a generation: the purpose of art, the nature of creative freedom, the meaning of commitment. Drawing on extensive interviews, close readings and a wealth of archival sources only recently made available, the book brings the many different faces of John Berger together and shows him as one of the most vital, and brilliant, thinkers and storytellers of our time.

Joshua Sperling has written on film, art and culture for a range of publications including Brooklyn Rail, Guernica, Senses of Cinema, Film Quarterly, Jump Cut, Asymptote, Film Criticism, French Forum, and Bullet Magazine. He received a dual PhD in Comparative Literature and Film and Media Studies from Yale University. His dissertation on John Berger was awarded special distinction. He also holds an MFA in Fiction from Brooklyn College and is currently a visiting professor of Cinema Studies at Oberlin College.

“Far from dragging politics into art, art has dragged me into politics.”
John Berger
A bold proposal for new thinking on education: the formation of a National Education Service

Life Lessons
The Case for a National Education Service
Melissa Benn

It is time for a radical shakeup of the purposes and practices of our education system.

Melissa Benn is one of the most clear-sighted and vocal campaigners for improving our schools. She shows here how we need to rethink education for life: as more and more of us live and work longer than ever before, a National Education Service should, like the NHS, be the framework that ensures a life-long entitlement for all, from early years provision to apprenticeships, universities and adult education. Like the NHS, it should be free at the point of delivery. The purpose of learning is not solely to pass exams but to prepare for living in the world. Citizens of the future will need to develop their imaginations as well as their intellects, to be at ease with both knowledge and uncertainty.

*Life Lessons* sets out a radical agenda for how we make education for all, and make it relevant to the demands of twenty-first century. This requires a deep-rooted, long-term vision of the role of learning in our society, one that is ready to take on the challenges of a new century and be part of a wider shift towards greater equality.

**Melissa Benn** is a journalist, novelist and campaigner. She has written for the *Guardian*, *New Statesman*, *Public Finance*, *Cosmopolitan* and *London Review of Books*, among many others. Her writing on education includes *School Wars*. A regular broadcaster and speaker, she is a founding member of the Local Schools Network, set up to support local schools and to counter media misinformation about their achievements and the challenges they face.

Praise for *School Wars*:

“Melissa Benn deserves – demands – to be read.” Will Hutton

“This is a tremendous book. It is a passionate polemic about the most important policy divide of the day ... [and] marks her out as one of Britain’s foremost advocates of comprehensive education.” Anthony Seldon, Observer

“An exceptionally well-informed, cogent, and spirited account of the debates over secondary education in Britain.” Stefan Collini, Nation

“A passionate defence of comprehensive schools” Peter Wilby, Guardian
The Xenofeminist Manifesto
A Politics for Alienation

Laboria Cuboniks

*The Xenofeminist Manifesto* is an attempt to articulate a feminism fit for the twenty-first century. Unafraid of exploring the potentials of technology, exploring both oppressive and emancipatory possibilities, the manifesto seeks to uproot forces of oppression that have come to seem inevitable – from the family, to the body, to the idea of gender itself. *The Xenofeminist Manifesto* reasserts that biology is not destiny and that no injustice should simply be accepted as ‘the way things are’, and looks to technologies to challenge our understandings of Nature – and even allow us to resist nature itself.

**Laboria Cuboniks** (b. 2014) is a xenofeminist collective, spread across five countries and three continents. She seeks to dismantle gender, destroy ‘the family,’ and do away with nature as a guarantor for inegalitarian political positions.

“The Xenofeminism is a corruption in the best sense of the term”

*The New Inquiry*
How the rise of China’s feminist movement is challenging its authoritarian government

Betraying Big Brother
The Feminist Awakening in China
Leta Hong Fincher

On the eve of International Women’s Day in 2015, the Chinese government arrested five feminist activists and jailed them for thirty-seven days. The Feminist Five became a global cause célèbre, with Hillary Clinton speaking out on their behalf, and activists inundating social media with #FreeTheFive messages. But the Feminist Five are only symbols of a much larger feminist movement of civil rights lawyers, labour activists, performance artists and online warriors that is prompting an unprecedented awakening among China’s urban, educated women. In Betraying Big Brother, journalist and scholar Leta Hong Fincher argues that the popular, broad-based movement poses the greatest threat to China’s authoritarian regime today. Through interviews with the Feminist Five and other leading Chinese activists, Hong Fincher illuminates both the challenges they face and their ‘joy of betraying Big Brother’, as Wei Tingting – one of the Feminist Five – wrote of the defiance she felt during her detention. Tracing the rise of a new feminist consciousness through online campaigns resembling #MeToo, and describing how the Communist regime has suppressed the history of its own feminist struggles, Betraying Big Brother is a story of how the movement against patriarchy could reconfigure China and the world.

Leta Hong Fincher is a journalist who has written for New York Times, Guardian, Ms. Magazine, BBC and CNN, and is the author of Leftover Women: The Resurgence of Gender Inequality in China.

Praise for Leftover Women

“A chilling account of the pressures on Chinese strivers ... One hopes that Leftover Women will soon be translated into Chinese, as it is likely to resonate deeply with urban educated women. It seems the party has forgotten the Mao-era dictum: ‘Women Hold Up Half the Sky’” New York Times

“Leftover Women should carry a health warning: this book will severely raise your blood pressure. Leta Hong Fincher’s subject – researched through statistical analysis, sociological surveys and extensive first-hand interviewing – is the toxic vitality of sexism in China today.” Guardian

“Important and interesting ... Gender relations, in many ways so much more advanced in China than in India, are going backwards as traditions that were seemingly flattened by Mao re-emerge.” Financial Times
FEMINISM

Why are inequalities based on gender so pervasive?

The Rise and Decline of Patriarchal Systems

Nancy Folbre

In this groundbreaking new work, Nancy Folbre builds on a critique and reformulation of Marxian political economy, drawing on a larger body of scientific research, including neoclassical economics, sociology, psychology, and evolutionary biology, to answer the defining question of feminist political economy: why is gender inequality so pervasive? In part, it is because of the contradictory effects of capitalist development: on the one hand, rapid technological change has improved living standards and increased the scope for individual choice for women; on the other, increased inequality and the weakening of families and communities have reconfigured gender inequalities, leaving caregivers particularly vulnerable.

The Rise and Decline of Patriarchal Systems examines why care work is generally unrewarded in a market economy, calling attention to the non-market processes of childbearing, childrearing and the care of other dependants, the inheritance of assets, and the use of force and violence to appropriate both physical and human resources. Exploring intersecting inequalities based on class, gender, age, race/ethnicity, and citizenship, and their implications for political coalitions, it sets a new feminist agenda for the twenty-first century.

Nancy Folbre is Director of the Program on Gender and Care Work at the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a Senior Fellow of the Levy Economics Institute at Bard College. She is the author of numerous books, most recently Greed, Lust, and Gender: A History of Economic Ideas.

Praise for Who Pays for the Kids

“Nancy Folbre focuses on questions that most economists never think about: how and why people form overlapping groups that influence and limit what they want, how they may behave, and what they get. She has sharp and plausible things to say about group solidarity and group conflict and how they have affected the workings of economic institutions. Anyone would be a better economist, or just a clearer thinker, after reading this book.” Robert M. Solow, Professor of Economics, MIT, and Nobel Laureate in Economics

Praise for The Invisible Heart

“An outstandingly provocative book about the economics of care and reciprocity” New York Times
How the law harms sex workers – and what they want instead

Revolting Prostitutes
The Fight for Sex Workers’ Rights
Molly Smith and Juno Mac

You hear that selling sex is degrading; you hear that no one would ever choose to do it; you hear that it’s dangerous; that women get abused and killed. You often hear, "There should be a law against it!" Or, perhaps just against the buyers. What do sex workers want? That’s not something you hear asked very often.

In some places, like New York, selling sex is illegal. In others, like Sweden, only buying it is. In some, like the UK and France, it’s legal to sell sex and to buy it, but not to run a brothel or solicit a sale. In New Zealand, it’s not illegal at all. In Revolting Prostitutes, Juno Mac and Molly Smith – both sex workers – explain what each of these laws do in practice to those doing the work. Addressing each model in turn, they show that prohibiting the sex industry actually exacerbates every harm that sex workers are vulnerable to.

Juno Mac is a sex worker and activist with the Sex Worker Open University, a sex worker–led collective with branches in London, Leeds and Glasgow.

Molly Smith is a sex worker and activist with the Sex Worker Open University. She is also involved with SCOT-PEP, a sex worker–led charity based in Edinburgh, which is working to decriminalise sex work in Scotland. She has written articles on sex work policy for Guardian and New Republic.
American Homo
Community and Perversity
Jeffrey Escoffier

American Homo offers a sweeping interpretation of the political, cultural and economic struggles of lesbian, gay and bisexual people to reveal how sexual minorities have challenged and changed American society. These provocative essays by long-time activist, writer, and theorist Jeffrey Escoffier tracks the lesbian and gay movements across the contested terrain of American political life.

Jeffrey Escoffier is a Research Associate at the Brooklyn Institute for Social Research and the former Director of Public Health Media at the New York City Department of Health. He is the author of Bigger Than Life: The History of Gay Porn Cinema from Beefcake to Hardcore and the editor of Sexual Revolution.

Pink Triangles
Radical Perspectives on Gay Liberation
Edited by Pam Mitchell

Though the interpretations of the interplay between sexism and capitalism, between the personal and the political, vary across this spectacularly wide-ranging collection, each essay shares two fundamental premises. First, that the oppression of gays and lesbians is not an isolated case, and therefore their struggle is necessarily part of a larger movement for social liberation. And, second, that the experience of gays and lesbians uphold the basic tenets of a foundational Marxism, and that they are uniquely placed to contribute to a revitalisation of Marxist theory.

Pam Mitchell is a writer and activist.
Come Together
The Years of Gay Liberation 1970–73
Edited by Aubrey Walter

Come Together tells the incredible story of the emerging radicalism of the Gay Liberation Front, providing a vivid history of the movement, as well as the new ideas and practices it gave rise to across the United Kingdom. Before marriage equality or military service, *Come Together* reminds us of paths forged but not taken by queer politics in its earliest stages.

*Aubrey Walter* was a founder of the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Men’s Press, which published in London from 1979 until 2006.

Homosexuality
Power and Politics
Edited by the Gay Left Collective

After the leading organisations of radical sexual politics – the Gay Liberation Front and the Gay Marxist Group – imploded or dissolved, the Gay Left Collective formed a research group to make sense of the changing terrain of sexuality and politics. Its goal was to formulate a rigorous Marxist analysis of sexual oppression, while linking the struggle against homophobia with a wider array of struggles, all under the banner of socialism.

This anthology combines the very best of their work, exploring masculinity and workplace organising, counterculture and disco, the survivals of victorian morality and the onset of the HIV/AIDS crisis.

*Gay Left* was a collective of gay men and a journal of the same name which they published every six months in London between the years 1975 and 1980. It was formed after the evaporation of the Gay Liberation Front (GLF) and the Gay Marxist Group with the goal of contributing to a Marxist analysis of homosexual oppression and encouraging an understanding of the links between the struggle against sexual oppression and the struggle for socialism.
Mobility justice is one of the crucial political and ethical issues of our day. We are in the midst of a global climate crisis and extreme challenges of urbanisation. At the same time it is difficult to ignore the deaths of thousands of migrants at sea and in deserts, the xenophobic treatment of foreign-born populations, refugees and asylum seekers, as well as the persistence of racist violence and ethnic exclusions on our doorstep. This, in turn, is connected to other kinds of uneven mobility: relations between people, access to transport, urban infrastructures and global resources such as food, water, and energy.

In *Mobility Justice*, Mimi Sheller makes a passionate argument for a new understanding of the contemporary crisis of mobility. She shows how power and inequality inform the governance and control of movement, connecting these scales of the body, street, city, nation, and planet into one overarching theory of mobility justice. This can be seen on a local level in the differential circulation of people, resources, and information, as well as on an urban scale, with questions of public transport and ‘the right to the city’. On the planetary scale, she demands that we rethink the reality where tourists and other kinetic elites are able to roam freely, the military origins of global infrastructure, and the contested politics of migration and restricted borders.

*Mobility Justice* offers a new way to understand the deep flows of inequality and uneven accessibility of a world in which the mobility commons has been enclosed.

Mimi Sheller is Professor of Sociology and Director of the Center for Mobilities Research and Policy at Drexel University. She is the author of *Democracy after Slavery*, *Consuming the Caribbean*, *Citizenship from Below* and *Aluminum Dreams*.

Praise for *Consuming the Caribbean*

“This is a stunning book! It is beautifully reasoned and well-documented and demonstrates Sheller’s mastery of her material, but it is much more. It is original in its approach ... and above all, it is elegantly and sensitively written.” — Janet Abu Lughod

“Beautifully written, clearly argued ... A wonderful book that deserves considerable attention.” — *Cultural Geographies*
What is the “populist moment” and what does it mean for the left?

In Defense of Left Populism

Chantal Mouffe

Populism, today, is the expression of a crisis of liberal-democratic politics. It is more than an ideology or a political regime. It is a way of doing politics that can take various forms but emerges when one aims at building a new subject of collective action – the people.

In this new book the leading political thinker Chantal Mouffe proposes a new way to define left populism. The political is to be constructed by establishing a political frontier that divides society into two camps, mobilising an “underdog” against “those in power”. Populism, far from being a perversion of democracy, constitutes the most adequate political force to recover and reconstitute itself. This new politics must recognise its partisan character. This presents itself as more than the image of demagoguery and emotive rabble seen across our media. Furthermore, it is an urgent struggle, because the future will be formed by the kind of populism that emerges victorious from the conflict against the current threats of post-politics and post-democracy.

Chantal Mouffe is Professor of Political Theory at the Centre for the Study of Democracy at the University of Westminster. Her books include Agonistics, The Return of the Political, Hegemony and Socialist Strategy (with Ernesto Laclau), The Dimensions of Radical Democracy, The Democratic Paradox and The Challenge of Carl Schmitt.

Praise for Chantal Mouffe

“Mouffe represents a position that every serious student of contemporary political thought must acknowledge and come to terms with.”
Philosopher's Magazine

“Evocative and challenging.” Radical Philosophy

“Important and timely.” Political Theory
Remembering, Repeating, and Working Through

V. I. Lenin
Introduced by Slavoj Žižek

Lenin’s originality and importance as a revolutionary leader is most often associated with the seizure of power in 1917. But, Žižek argues in his new study and collection of original texts, Lenin’s true greatness can be better grasped in the very last couple of years of his political life. Russia had survived foreign invasion, embargo and a terrifying civil war, as well as internal revolts such as at Kronstadt in 1921. But the new state was exhausted, isolated and disorientated in the face of a world revolution that seemed to be receding. New paths had to be sought for the Soviet state to survive and imagine some alternative route to the future. With his characteristic brio and provocative insight, Žižek suggests that Lenin’s courage as a thinker can be found in his willingness to face this reality of retreat lucidly and frontally.

Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov (1870–1924), better known by the alias Lenin, was a Russian communist revolutionary, politician, and political theorist. He played a leading role in the Bolshevik Revolution of October 1917.
The Putney Debates
The Levellers
Introduced by Geoffrey Robertson
Edited by Philip Baker

In a series of debates with Oliver Cromwell in Civil War England, the Levellers argued for democracy for the first time in British history. Evolving from Oliver Cromwell’s New Model Army using parliament’s struggle against King Charles I, the Levellers pushed for the removal of corruption in government, universal voting rights and religious toleration. This came to a head with the famous debates between the Levellers and Cromwell at St Mary’s church in Putney, London. Renowned human-rights lawyer and author Geoffrey Robertson argues for the relevance of the Levellers’ stand today, showing how they were the first radical Western democrats.

Fidel Castro (1926–2016) was one of the primary leaders of the Cuban Revolution, the Prime Minister of Cuba from 1959 to 1976, and then the President of the Council of State of Cuba until his resignation from office in February 2008.

The Declarations of Havana
Fidel Castro
Introduced by Tariq Ali

In response to the American administration’s attempt to isolate Cuba, Fidel Castro delivered a series of speeches designed to radicalise Latin American society. As Latin America continues to upset America’s plans for neoliberal imperialism, renowned radical writer and activist Tariq Ali provides a searing analysis of the relevance of Castro’s message for today.

“Castro was one of the more extraordinary political figures of the twentieth century. A charismatic figure from the developing world, his influence was felt far beyond the shores of Cuba.” Richard Gott, Guardian

“A towering international figure whose importance in the twentieth century far exceeded what might have been expected from the head of state of a Caribbean island nation of 11 million people.” Anthony DePalma, New York Times
The war between Maoists and the state in the heart of India

The Burning Forest
India’s War Against the Maoists

Nandini Sundar

The Burning Forest is an empathetic, moving account of what drives indigenous peasants to support armed struggle despite severe state repression, in which lives are lost, and homes and communities destroyed. Over the past decade, the heavily forested, mineral-rich region of Bastar in central India has emerged as one of the most militarised sites in the country. The government calls the Maoist insurgency the “biggest security threat” to India. In 2005, a state-sponsored vigilante movement, the Salwa Judum, burnt hundreds of villages, driving their inhabitants into state-controlled camps, drawing on counterinsurgency techniques developed in Malaysia, Vietnam and elsewhere. Apart from rapes and killings, hundreds of ‘surrendered’ Maoist sympathisers were conscripted as auxiliaries.

The conflict continues to this day, taking a toll on the lives of civilians, security forces and Maoist cadres. In 2007, Sundar and others took the Indian government to the Supreme Court over the human rights violations arising out of the conflict. In a landmark judgment, the Court in 2011 banned state support for vigilantism. The Burning Forest examines this brutal war in the heart of India, and what it tells us about the courts, media and politics of the country. The result is a granular and critical ethnography of Indian democracy over a decade.

Nandini Sundar, Professor of Sociology at Delhi University, has been visiting Bastar for over twenty-five years. Her first book, Subalterns and Sovereigns: An Anthropological History of Bastar (1854–1996) is an authoritative account of Bastar’s colonial and post-colonial past.

“A very important and interesting book which should be widely read. A deeply disturbing analysis of the sacrifice of tribal lives and communities caught between the camouflaged barbarity of the security forces and the violent arrogance of a deflected rebellion.” Amartya Sen

“Nandini Sundar, an extraordinary anthropologist-activist, has mined twenty-five years of experience in the region to write an account of Bastar’s civil war that is both gripping and harrowing. It is a story that everyone who cares about India must read.” Partha Chatterjee

“An impeccably researched and finely written work of scholarship, redolent with insight, and displaying enormous courage as well.” Ramachandra Guha, Hindustan Times
How the West’s obsession with Vladimir Putin prevents it from understanding Russia

Russia Without Putin
Money, Power and the Myths of the New Cold War

Tony Wood

It is impossible to think of Russia today without considering Vladimir Putin. More than any other major national leader, he personifies his country in the eyes of the outside world, and dominates Western media coverage of Russia to an extraordinary extent. In Russia itself, he is likewise the centre of attention for detractors and supporters alike. But as Tony Wood argues, this overwhelming focus on the president and his personality means that we understand Russia less than we ever did before. Too much attention is paid to the man, and not enough to the country outside the Kremlin’s walls.

In this timely and provocative analysis, Wood looks beyond Putin to explore the profound changes Russia has undergone since 1991. In the process, he challenges many of the common assumptions made about contemporary Russia. Though commonly viewed as an ominous return to Soviet authoritarianism, Putin’s rule should instead be seen as a direct continuation of Yeltsin’s in the 1990s. And though many of Russia’s problems today are blamed on legacies of the Soviet past, Wood argues that the core features of Putinism – a predatory, authoritarian elite presiding over a vastly unequal society – are integral to the system set in place after the fall of Communism.

What kind of country has emerged from Russia’s post-Soviet transformations, and where might it go in future? Russia without Putin culminates in an arresting analysis of the country’s foreign policy – identifying the real power dynamics behind its escalating clashes with the West – and reflect on the paths Russia might take in the twenty-first century.


Praise for Chechnya: The Case for Independence

“Well researched and reasoned. Whatever one thinks of state sovereignty these days, this political project demands serious engagement, and his humanitarian concerns cannot be ignored” Georghi Derluguiian

"An antidote to the prevailing wisdom.” Sebastian Smith
For the left and the right, major multinational companies are held up as the ultimate expressions of free market competition. Their remarkable success vindicates the old idea that our modern societies are too large, too complex and difficult, to be subjected to a plan. And yet, as Leigh Phillips and Michal Rozworski argue, late capitalism already operates by central planning. The sheer economic weight of multinational, corporate giants means that the decision making of its owners decides the fate of virtually everyone downstream of them, shaping the fortunes of much of the world. Not only is planning possible, we already have it. Except all the power is concentrated in the hands of a selfish few.

Against the dictatorship of capital, *The People’s Republic of Walmart* is a clarion call for a return to collective decision making in all matters economic. With the rise of new computational systems and new capacities for massive, collective enterprises, democratically organising the economic in the interest of human need rather than in the interests of profit is as great as it ever has been.

Leigh Phillips is a science writer and EU affairs journalist. He is the author of *Austerity Ecology & the Collapse-Porn Addicts.*

Michal Rozworski is a Toronto-based union researcher and writer. He blogs at Political Eh-conomy and has been published in *Jacobin, Ricochet, The Toronto Star,* and *Briarpatch Magazine.*
Amnesty Now

Daniel Denvir

For three decades establishment Democrats and Republicans have led a bipartisan assault on immigrants. Pulled further and further right by a vocal and organised group of nativists, they have turned the southern border region into a conflict zone, breaking up millions of families in the process. In Amnesty Now, Daniel Denvir delivers a caustic takedown of liberal triangulation on the border, showing how concessions to 'enforcement first' law and order immigration politics hasn’t placated the nativists – it has only empowered them. Establishment officials from both parties have allowed the rightwing to dictate our policy on migration, even as popular opinion clamours for a more humane and just approach. With the centre collapsed, the left can either demand full amnesty now, or cede the ground of national belonging to nativists and white supremacists.

Daniel Denvir is a fellow at Harvard Law School’s Fair Punishment Project and host of The Dig, a podcast from Jacobin magazine. His journalistic work covers criminal justice, the drug war, immigration, and politics, and has appeared in the New York Times, Jacobin, Vox, Nation, Guardian, and elsewhere.

Capital City

Gentrification and the Rise of the Real Estate State

Samuel Stein

Our cities are changing. Global real estate is now a 217 trillion dollar industry, 36 times the value of all the gold ever mined. It makes up 60 percent of the world’s assets, and the most powerful person in the world – the president of the United States – made his name as a landlord and real estate developer.

As Samuel Stein makes clear in this tightly argued book, it’s through the seemingly innocuous profession of city planning that we can best understand the transformations underway. Planners provide a window into the practical dynamics of urban change: the way the state uses and is used by organized capital, and the power of landlords and developers at every level of government. But crucially, planners also possess the powers we must leverage if we ever wish to reclaim our cities.

Samuel Stein studies geography at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York and teaches urban studies at Hunter College. His writing on planning politics been published by Jacobin, The Journal of Urban Affairs, Metropolitics, and many other magazines and journals.
The story of Japan’s forgotten radical 1968

The Japanese ’68
Theory, Politics, Aesthetics
Edited by Gavin Walker

The analysis of May ’68 in Paris, Berkeley, and the Western world has been widely reconsidered. But 1968 is not only a year that conjures up images of Paris, Frankfurt, or Milan: it was also the pivotal year for a new anti-colonial and anti-capitalist politics to erupt across the Third World, a crucial and central moment in the history, thought, and politics of Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America. Japan’s position – neither in ‘the West’ nor in the ‘Third World’ – provoked a complex and intense round of mass mobilisations through the 1960s and early ’70s. Although the ’68 revolutions’ of the Global North – Western Europe and North America – are widely known, the Japanese situation remains remarkably under-examined globally. Beginning in the late 1950s, the New Left, independent of the prewar Japanese communist moment (itself of major historical importance in the 1920s and ’30s), came to produce one of the most vibrant decades of political organization, political thought, and political aesthetics in the global twentieth century. In the present volume, major thinkers of the left in Japan, alongside scholars of the 1968 movements, reexamine the theoretical sources, historical background, cultural productions, and major organisational problems of the 1968 revolutions in Japan.

Gavin Walker is Associate Professor at McGill University. He is a member of the editorial collective of Positions: Asia Critique and author of The Sublime Perversion of Capital: Marxist Theory and the Politics of History in Modern Japan.
Fully Automated Luxury Communism
A Manifesto
Aaron Bastani

The first decades of the twenty-first century marked the demise of the current world order. Despite widespread acknowledgement of a series of disruptive crises, the proposed response from the mainstream has been to stick with the status quo. Against the confines of this increasingly limited politics a new paradigm has emerged. *Fully Automated Luxury Communism* claims that new technologies will liberate us from work, providing the opportunity to build a society beyond both capitalism and scarcity. Automation, rather than undermining an economy built on full employment, is instead the path to a world of liberty, luxury and happiness. For everyone. In his first book, leading political commentator Aaron Bastani conjures a new politics: a vision of a world of unimaginable hope, highlighting how we might move to energy abundance, feed a world of 9 billion, overcome work, transcend the limits of biology and build meaningful freedom for everyone. Rather than a final destination, such a society heralds the beginning of history.

Aaron Bastani is co-founder and Senior Editor at Novara Media. He has written for *Vice*, the *London Review of Books*, *Guardian* and *Open Democracy*, and has appeared on Sky News, *Channel 4 News* and *CNBC*.

NEW EDITION

On Populist Reason
Ernesto Laclau

In this highly prescient work – which has had a big impact on figures such as Pablo Iglesias of Podemos in Spain – Ernesto Laclau continues the philosophical and political exploration initiated in *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy*. Here he focuses on the construction of popular identities and how ‘the people’ emerge as a collective actor. Skillfully combining theoretical analysis with a myriad of empirical references from numerous historical and geographical contexts, he demonstrates the relation of populism to democracy and to the logic of representation. This book is essential reading for all those interested in the question of political identities in a world marked by figures such as Trump, Farage, Le Pen as well as Sanders, Iglesias and Mélenchon.

Ernesto Laclau was Professor of Political Theory in the Department of Government, University of Essex, and Distinguished Professor for Humanities and Rhetorical Studies at Northwestern University. He was the author of, among many other works, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy* (with Chantal Mouffe).

“What needs to be politically articulated at the present time is the possibility of a leftist populism. This is what makes Laclau’s long-awaited book so important.”
Simon Critchley
In Praise of Disobedience
The Soul of Man Under Socialism and Other Writings

Oscar Wilde
Introduction by Neil Bartlett

In *Praise of Disobedience* draws on works from a single miraculous year in which Oscar Wilde published the larger part of his greatest works in prose—the year he came into maturity as an artist. Before the end of 1891, he had written the first of his phenomenally successful plays and met the young man who would win his heart, beginning the love affair that would lead to imprisonment and public infamy.

In a witty introduction, playwright, novelist and Wilde scholar Neil Bartlett explains what made this point in the writer’s life central to his genius and why Wilde remains a provocative and radical figure to this day.

Included here are the entirety of Wilde’s foray into political philosophy, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism*, the complete essay collection *Intentions*, selections from *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* as well as its paradoxical and scandalous preface, and some of Wilde’s greatest fictions for children. Each selection is accompanied by stimulating and enlightening annotations. A delight for fans of Oscar Wilde, *In Praise of Disobedience* will revitalize an often misunderstood legacy.

**Oscar Wilde** was born in Dublin in 1854. His novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, and stage comedies *Lady Windermere’s Fan*, *A Woman of No Importance*, *An Ideal Husband*, and *The Importance of Being Earnest*, established his reputation. In 1895, following his libel action against the Marquess of Queensberry, Wilde was sentenced to two years’ imprisonment for homosexual conduct, as a result of which he wrote ‘The Ballad of Reading Gaol’, and his epistolary essay *De Profundis*. On his release from prison in 1897 he lived in obscurity in Europe, and died in Paris in 1900.
Old Gods, New Enigmas
Marx’s Lost Theory

Mike Davis

This highly anticipated book by the best-selling author of City of Quartz and Planet of Slums marks the 200th anniversary of Marx’s birth, exploring Davis’s thinking on history, labour, capitalism, and revolution – themes ever present in the work of this leading radical thinker.

In a time of ubiquitous disgust with political and economic elites, Davis explores the question of revolutionary agency – what social forces and conditions do we need to transform the current order? – and the situation of the world’s working classes from the US to Europe to China. Even the most preliminary tasks are daunting. A new theory of revolution needs to return to the big issues in classical socialist thought, such as clarifying ‘proletarian agency’, before turning to the urgent questions of our time: global warming, the social and economic gutting of the rustbelt, and the city’s demographic eclipse of the countryside. What does revolution look like after the end of history?

Mike Davis is the author of several books, including City of Quartz, The Monster at Our Door, Buda’s Wagon, and Planet of Slums. He is the recipient of the MacArthur Fellowship and the Lannan Literary Award. He lives in San Diego.

Praise for Planet of Slums

“A profound enquiry into an urgent subject ... a brilliant book.” Arundhati Roy

“The astonishing facts hit like anvil blows ... Davis has produced a heartbreaking book that hammers the reader a little further into the ground with the blow of each new and shocking statistic.” Financial Times

“Davis’s descriptions of the conditions endured by slum-dwellers provide reason enough to read this book. His analysis is full of gripping stories from globalization’s frontline.” New Statesman

“The Raymond Chandler of urban geography ... In Planet of Slums, Davis’s genre is the global disaster movie, as directed by the chroniclers of Victorian poverty: Engels, Booth and Dickens. The scale of modern squalor revealed in his brilliant survey dwarfs its predecessors ... A coruscating tragedy.” Independent
The alliance of critical theory between Frankfurt and Paris

Adorno, Foucault and the Critique of the West

Deborah Cook

Adorno, Foucault, and the Critique of the West argues that critical theory continues to offer valuable resources for critique and contestation during this turbulent period in our history. To assess these resources, it examines the work of two of the twentieth century’s more prominent social theorists: Theodor W. Adorno and Michel Foucault. Although Adorno was situated squarely in the Marxist tradition that Foucault would occasionally challenge, Cook demonstrates that their critiques of our current predicament are complementary in important respects. Among other things, they converge in their focus on the historical conditions – economic in Adorno and political in Foucault – that gave rise to the racist and authoritarian tendencies that continue to blight the West. But this book will also show that as Adorno and Foucault plumb the economic and political forces that have shaped our identities, they offer remarkably similar answers to the perennial question: What is to be done?

Deborah Cook is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Windsor, Canada. Her previous books include The Subject Finds a Voice, The Culture Industry Revisited and Adorno on Nature.

“Defying conventional wisdom, Deborah Cook makes a compelling case for the complementarity of Adorno and Foucault’s critical projects. In so doing, she makes clear that the theoretical legacy of the past century still has much to offer in the struggle to meet the daunting challenges of our own.”

Martin Jay, University of California, Berkeley

Praise for Adorno on Nature

“Adorno is one of the most sophisticated and thorough materialists of the last century, and Cook introduces with much precision (and sympathy for those not already familiar with Adorno’s work) the diversity and strength of Adorno’s approach. Adorno on Nature functions in part, then, as a corrective to recent neglect of Adorno’s commitment to Marxist materialism.”

Mind

“A useful and persuasive account of Adorno’s concept of nature and its relationship with the thought of, above all, Marx, but also Hegel, Kant and, to a lesser extent, Freud.” Marx and Philosophy Review of Books
NEW IN PAPERBACK

**Humankind**

Solidarity with Non-Human People

*Timothy Morton*

What is it that makes humans human? As science and technology challenge the boundaries between life and non-life, between organic and inorganic, this ancient question is more timely than ever. Acclaimed Object-Oriented philosopher Timothy Morton invites us to consider this philosophical issue as eminently political. In our relationship with non-humans, we decided the fate of our humanity.

*Timothy Morton* is Rita Shea Guffey Chair in English at Rice University. He is the author of *Hyperobjects: Philosophy and Ecology after the End of the World*, *The Ecological Thought* and *Ecology without Nature*.

“I have been reading Timothy Morton’s books for a while and I like them a lot.” Bjork

“Considered by many to be among the top philosophers in the world, especially among those tackling issues related to human effects on our environment, Morton herein provides an important, spirited, and sometimes frenetic analysis of the foundational assumptions of Marxism and other -isms with regard to nature and culture.”

Jeff Vandermeer, author of *The Southern Reach Trilogy*

NEW EDITION

**The Lives of Michel Foucault**

*David Macey*

Postface by Stuart Elden

When he died of an AIDS-related condition in 1984, Michel Foucault had become the most influential French philosopher since the end of World War Two. His powerful studies have had a lasting impact on philosophers, historians, critics, and novelists the world over. But as public as he was in his militant campaigns on behalf of prisoners, dissidents, and homosexuals, he shrouded his personal life in mystery. In *The Lives of Michel Foucault* David Macey gives the richest account to date of Foucault’s life and work, informed as it is by the complex issues arising from his writings.

*David Macey* was a historian, translator, and the author of *Lacan in Context* and *Frantz Fanon: A Biography*.

“Macey was one of the best intellectual historians of his generation. His biography of Foucault will outlive a great many other books in its field.” Neil Belton, *Guardian*

“Admirable. Yields a vivid picture of Foucault.” *New Republic*

“The Lives of Michel Foucault is the third, and probably the last, Foucault biography to appear in English. It is also the best: fuller in its sources and freer in their use and preferable, in terms of moral intelligence, maturity and poise.” *Times Literary Supplement*
How do we take the economy out of the hands of the wealthy elite?

Economics for the Many
Edited and introduced by John McDonnell

Big challenges lie ahead for our society: increased automation of work, and the threat of catastrophic climate change. But these are also huge possibilities presented by new technologies and better ways of organising our economy in the wake of neoliberalism's failure. With the election of Jeremy Corbyn as Labour leader, and the extraordinary turnaround of Labour’s fortunes in the 2017 election, the possibility has opened up to build an economy in Britain that is radically fairer, radically more democratic, and radically more sustainable. But we need ideas and strategies on how to get there.

Economics for the Many, edited and introduced by Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, John McDonnell, features contributions from the participants in McDonnell’s New Economics conferences, including Faiza Shaheen, Barry Gardiner, Prem Sikka, Ann Pettifor, Paul Mason, and Rebecca Long-Bailey. The book covers topics from housing, public ownership and fairer international trading systems to industrial policy for the twenty-first century and how to tackle tax avoidance and regional imbalances. Together, the essays in this volume lay out the vision for a new economics; one that works for the many, not the few.

John McDonnell MP has been the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer under Jeremy Corbyn’s leadership since 2015. He has been the Member of Parliament (MP) for Hayes and Harlington since the 1997 general election. He has served as Chair of the Socialist Campaign Group in Parliament and the Labour Representation Committee, and was Chair of the Public Services Not Private Profit Group. He is also Parliamentary Convenor of the Trade Union Co-ordinating Group of eight left-wing trade unions representing more than half a million workers.
The Limits to Capital

David Harvey

Now a classic of Marxian economics, *The Limits to Capital* provides one of the best theoretical guides to the history and geography of capitalist development. In this edition, Harvey updates his classic text with a substantial discussion of the turmoil in world markets today. In his analyses of ‘fictitious capital’ and ‘uneven geographical development’ Harvey takes the reader step by step through layers of crisis formation, beginning with Marx’s controversial argument concerning the falling rate of profit, moving through crises of credit and finance, and closing with a timely analysis of geopolitical and geographical considerations.

A Companion to Marx’s Capital

The Complete Edition

David Harvey

In recent years, we have witnessed a surge of interest in Marx’s work in the effort to understand the origins of our current predicament. For nearly forty years, David Harvey has written and lectured on *Capital*, becoming one of the world’s foremost Marx scholars.

Based on his recent lectures, this current volume – finally bringing together his guides to volumes I, II and much of III of *Das Kapital* – aims to bring this depth of learning to a broader audience, guiding first-time readers through a fascinating and deeply rewarding text. *A Companion to Marx’s Capital* offers fresh, original and sometimes critical interpretations of a book that changed the course of history and, as Harvey intimates, may do so again.
How Europe Underdeveloped Africa

Walter Rodney

Introduction by Angela Davis

How Europe Underdeveloped Africa is an ambitious masterwork of political economy, detailing the impact of slavery and colonialism on the history of international capitalism. In this classic book, Rodney makes the unflinching case that African maldevelopment is not a natural feature of geography, but a direct product of imperial extraction from the continent, a practice that continues up into the present. Meticulously researched, How Europe Underdeveloped Africa remains an unshakably relevant study of the so-called ‘great divergence’ between Africa and Europe, just as it remains a prescient resource for grasping the multiplication of global inequality today.

In this new edition, Angela Davis offers a striking introduction to the book, exploring its lasting contributions to a revolutionary and feminist practice of anti-imperialism.

Walter Rodney was an internationally renowned historian of colonialism and a leader of Black Power and Pan-African movements across the diaspora, most notably the Guyanese Working People’s Alliance. His life and work brought together struggles for independence on the African continent with the strivings of the black working classes of North America and the Caribbean basin. On 13 June, 1980, Rodney was assassinated, most likely by the then president of Guyana. He was thirty-eight years old.

“For many of us, Walter Rodney’s How Europe Underdeveloped Africa, first published in 1972, was a groundbreaking book. It provided a completely new way of looking at the continent and its history, a way of understanding not only how we got to where we are, but also what is needed for the peoples of Africa to reclaim their destinies.” Red Pepper

“Walter Rodney ... was clearly one of the most solidly ideologically situated intellectuals ever to look colonialism and its contemporary heir black opportunism and exploitation in the eye.” Wole Soyinka

“Walter Rodney was a pioneering scholar who provided new answers to old questions and posed new questions in relation to the study of Africa.” Professor Winston McGowan
On the international operations of racism and the global meaning of Black Power

NEW EDITION

The Groundings with My Brothers

Walter Rodney

In this classic work published in the heady days of anti-colonial revolution, *The Groundings with My Brothers* follows the global circulation of emancipatory ideas, from the black students of North America to the Rasta counter culture of Jamaica and beyond. The book is striking in its simultaneous ability to survey the wide and heterogeneous international context while remaining anchored in grassroots politics, as Rodney offers us first-hand accounts of mass movement organising. Having inspired a generation of revolutionaries, this new edition will reintroduce the book to a new political landscape that it helped shape, with reflections from leading scholar-activists such as Carole Boyce Davies.

“I have sat on a little oil drum, rusty and in the midst of garbage, and some black brothers and I have grounded together.” Walter Rodney
The Common Wind
Afro-American Organization in the Revolution Against Slavery
Julius Scott

Out of the grey expanse of official records in Spanish, English and French, *The Common Wind* provides a gripping and colourful account of inter-continental communication networks that tied together the free and enslaved masses of the new world. A powerful ‘history from below’, this book follows those ‘rumours of emancipation’ and the people who spread them, bringing to life the protagonists in the revolution against slavery.

Though it has been said that *The Common Wind* is ‘the most original dissertation ever written’, and is credited for having ‘opened up the Black Atlantic with a rigour and a commitment to the power of written words’, the PhD project has remained unpublished for thirty-two years, since it was completed at Duke University in 1986. Now, after receiving wide acclaim from leading historians of slavery and the new world, it will be released by Verso for the first time, with a foreword by Marcus Rediker.

Julius Scott is Professor of Afroamerican and African Studies at the University of Michigan.
The past and future of black American history

Reclaiming the Black Past
The Use and Misuse of African American History in the Twenty-First Century
Pero G. Dagbovie

In our information–overloaded twenty-first century, it seems impossible to fully discern or explain how we know about the past. But two things are certain. Whether we are conscious of it or not, we all think historically on a routine basis. And our perceptions of history, including African American history, have not necessarily been shaped by professional historians. In this wide-reaching and timely book, Pero Gaglo Dagbovie argues that public knowledge and understanding of black history, including its historical icons, has been shaped by institutions and individuals outside academic ivory towers. Drawing on a range of compelling examples, Dagbovie explores how, in the twenty-first century, African American history is regarded, depicted, and juggled by diverse and contesting interpreters – from museum curators to filmmakers, entertainers, politicians, journalists, and bloggers. Underscoring the ubiquitous nature of African American history in contemporary American thought and culture, each chapter unpacks how black history has been represented and remembered primarily during the ‘Age of Obama’, the so-called era of ‘post-racial’ American society. Reclaiming the Black Past is Dagbovie’s contribution to expanding how we understand African American history during the new millennium.

Pero G. Dagbovie is Professor of African American History and Associate Dean in The Graduate School, Michigan State University. His books include Black History: ‘Old School’ Black Historians and the Hip Hop Generation, The Early Black History Movement, African American History Reconsidered, and What Is African American History?

Praise for African American History Reconsidered

"Pero Gaglo Dagbovie’s incisive and timely book compels a new generation to come to terms with African American history. Beautifully crafted, illuminating and passionate, African American History Reconsidered reminds us that politically engaged critical analysis has long been at the heart of the black historian’s craft.” Robin D. G. Kelley, author of Thelonious Monk: The Life and Times of an American Original

“A superb study; the first major treatise on African American historiography in the past two decades. Dagbovie’s work fills a gap in historiography and contributes immensely to historical studies.” Derrick P. Alridge, author of The Educational Thought of W. E. B. Du Bois: An Intellectual History
Black Radical Tradition
A Reader

Edited by Ben Mabie, Erin Gray and Asad Haider
Preface by Barbara Ransby

With activists taking to the streets with renewed vigor to fight racism, inequality, and capitalism, this collection of classic writings and primary documents restores the historical grounding and revolutionary genealogy of today’s protest movements. Including key writings of thinkers and figures like W.E.B. Du Bois, Hubert Harrison, Harry Haywood, Claude McKay, Claudia Jones, C.L.R. James, Malcolm X, Angela Davis, Audre Lorde and the Combahee River Collective, this is the most comprehensive collection of revolutionary black voices ever assembled. In highlighting the central debates that animated the movement through its long history, it registers the monumental import once of black radical theory to our understanding of the past and present alike.

Incisive contextual materials from the editors help situate each contribution in its historical and political setting, and a preface from Barbara Ransby argues for the resounding purchase these authors have for our own time. The book is a powerful testament to over 150 years of struggle, a valuable resource for both scholars and activists.

Ben Mabie is the managing editor of Viewpoint Magazine, a journal of Marxist theory as it is articulated within mass movements. He works as an editorial assistant at Verso Books.

Erin Gray is a historian and theorist of lynching. Her writing appears in Viewpoint Magazine, and multiple other journals.

Asad Haider is a founding editor of Viewpoint Magazine and author of Mistaken Identity.
The best way to keep track of your year

2019 Verso Radical Diary

The 2019 Verso Radical Diary is a beautifully designed week-to-view planner where you can keep track of your coming year. Alongside illustrations, it features significant dates in radical history, drawn from events such as the English Civil War and Castro’s victory march in Havana – it touches on the lives of characters such as Rosa Luxemburg and Gil Scott-Heron – and includes movements such as #blacklivesmatter and the Suffragettes.

The 2019 edition includes illustrations from Savage Messiah. Laura Oldfield Ford’s brilliant psychogeographic graphic novel, as well as extracts from brand new Verso books, including Revolting Prostitutes, New Dark Age and Paradise Rot.

“Anglo-America’s preeminent radical press.” Joshua Cohen, Harpers’ Magazine

“A rigorously intelligent publisher.” Sunday Times
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