

Anti-Haitianism: A Hemispheric Rejection Of Revolutionary Blackness



*Bertin M. Louis, Jr. -
Photo: University of
Kentucky*

11-13-2024 ~ From the United States to the Dominican Republic to the Bahamas, the collective scapegoating and mass deportation of Haitians for political gain lays bare a particular kind of anti-Blackness.

[This piece is part of a series analyzing anti-Haitianism with a hemispheric approach. [Read the first article in the series.](#)]

On September 25, 2024, Democratic representative Steven Horsford introduced [House Resolution 1500](#) on the floor of Congress. The intent of the resolution was to censure Republican Congressman Glen Clay Higgins of Louisiana over a social media post that amplified [false claims](#) made by former president Donald Trump and his running mate JD Vance that Haitian immigrants were eating pets in Springfield, Ohio. In a post on X responding to an Associated Press article about Haitians in Springfield [filing charges against Trump and Vance](#), Higgins wrote: “Lol. These Haitians are wild. Eating pets, vudu, nastiest country in the western hemisphere, cults, slapstick gangsters... but damned if they don’t feel all sophisticated now, filing charges against our President and VP.”

He continued: “All these thugs better get their mind right and their ass out of our country before January 20th.” Higgins later deleted the tweet but the damage was done. Condemnations flooded in, followed by the resolution to censure the congressman.

Such comments and lies reflect the worst white supremacist stereotypes about Haiti and Haitians. Broadly, [anti-Haitianism](#) consists of actions, beliefs, outcomes, policies, political strategies, and practices that reify the negative connotations associated with Blackness and Haitian identity. Trump and [Vance](#) both used the [admittedly](#) false [anti-Haitian rumor](#) as a form of anti-Black, anti-immigrant fear mongering to garner political support.

Examples of such strategies abound. In September 2021, for instance, U.S. Border Patrol agents [appeared to whip Haitians in Del Rio, Texas](#) amid a crackdown at the border that resulted in the [largest mass expulsion](#) of asylum seekers in recent U.S. history. Between January 2021 and February 2022, the United States expelled or deported over [20,000 Haitians](#). During the same period, more than 5,000 Haitians were deported from other countries, about half of them from the Bahamas.

Anti-Haitianism, of course, is not limited to the United States. It is a [regional and hemispheric phenomenon](#). Within scholarly and informed circles, the best known example of this form of political domination, marginalization, [racism](#), and anti-Blackness is in the Dominican Republic. In his study of race and politics, Ernesto Sagás analyzes how Dominican political elites use race and [antihaitianismo](#) to “construct national myths and then use these myths to stymie challenges to their hegemony.”

As Sagás explores, the national myth undergirding Dominican statehood was that the Dominican Republic was the most Spanish colony in the so-called New World. After Haiti’s occupation of Santo Domingo from 1822 to 1844—which liberated enslaved people, guaranteed Haitian freedom and independence, and [culminated](#) in Dominican independence—the Dominican Republic solidified its distance from Blackness and Haitian identity. Antihaitianismo then developed as an ideology based on anti-Black prejudices, stereotypes, and myths about Haitians and people of Haitian descent. Antihaitianismo, Sagás writes, scapegoats Haitians for problems within Dominican society and considers Haitians to be culturally and racially inferior Black sub-humans.

Antihaitianismo was violently on display in Dominican society in the 1937 [genocidal massacre of tens of thousands of Haitians](#) at the orders of Dominican dictator Rafael Trujillo. More recently, in 2013, the country's highest court issued a ruling, locally known simply as *la sentencia*, that not only upheld a constitutional amendment that abolished birthright citizenship but also retroactively stripped the citizenship of more than 200,000 Black Dominicans of Haitian descent, rendering them stateless. Beginning in 2015, tens of thousands were forced out of the country. Now, Dominican President Luis Abinader has [announced plans](#) for a new round of mass deportations.

"A Certain Kind of Black"

In my book project, *Anti-Haitianism in Paradise: Marginalization, Stigma, and Anti-Blackness in the Bahamas*, part of the "Black Lives and Liberation" series from [Vanderbilt University Press](#), I build on Sagás's work and use anti-Haitianism to articulate the unique form of oppression Haiti and people of Haitian descent experience. In other words, I am wresting the idea and reality of anti-Haitianism in the Dominican Republic, applying it to varying social contexts, and broadening the theory to explain what anthropologist Gina Athena Ulysse—in reference to the racist treatment and degradation of Haitians in other parts of the world—refers to as ["the rejection of a certain kind of Black."](#)

The Bahamas, a small, predominantly Black Caribbean archipelago nation, has a history of anti-Haitian actions. Haitians have migrated to the Bahamas since the era of the Haitian Revolution (1791-1803). Yet on November 9, 2019, members of a Bahamian nationalist group called [Operation Sovereign Bahamas](#) protested outside a gymnasium housing hundreds of victims of Hurricane Dorian. The [devastating Category 5 hurricane](#) hovered over Grand Bahama for 24 hours starting on September 1, 2019, flooded much of the island, and mostly submerged the Abaco Islands, rendering these areas uninhabitable. Haitians who had been living in informal settlements in Abaco were displaced.

Two months later, the Operation Sovereign Bahamas demonstrators called on the Bahamian government to evict the displaced people taking shelter at the gymnasium. "The Bahamas is for Bahamians," the group's founder, Adrian Francis said, according to Bahamian news service [Eyewitness News Bahamas](#). Other members of the group held Bahamian flags and shouted at evacuees, presumably of Haitian descent, "Go home!" "Repatriation!," and "We want you out of our country!" This scene came after the same civic group had held a well-

attended [town hall meeting](#) on October 4, 2019 in New Providence, Bahamas titled "[Eradicating Illegal Immigrants in the Bahamas, Shanty Towns Down.](#)"

Cyclical White Supremacy

Anti-Haitianism operates as an ideology rooted in anti-Blackness, nationalism, political domination, and marginalization. We can also see anti-Haitianism expressed as a set of practices. But what is the relationship between anti-Haitianism in the Dominican Republic and anti-Haitianism in the Bahamas? As in the United States, political elites in both nations use anti-Haitianism as a strategy, suggesting that both African-descended nations are structurally anti-Haitian. When Black Dominicans of Haitian descent were forced to leave the Dominican Republic in 2015 due to [la sentencia](#), it was partly done by the party in power as a move to garner political capital.

Another dimension of anti-Haitianism is that these nations express and exert their sovereignty through anti-Blackness. In the wake of Hurricane Dorian, the Bahamas repatriated 228 Haitian migrants, 153 of whom had lived in hurricane-ravaged Abaco. Many Haitian residents of Abaco lived in informal settlements, locally called shanty towns, and had unexpired work permits that granted them legal status in the country.

When majority Black nations assert their sovereignty through anti-Haitianism, they extend the spirit of white supremacy and anti-Blackness, traditions previously exerted on the ancestors of Bahamians and Dominicans through slavery. These cycles also expose the *cyclical* nature of white supremacy and the *durability* of anti-Blackness.

Anti-Haitianism in Hemispheric Perspective

Reflecting its hemispheric dimensions, anti-Haitianism has also developed into an important type of anti-Blackness informing other types of Blackness within nations in North America, the Caribbean, and South America. Regine O. Jackson's 2011 [Geographies of the Haitian Diaspora](#) discusses how Haitian migrants and their progeny have served in the past and present as repugnant cultural "others" in relation to the citizens of Jamaica, Guadeloupe, and Cuba.

In Haiti, in the wake of the 2010 earthquake, a United Nations-introduced cholera outbreak [claimed nearly 10,000 lives](#) and adversely affected more than 820,000 people. The United Nations remains unaccountable and unpunished for this

human rights [catastrophe](#). In addition, much earthquake aid did *not go to Haitians* but to donors' own civilian and military entities, UN agencies, international NGOs, and private contractors, suggesting that humanitarian aid can be wielded as an anti-Haitian weapon.

And in Brazil, scholars [Denise Cogo and Terezinha Silva](#) have observed the racist treatment of Haitians who were encouraged to migrate the country in the post-earthquake period to work as laborers ahead of the 2016 Olympics. The adverse experiences of Haitians in Brazil—home to the [largest Black population](#) in the Americas—expose the linkages between labor extraction, anti-Blackness, and anti-Haitianism.

Anti-Haitianism also serves other purposes within these examples, such as identity construction. The peoples of the Bahamas, Brazil, the Dominican Republic and other countries construct their identities as superior in relation to Haitian identities, producing anti-Haitian outcomes. The fact that Haitians have still not been compensated by the United Nations for cholera-related illness and death, and that the people who caused the epidemic have not been punished through Haitian or international law, reflects how Haitian lives are not only considered expendable but also unworthy of justice.

While we must consider differences in the local histories, socioeconomic conditions, and political situations of the Bahamas, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, and elsewhere, a clear anti-Haitian pattern emerges in the wake of the 2010 earthquake. This pattern, on display in the news and scholarly publications, includes [alienation, death, expulsion](#), elimination, humiliation, marginalization, and stigmatization. Also, while these majority Black nations are subject to anti-Blackness, all these countries promote a unique form of anti-Blackness that specifically adversely affects Haitians. This should remind us that all that is Black is not the same type of Black, reflecting hierarchical and differentiated Blackness.

Anti-Haitianism is, in other words, an expression of a rejection of the Blackest of the Black—a revolutionary Blackness that demands freedom, equality, and dignity, but remains collectively punished and stigmatized.

By Bertin M. Louis, Jr.

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Source: Independent Media Institute

The One-Word Explanation For Trump's Stunning Victory?



C.J. Polychroniou

11-13-2024 ~ Corporate media pundits will not tell you, because it remains at the core of their belief system. But neoliberalism is not just an economic doctrine, but a political project that has now ushered us into the abyss of fascism.

Donald Trump's commanding victory over [Kamala Harris](#) seems to have surprised a lot of people both in the U.S. and around the world. Yet, it's not surprising that Trump pulled off this victory, especially since polls predicted a tight race. What is surprising though is the scale of his victory. In a deeply divided society with a

two-party system, one would have expected that either candidate would have won by a narrow margin.

Trump's victory, which will have a wide-ranging impact on all aspects of U.S. society and will reverberate through the global political economy, represents a genuine political earthquake. He won the electoral college and the popular vote by expanding his coalition with historic demographic shifts. Even democratic heartlands saw large swings toward Trump, while Kamala Harris underperformed with both women (thus indicating that abortion was much less of a key issue than people thought it would be in the 2024 presidential election) and young voters. [Young male voters](#), in particular, swung toward Trump in a big way as Kamala Harris not only put [women on top of her agenda](#) but, in turn, had very little to say about men. As for the [loss of the working-class vote](#), which so much has already been said and written about it, suffice to say that Harris also had nothing to say to the mass of citizens facing economic hardship. Strangely enough, Harris and the Democrats in general did not even try to convey to the public some of the success that Biden's economic policies had in contributing to growth and employment.

Kamala Harris could not convince the voters. A considerable majority of the electorate did not share her priorities. That much is obvious. Following her loss to [Donald Trump](#), Democratic National Committee finance committee member Lindy Li made a telling comment when she said that Harris' bid for the White House was a "[\\$1 billion disaster](#)."

Indeed, Democrats' humiliating losses in the 2024 elections has sparked [infighting and finger pointing](#) about what went wrong and where the party goes from here. Whether Kamala Harris was the right choice for the Democrats is now of course an academic question. But it may be of interest to see what the [New York Times](#) said about Harris in November 2019: "Ms. Harris is the only 2020 Democrat who has fallen hard out of the top tier of candidates. She has proved to be an uneven campaigner who changes her message and tactics to little effect and has a staff torn into factions."

The emerging consensus on Trump's reelection is that it was fueled by the economy. But what exactly does this mean? Between the final quarter of 2022 and the third quarter of 2024, the [U.S. economy](#) under the Biden-Harris administration was in rather good shape. Unemployment was at its lowest level in decades, wages were rising (though it's not clear at all if Americans' pay has fully

recovered from inflation), and the GDP was expanding above the trend. In fact, the U.S. economy has been growing [faster](#) than any other advanced economy by a wide margin. And the inflation has steadily cooled over the past couple of years.

Now, we do know of course that there was a mismatch in U.S. economy perception and reality, and that a [Harris-Guardian](#) poll conducted in the spring of 2024 had in fact revealed that almost everything that most Americans believed about the economy was wrong. However, all this can be explained by the fact that economies are too complex to be summed up by just a couple of indicators. A person's perception of a country's economic health can be influenced by one's own economic status, pessimism about the overall direction of the economy based on comparisons about economic conditions even with the rather distant past, and sentiments about the role of government and even the public's voice in government and politics. People who feel disconnected from the political system and have dismal views about the nation's politics are not likely to express positive views about the state of the economy. In other words, perceptions about the state of the economy can be influenced by [political biases](#).

The notion that Trump's re-election was fueled not so much by the actual state of the economy but rather by voter anxiety over the general direction of the economy and who is really in charge of government in the United States would have made more sense. [Most voters](#) don't feel economically stable or secure. They are aware of the growing economic inequalities and worry about job security. Surveys have consistently found that most workers in the U.S. can't afford an [emergency expense](#) even of a few hundred dollars. For most U.S. adults, the [American dream](#) no longer holds true, including a staggering 80 percent among people under the age of 30.

Let's call things by their proper names. It is the cumulative effects of neoliberalism on economic wellbeing, social cohesion, and democratic politics that explains the pessimism that exists in people's minds about the direction of the economy and the condition of the country overall. It is the disastrous effects of neoliberalism that can explain the latest realignment of the U.S. electorate and Trump's decisive victory over Kamala Harris. It is the dysfunctional U.S. economic system in its totality that has given rise to authoritarian demagogues like Donald Trump who promise unhappy and angry voters a return to a golden age.

The economic, political, social, and cultural dominance of neoliberalism has

facilitated the rise of authoritarian populism and the far right not only in the United States but throughout the world. Here, I define neoliberalism not only as an economic doctrine primarily characterized by free markets, globalization, liberalization, massive deregulation, shifts away from social welfare programs, and the redistribution of income and wealth from labor to capital, but also as a political project that aims to undo the demos and is carried out by the dominant economic classes through a brutal form of class warfare and with the explicit aim of capturing the political system and hijacking the state as the implementation of neoliberal policies requires large-scale intervention in the capitalist economy; and, equally important, as a sociopolitical ideology that puts individual self-interest before the common good, displays indifference to economic and social inequality and subsequently justifies plutocracy, offers acceptance to unequal power distribution, and transfers responsibility to individual agents.

Neoliberalism has attained a hegemonic position as an economic doctrine and sociopolitical ideology in much of the developed world and permeates the entire mainstream political space. Across Europe, social democratic and socialist parties have become virtually indistinguishable from conservative and right-wing political parties. In the U.S. the Carter, Clinton and Obama administrations pushed neoliberalism as the only viable alternative. Subsequently, what we have seen over the past twenty or so years across the developed capitalist world is the resurgence of ethno-nationalism, the rise of far-right political movements and political parties, and neofascist leaders like Orban in Hungary and Meloni in Italy and proto-fascists like Trump in the United States rising to power through the ballot box.

The new breed of authoritarian populists like Trump has emerged precisely because neoliberal capitalism has created so much discontent and anger that it needs a new model of governance to keep the system intact. And it comes in the form of proto-fascism or neo-fascism. Trumpism is an extreme far-right ideology that attacks democracy and seeks to disband progressive social agendas while promoting a new and more ruthless form of market liberalization. Trumpism is best defined as neoliberal fascism.

Unfortunately, as the traditional parties of the left have themselves embraced the neoliberal orthodoxy and the postmodern left has become obsessed with cultural issues and anti-racism at the expense of economic issues, a very sizeable chunk of the working class has been duped by the new breed of authoritarian populists and

put its trust in turn in their hands in hopes of a better future. This is the tragedy of the Left. For without radical political leadership for guidance and inspiration, the working class of today fails to recognize neoliberal capitalism as the problem and has been made in turn to look for scapegoats. This is what Trump has managed to do with his vicious attacks on immigrants, undoubtedly more successfully than any other authoritarian demagogue in the western world.

Like their predecessors, the new breed of authoritarian demagogues with proclivities to fascist rhetoric like Trump are homogenizing nationalists. But with the U.S. being one of the most ethnically diverse and multicultural nations in the world, Trump knew he had to expand his voter base if he were to be successful in his bid for reelection. The fact that his message got through with black, Latino and Asian voters is nothing short of amazing. It seems that the more racist Donald Trump sounds, the more voters he attracts from minority groups. Indeed, the Republican Party is now less white than ever before, and that has to be a very distressing development for the future of the Democratic Party.

What the next four years will bring from the Trump administration may be unlike anything the United States has experienced in modern times. Trump feels he has a powerful mandate, which is hard to argue against, to fulfill his campaign promises. Deportations and closing the border, drilling, pardons, tariffs, targeting journalists, and signing executive orders for schools pushing “critical race theory” and “gender identity” could be among the first promises he may try to fulfill. The restructuring of the U.S. government will take time, and it is unlikely that the second Trump administration will be as disorganized and chaotic as the first.

Progressives and radicals should prepare for what lies ahead. We do live in interesting times.

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Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/trump-s-victory-explained>

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The Sustainability Scam: How Self-Interest Ruins Good Ideas



11-09-2024 ~ *We must ensure ecocentric standards to reverse environmental and social injustices.*

We have laws to ensure children are born into a safe, sustainable, and unpolluted environment. These laws are also meant to [empower](#) future generations and guarantee birth equity. But far from ensuring that these rights are upheld, we disfranchise children at birth because they do not have a legal say in the actions of adults that impact their future.

Our ill-advised desire to [prioritize economic growth over children's futures has led to the climate crisis](#). It has also led to children being born into unequal conditions where they do not have equal access to welfare resources. This has resulted in the impacts of environmental degradation being felt unequally among different socioeconomic groups. Poor people, Indigenous groups, and people of color are, by and large, impacted more by the degraded environment than the wealthy and white segment of the population. This is the tragic legacy of environmental racism, which has been referred to as "[the new Jim Crow](#)."

Those most affected by these injustices often have little or no say in shaping policies and laws, and their children eventually inherit this unequal system. In a

capitalist, profit-driven economy, it is unsurprising that the corporate sector, driven by financial concerns above all else, is the biggest culprit in perpetuating these wrongs—particularly the [extractive industries](#) and [industrial agriculture](#).

The Misinformed Power Grab

Most leaders—and the biggest beneficiaries of an unequal society—never came close to protecting children from the harm caused by the development model favored by the rich world. Instead, poor children grow up in a world to face the repercussions of a [power grab](#) by wealthy, primarily white, families.

The first misstep of dissociating the connection between human rights and environmental sustainability was taken in 1948 when the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR) was signed, establishing fundamental rights for all people.

Twenty years later, in 1968, the [United Nations held a conference in Tehran](#) where some groups raised concerns about the impact of population growth (and, by extension, economic growth) on human rights. Despite these efforts, the concerns were never resolved, and the relevant changes were never incorporated into the UDHR.

Fixing the Problem: Laws, Norms, and Reparations

The UN's ill-informed, misguided policy decision has led to a socioeconomic system built on the disenfranchisement of children at the time of their birth. There is an urgent requirement to rectify this situation and secure their welfare.

Firstly, reparations are needed. The wealth made through this process of disenfranchisement must be used to secure the future of newborn children who are entering the world. Those wealthy individuals and corporations that have benefited most from this disenfranchisement (and may have promoted ignorance by glossing over the [actual impacts of economic growth](#)) should be held especially responsible.

Secondly, we must establish laws and norms that ensure that the rights and welfare of unborn children are accounted for in the democratic process and that human beings are not merely seen as a means to sustain and grow economies. We must shape a future where children are not born simply to become consumers or workers but as fully participatory citizens with agency over their lives, with the ability to choose and thrive instead of merely surviving.

While [Effective Altruism](#) and other movements based on financial investments are often viewed by many nonprofits as effective ways to resolve these issues, [reparations are the most effective and immediate](#) way to fix problems facing us today if we want to restore the natural balance. If we skip this crucial step, it would be the equivalent of building a house with no foundation.

The Sustainability Scam

Sustainability has become a buzzword among environmentalists, CEOs, and politicians. Leaders often present themselves as guardians of a better future, bragging about eco-friendly projects and sustainable methods. However, a closer look exposes a darker aspect to these assertions. The rhetoric and reality frequently diverge significantly, with racial disparities, self-interest, and uneven growth undermining various projects' ostensible benefits.

Nonprofits working toward social, economic, and environmental changes must also include family planning in their goals. They must first help ensure the shared, inclusive equity of children born into the world. That means giving all newly born human beings an equal capacity to self-determine the social and ecological influences that others have over them.

In his 2018 book [Winners Take All, The Elite Charade of Changing the World](#), Anand Giridharadas examines how the global elite's efforts to "change the world" are only an attempt to retain the status quo. He argues that their actions to try and resolve problems are a bid to hide their role in creating the problems in the first place. Publishers Weekly [called](#) the book a "damning portrait of contemporary American philanthropy."

But Giridharadas—and publications like the [New York Times](#)—have missed the biggest charade—the one mainly driving the suffering and death unfolding as temperatures increase. This "sustainability scam" has at least two standards for activist campaigns that claim to be sustainable, green, humane, democratic, eco-friendly, etc. There is one standard for wealthy investors (and their children), who often fund organizations that promote these terms, hoping that their work might have an impact in furthering them, and a different standard based on birth equity.

These standards are artificial, arbitrary, and designed to allow a particular form of economic growth that benefits some—mainly the white population—at a deadly cost to others. This first standard—anthropocentric and [adopted in 1968](#) by the

UN agencies bowing to wealthy families—does not require birth equity. It functions on unsustainable welfare as the primary currency or value.

This first standard allows significant deviation from the ecosocial baselines and ecocentric standards that would have [prevented the climate crisis](#). These real standards can be measured along [at least eight metrics](#) like restorative levels of greenhouse gas emissions and inclusive representative ratios that ensure a healthy, functional democracy. Deviation from these standards—based on self-determination or freedom and equitable share in democracy—has led to the [climate crisis that is killing millions](#).

Funders in the polluter nations facing significant climate liability fund various institutions—media, nonprofits, universities, agencies, think tanks, and celebrities—to spread disinformation to support the first standard. This allows wealthy families to treat inherited wealth and other privileges as something outside the realm of the democratic process, which they use to strengthen their positionality and growth to systematically disenfranchise the average voter. We are now at a place where they can use the wealth they made through the scam to attack the democratic process and try to step outside of it.

An [effort is underway at the United Nations](#) that requires assessments of climate damages. This includes the need to 1) ensure that ecocentric standards are adopted to account for the actual harm being done by the crisis and 2) to treat these standards and the recovery of climate reparations as the first and overriding human rights, a right that preempts the government's authority to assign wealth contrary to it, and allows citizens to engage in preemptive acts of self-defense to protect themselves and their children.

Inequitable Growth Policies

As a fundamental right, people who are made vulnerable by the actions of others—like [fenceline communities put in harm's way](#) by petrochemical plants being built in their backyards—are owed compensation. As [millions die in a climate crisis](#) resulting from inequitable growth policies undoing most mitigation efforts, questions arise about how that happened and who should be held accountable.

We can see the imbalance in how the climate crisis disproportionately impacts those who are least responsible for causing it. In 2022, Seth Borenstein and Drew

Costley of the Associated Press [reported](#) that “the data shows that the top carbon emitter over time, the United States, has caused more than \$1.9 trillion in climate damage to other countries from 1990 to 2014, including \$310 billion in damage to Brazil, \$257 billion in damage to India, \$124 billion to Indonesia, \$104 billion to Venezuela and \$74 billion to Nigeria. But at the same time, the United States’ carbon pollution has benefited the U.S. by more than \$183 billion, while Canada, Germany, and Russia have profited even more from American emissions.”

This problem can no longer be ignored if we want to secure our children’s future. We must work toward [resolving](#) the social and economic disparities, increasing access to welfare measures, and ensuring better resources for pregnant women and families.

Ensuring Child Rights

There is a [minimum threshold of well-being for birthing a child](#), which is necessary for self-determination. We must take drastic measures to ensure all children have the resources to become self-determining individuals. This could involve seizing resources from well-defended enclaves of wealth. By doing so, potential mothers might be incentivized to plan for their children’s future, knowing these resources would be available.

Some will argue that reduced economic growth, for example, is too high a cost to pay for ensuring birth equity and access to the same welfare opportunities for all children, especially those from BIPOC communities. However, these minimum thresholds are essential in forming a just and equitable society. People who argue against these basic standards threaten who we aspire to be as a society. They are more interested in exploiting humans and the environment for their gains, rather than investing in a better future. They [threaten our freedom](#).

It’s physically impossible to have a legally obligating “we” that precedes all legitimate national constitutions without measurable birth equity. As the work done by the United Nations shows, no one gets to use authority and state violence to benefit at a cost to others [without incurring significant risk](#). It is important to see beyond the lies perpetuated [between 1948 and 1968](#) to make us think that national sovereignty is magically inherent. It has to be derived from the measurable sovereignty or self-determination of its subjects.

The only way to ensure share equity is to entitle would-be parents to bring

children into the world only after a certain threshold of planned conditions, measurable on the eight metrics, have been achieved. The wealth accumulated by exploiting nature, which led to the climate crisis, must be used to ensure these conditions.

The United States prides itself on being a free nation but uses the concept of freedom that starts by exploiting the most vulnerable. There is no [minimum threshold of well-being](#) for future children and animals, as they are [seen as a means](#) to growing economies rather than individuals with rights who form integral parts of society.

Converting democracies into unsustainable growth economies that enrich a few by diluting everyone else's equal and influential equity shares in our political system is a subtle form of oppression. It leads to [millions dying as the growth triggers catastrophic heat waves](#). This eventually results in justified resistance movements to protest against the scam, where those at the top of the economic pyramid benefitted from a society that promised an inclusive democracy, which is instead based on shared inequity.

"While there is no 'optimal' human population, the evidence suggests that a sustainable global population of 3 billion is an optimistic number given that we long ago entered a continuously intensifying state of ecological overshoot, accumulating ever more massive amounts of ecological debt that must be paid down if we are to avoid the ongoing (and ever-worsening) climate catastrophe, ecological destruction, and the resulting human misery," Dr. Christopher K. Tucker, chairman of the American Geographical Society, said in an October 2024 email.

"Adding 80 million additional people to the planet each year—the equivalent of 10 New York Cities or an additional Germany each year—is not a recipe for addressing this polycrisis," he said. "Fortunately, simply investing (heavily) in empowering strategies focused on women and girls worldwide can hasten the already inevitable demographic transition that would relieve the unrelenting pressure we have foisted on our planet—and help us meet our commitments to the next generation under the UN's 1959 [Declaration of the Rights of the Child](#)."

The wealthy need to pay the cost of creating an unequal system that benefits them instead of ensuring equal and inclusive participation by all citizens in that

system. They profit from treating children as part of a labor force [to build and grow economies](#), instead of securing their rights as part of human rights and the democratic process.

Many involved in prioritizing birth equity have seen a pattern in how they react to it: they do not offer counterarguments to the idea that [restoring nature through ecosocial birth equity](#) must be the first and overriding human right but resort to tactics to evade the issue.

These people share a common trait: They attempt to evade being held responsible for the deadly costs and lush benefits of their birth, developmental, and emancipatory positionality. Their phrasing varies from “I’m just trying to save these specific animals” to “I’m just trying to focus on this specific area of research.” That kind of siloed myopia ultimately [destroys](#) biodiversity and causes irreversible environmental damage.

True Sustainability Means Having Children in a Very Different Way

These deceptive tactics undermine the promise of sustainability, allowing leaders to project a false image of environmental stewardship while continuing harmful practices. To achieve genuine sustainability, we must demand transparency, hold organizations accountable, and ensure that the benefits of sustainable development are [distributed equitably](#). Addressing these systemic issues is the only way toward a sustainable and just future.

Many willing to benefit at a deadly cost to others want to treat the birth of children as unrelated to their lives. It is not. It is the basis of all things: a commitment to our most fundamental aspirations. Do we care about each other or exploit each other? While economics has dominated the social sciences because humans predictably try to maximize their welfare, it is also clear that many people choose criteria for truth and value that reaffirm their birth and developmental positionality.

That’s a dangerous form of self-deception, but understanding its existence allows us to move beyond economics, beyond capitalism versus socialism, and toward unifying constitutionality. We can’t change lives for the better if disproportionately influential people have the power to define what good is. Recognizing this fact is essential to hold those who evade our [obligations to birth equity](#) accountable—so that we all can work together to know what’s right and

work toward taking remedial steps to prevent further environmental damage.

How could you know how much welfare you deserve if you are not involved in making the rules determining welfare? We can't create economic demand by violating neonatal rights. We can't ensure economic growth by preventing all citizens from being born and raised in town halls and participating in the democratic process. Using [specific ecosocial thresholds](#) to reform birth and development rights ensures an equal and influential role in rulemaking, thus limiting the influence others have over you to live in relative self-determination. Given the [exponential difference](#) between the wealth of Black and white children, massive reforms are necessary to achieve equity.

Countries cannot legitimately undercut the sovereignty of their subjects by ignoring children's birth and development entitlements, using those children instead as economic inputs to create ecologically deadly growth. Nations and many powerful interests within them have, while responding to the "baby bust" of falling fertility rates, openly admitted to doing this. Part of creating deadly growth is to offer [tax cuts to women for having children](#).

In the book [Walden](#) by Henry David Thoreau, we learn that a basket weaver could not expect to [succeed in the "free" markets](#) created by those colonizing his lands. But even Thoreau missed the fundamental value of nature in constituting the creation of power relations toward equity and freedom. Laws that protect the beneficiaries of any political system only derive their legitimacy by [including and empowering future generations—in a measurable way](#)—rather than exploiting them.

By Esther Afolaranmi, Carter Dillard, Beatrix Homler, and Mwesigye Robert

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Source: Independent Media Institute

Credit Line: This article was produced by [Earth | Food | Life](#), a project of the Independent Media Institute.

Neoliberal Fascism Is Now The Dominant Ideology In The United States Of America

11-09-2024 ~ *The formation of a united front against this far-right realignment is more important and urgent than ever before.*

It's official. Neoliberal fascism has become mainstream in the United States.



C.J. Polychroniou

This is the only rational conclusion that one can draw from [Trump's decisive victory](#) in the 2024 election. Indeed, Trump's historic victory (which includes leading the GOP to a much larger-than-expected Senate majority and potentially in control of the House) has changed the nature of the Republican Party and shifted the center of gravity in U.S. politics in such earth-shattering fashion that it has led to the actual collapse of the Democratic Party.

Neoliberal fascism is now the dominant politico-ideological orientation in the United States and its dire consequences will undoubtedly be felt for years to come both inside the country and across the world. In this context, the formation of a united front against fascism is more important and urgent than ever before.

Under the leadership of [Donald Trump](#), a political movement has been born that encompasses different major coalitions (working-class voters, women [whose share of support for Trump, ironically enough, went up by 2 percentage points from the last election], Christian fundamentalists, minorities [Black, Hispanic, Asian voters] and youth [though largely white and conservative], and the ultra-wealthy) all of whom have been drawn to the "America First" slogan.

As such, the followers of Trump's movement are apparently enthused by the idea of witnessing the radical restructuring of the federal government (the shrinking of government agencies accompanied by the expansion of the powers of the presidency) and retribution for the great leader's political enemies; they are apparently in favor of rolling back civil and human rights and in approval of "law and order" politics which includes, among other things, militarizing the police and carrying out a militarist plan to deport millions of undocumented immigrants and banning sanctuary cities; they are apparently in support of a political agenda that targets climate change and curtails measures that protect the environment; and

they are apparently in approval of massive tariffs on all imports as a tool of economic competition and tax cuts to benefit the rich.

The GOP is now Trump's party, and it is fascistic. It was a fallacy all along on the part of many Democrats to think that MAGA Republicans were a minority within the GOP. [Kamala Harris](#) exhibited anything but political savviness by going after [wavering Republicans](#), flip flopping on key issues, and ignoring the needs of working-class people. Thus, as [Bernie Sanders](#) aptly put it, "It should come as no great surprise that a Democratic Party which has abandoned working class people would find that the working class has abandoned them."

The Democrats should have learned from the mistakes of Social Democratic parties in Europe, which abandoned working class people and subsequently opened the door to authoritarian populist leaders who promised voters fed up with neoliberal policies a return to a "golden age" of economic independence, national identity and traditional social values. But they didn't because Democrats have become the party of Wall Street and jet-setting celebrities.

The question now facing progressive and radical forces in the US is what to do next. Questions over political identity, vision and strategy ought to dominate public discussions in the weeks and months ahead. A united front against Trump must be formed in order to curtail the scope of his neoliberal fascist plans. As things stand, there are virtually no checks on Trump in his second term. And he comes into office armed with a Supreme Court ruling that grants the president immunity from prosecution for criminal acts committed while in office.

Dark times lie ahead. Many of those who voted for Trump will come to regret their choice, but that's of little consolation now to the rest of society. Now it's up to the rest of us to become more involved ever more passionately in pedagogical projects and political struggles that would build walls of resistance against a fascist takeover in the US. The fascist threat is real, and the Democratic Party bears much responsibility for democracy's imminent demise.

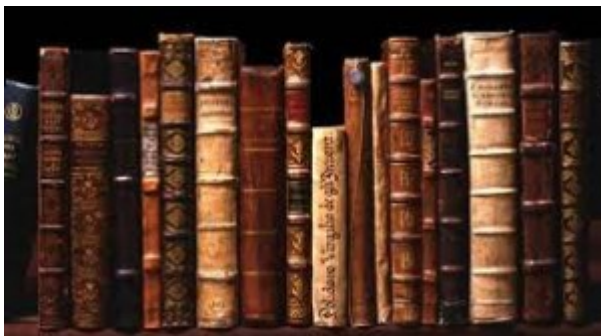
The country needs a new vision and new politics. A powerful popular mass political response is urgently needed. It can happen. It must happen. The time to get organized in a much more serious and effective way is now.

Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/neoliberal-fascism-trump-win>

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Community Support Helps The Orca Book Cooperative Stay Afloat



11-06-2024 ~ When COVID-19 hit, U.S. bookshops were an endangered species. Olympia, Washington's largest independent bookstore survived by embracing the co-op model.

Bookshops have historically served as community gathering spots and hubs for social change besides being spaces where patrons can relax and feed their minds. A notable example is New York's Oscar Wilde Memorial Bookshop, which was the site of [organizational meetings](#) for the [first gay pride parade](#) in 1970.

"Oscar Wilde soon became Information Central. As the first gay bookshop in the country, we amassed something that proved to be invaluable for organizing a march," [wrote](#) Fred Sargeant in his 2010 first-person account for the Village Voice.

Meanwhile, Washington, D.C.'s Drum and Spear Bookstore, "was a creative hub

for Black power, Black consciousness, and internationalist activism” from 1968 to 1974, [according](#) to the Library of Congress. The bookshop eventually shut down due to [debt](#).

Despite being bastions of societal advancement, community, and mental nourishment, bookshops have dwindled due to factors like [competition from Amazon](#) and the [popularity of e-books](#). In 2021, the United States Census Bureau [pointed out](#) that “the number of U.S. [b]ookstores dropped from 12,151 in 1998 to 6,045 in 2019.”

The pandemic furthered this downward trend. In October 2020, Focus Finance [reported](#) that “sales turnover from brick-and-mortar bookstores declined by 31 percent from January to July 2020. Some bookstores are even seeing year-over-year sales declines as high as [80 percent](#).”

In April 2020, when COVID-19 was in full swing, the Olympia, Washington, bookstore Orca stayed afloat by [adopting](#) the co-op model. As the shop’s [site](#) explains, owner Linda Berentsen “was ready to retire but wanted to ensure that the store lived on.”

“Diversifying was the only option,” says Kait Leamy, an Orca worker-owner since December 2021. “People didn’t want Orca to go away, so turning into a member-owned co-op was a great way to fundraise at the time.”

Leamy explains that the shop, which existed in various forms for nearly three decades before becoming the Orca Books Cooperative, is now owned by its employees and supportive Olympia community members.

“I think people in this area love that community-run aspect of things,” they state, adding that Orca owes its survival to this communal spirit. “The community has saved our lives several times. People in town are supportive on a day-to-day basis by shopping here and also when big, crazy things happen.” For example, one crowdsourcing campaign replenished funds lost to an embezzling bookkeeper. Another helped cover veterinary expenses for the shop’s resident cat, Orlando.

The bookshop has two kinds of memberships: “[Basic Consumer \[and\] Low-Income Consumer](#).” Each member pays a fee that provides some benefits, discounts, and voting rights.

Olympia is a hot spot for co-ops. In 2019, the Northwest Cooperative Development Center [told](#) the social justice publication Works in Progress that the city had “more cooperatively owned businesses per capita than any other U.S. city (one co-op business for every 5,255 residents).”

Leamy, who was a member of several co-ops while in college, notes, “Now I can’t have a job with the hierarchy that regular corporate jobs have, because I am so used to this co-op model where everybody has autonomy, [all] voices are equal, and no one is telling you what to do.”

As Olympia’s largest independent bookstore, Orca is a space where customers and staff “from all walks of life” form “a vibrant, supportive, and generous book-loving community,” the store’s site [states](#). “We rejoice in offering a wonderfully eccentric haven for our wonderfully diverse patrons.”

The shop’s amenities include a free coffee cart and a mutual aid table with medical supplies. Orca also carries cards, calendars, stickers, prints, magnets, T-shirts, and other items crafted by local creatives like noted papercut artist [Nikki McClure](#).

It also [serves](#) as a “community hub for book trade, resource sharing, and community recycling.”

“You don’t have to spend money to be here,” Leamy notes. “These days, there are so few places in the world that you’re allowed to just be in, so we try hard to make Orca a welcoming place. I think that helps us because people care and are invested.”

Selling mostly used books, Orca strives to keep its prices as low as possible, “so people can have access to the information,” according to Leamy. “We’re told all the time that we’re the cheapest bookstore in town. That feels important to us because new books are getting more and more expensive. A new hardcover these days can be \$45.”

Rather than participating in a wholesale process, local authors can sell their books in small numbers at Orca. The shop takes only a small cut, leaving the author with the majority of the sale price.

Orca hosts events such as author talks, poetry readings, mending circles, and

book club meetings “where [people] come together, read the same thing, talk about it, and talk about life and the world,” Leamy says. “You can’t do that on Amazon. Having a physical space and a physical book instead of digital feels important.”

Combined with right-wing efforts to ban and burn books, the decrease in face-to-face interaction in the digital age makes the survival of shops like Orca more important than ever.

“Bookstores, particularly, are hard [to maintain] these days,” Leamy observes. “There are some days where we say, ‘Are we going to make it?’ and some days where we’re flying high. I think there are enough people out there who want bookstores to exist [bettering the odds] that we can make it.”

By Damon Orion

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Source: Local Peace Economy

Credit Line: This article was produced by [Local Peace Economy](http://LocalPeaceEconomy.com).

Decision 2024: Neoliberal Fascism Or Neoliberal Business As Usual?



*White House - Photo:
whitehouse.gov*

11-03-2024 ~ Trump's rise the result of the ongoing erosion of the political culture in the U.S. under neoliberalism, which has essentially become the dictatorship of big financial capital.

With just a few days left until Election Day, the fact that the [race to the White House](#) between U.S. Vice President [Kamala Harris](#) and former President [Donald Trump](#) remains extremely tight is truly mind-boggling. Reason dictates that the Democrats should be set to win a landslide, but what could very well happen instead is the return of Donald Trump to the White House.

Unfortunately, there are some good reasons why this is a tightly fought election. First, the cold truth is that Kamala Harris is not an inspiring leader. What's even worse is that she is a flip-flopper. She's changed her position on [fracking](#) and on the infamous [border wall](#) (she is now against fracking natural gas bans and seems to be leaning in favor of building more border wall) and hasn't done enough to explain her policy positions on several issues, including Medicare for All. Rational voters would not fail to take notice of such shortcomings in a presidential candidate.

Second, Kamala Harris represents a party that has lost the [working class](#) and is perceived as being one with the elites. Harris' own campaign has been too focused on winning over wavering Republicans, preferring to share the stage with Liz Cheney and billionaire Mark Cuban over progressive icons like Sen. [Bernie Sanders](#) (I-Vt.) and Rep. Alexandria Ocasio- Cortez (D-N.Y.), and attacking Trump as a [threat to democracy](#).

Both strategies appear to have backfired. First, because working-class people represent a much larger segment of the electorate than wavering Republicans,

and because cozying up to anti-Trump Republicans and receiving the endorsement of the warmongering [Cheneys](#) has alienated progressives. Second, exhorting citizens to vote for the Harris-Walz ticket because Trump represents a threat to democracy isn't making inroads with average folks who are mainly concerned with how to make ends meet. Most adult citizens have [no confidence in U.S. institutions](#) and in fact [mistrust the electorate system](#), which is why millions of citizens do not bother to vote and the [voter turnout](#) in the U.S. trails that of many other Western countries.

Third, Harris has not distanced herself from the Biden approach on [Israel and Gaza](#), which has been nothing short of a moral catastrophe, and has subsequently alienated the young, progressive and non-white voters who overwhelmingly sided with President Joe Biden in 2020. Not only that, but she and the Democrats have managed to create the impression among a large swath of voters that they are now the real warmongers, which is not far from the truth.

In the meantime, Trump's support has remained stable and defined in spite of what he says. Trump exerts a [cult-of-personality](#) influence over his followers like no other populist leader in the Western world. Of course, this is the result of the ongoing erosion of the political culture in the U.S. under neoliberalism, which has essentially become the dictatorship of big financial capital. Neoliberalism is incomparable with democracy as it alters society's balance of power overwhelmingly in favor of big capital, transforms citizenship into an exercise of consumer choice, and undermines policy initiatives aimed toward the common good.

Neoliberalism must be understood not only as an economic project, but also as a political and cultural project. And nowhere else in the Western world is civil society's neoliberal transformation so pronounced as it is in the United States. Even the right to unionize, a fundamental human and civil right, faces massive challenges due to the political power of the corporate world. This is because [democracy in the U.S. has always been of a very fragile nature](#) and the consolidation of democratic ideals has faced resistance and opposition down to this day. Under such circumstances, the rise of the authoritarian strongman government that Donald Trump represents must be seen as an inevitable outcome.

Indeed, the unwavering appeal of Donald Trump among his supporters, in spite of

all his crimes and scandals, speaks volumes both about the nature and scope of the [cultural divide](#) in the U.S., as well as about the political and economic effects of neoliberalism. This is the only way to understand why the white working class and less-educated voters, the traditional base of the Democratic Party, have flocked to Republicans in recent decades and now represent Trump's base. White working-class and less-educated voters broke ranks with the Democratic Party when the New Democrat faction severed completely its ties with the "New Deal" policies and embraced in turn economic policies that are the backbone of the neoliberal project.

By the same token, the old stereotype of the Republicans as the party of the rich and the elite no longer holds sway with many voters. And there is ample evidence to explain why this is the case. Virtually all of the [wealthiest congressional districts](#) across the country are now represented by a Democrat, while it is the Republicans who claim to represent the people who struggle.

In the end, it is probably not mind-boggling at all that election polls show a very close race between Kamala Harris and Donald Trump. In a recent Pew Research Center survey, more than [80%](#) of registered voters said that the economy is the most important issue for them in the 2024 presidential election. And in a final [Financial Times](#) poll, voters expressed preference for Trump over Harris to lead the economy.

Of course, analyses that expose [Trump's myths about the economy](#) and warnings by experts that his own economic plans would [worsen inflation](#) and wreak havoc on [U.S. workers and businesses](#) while increasing the gap between the haves and the have-nots either do not reach his supporters or simply leave them unfazed. In either case, indifference to truth is a symptom of our extremely polarized times and, in a society that has lost its vision for the common good and has allowed in turn the rich to hijack the political system, all that matters now is that people believe in their own reasoning. Demagogues like Trump are fully aware of the existing social realities and not only exploit the available circumstances but make an art out of the belief that reality is what you make of it.

As sad as it may be, the 2024 presidential election is a choice between neoliberal fascism and neoliberal business as usual. Some would say there is still a difference between the two options; others might call it irredeemable politics. But these are the only two choices that U.S. voters have.

Source: <https://www.commondreams.org/opinion/neoliberal-fascism-election-2024>

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