

BENEFICIARIES OF TRUMPIAN MOTION

Posts in this series; some of the terms I use are described more fully in these posts.

Trumpian Motion

Negative Responses to Trumpian Motion

Economic Elites Drive Trumpian Motion

Beneficiaries of Trumpian Motion

Notes on Trumpian Motion Series

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The primary beneficiaries of Trumpian Motion are the economic elites, but there are others. In this post, I use Pierre Bourdieu's concepts of capital as described in David Swartz' book *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* to examine these winners.

In the 1950s, the economic elites and the cultural elites reached a truce. The cultural elites bowed to capitalism and accepted its domination. The economic elites left matters of social justice and science to the cultural elites. The dominant culture changed in the direction of greater social equity. Science upended the common sense ideas held by most people. As Arthur C. Clarke said, "Any sufficiently advanced technology is indistinguishable from magic." Mainstream churches for the most part accommodated themselves to the scientific revolution and to enlarging the groups entitled to Equal Protection in reality as well as in law, and more or less accepted the view of the dominant culture elites that certain matters were best left to the moral and ethical sense of the individual.

But as physical and social sciences undermined all of the traditional teachings in their ancient texts fundamentalists of all faiths rebelled. They used whatever religious capital they had ranting in the corners and back alleys

of society, assuring their faithful that hurricanes, earthquakes and fires, disease, and other natural events were punishments for sin, and that social changes were the teachings of devils. In the broader world, they sounded like Savonarola or a Jesuit of the Inquisition. They were largely ignored, and occasionally mocked, because people knew from science that the actual causes of such events were natural, not divine. And people saw that the fundamentalist hostility towards people who didn't meet their iron age morality was ugly and hypocritical.

But it wasn't just the religious fundamentalists who refused to recognize change. There are Tenthers, gun absolutists, sovereign citizens, constitutional sheriffs, groups who refuse to pay taxes on constitutional grounds, John Birchers, truthers, fascists, Nazis, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters and other so-called Patriot groups, and many more. There are the individual haters, including anti-Semites, racists, white supremacists, homophobes, anti-immigrants, men's rights boys and other misogynists. These are not necessarily associated with formal groups, though many are. There are also groups to the right of religious fundamentalists, like Christian Dominionists and polygamous Mormon sects and even stranger groups. Let's call these groups the Rejectionists.

The Rejectionists were marginalized by the cultural elites during the truce. They survived, and some even grew. But only a few of the religious fundamentalists had any religious or economic capital, a word Bourdieu uses as a synonym for power. Economic and cultural elites for the most part denied Rejectionists access to cultural and social capital, and they lacked the ability to raise economic capital. Therefore Rejectionists are part of the dominated class, those with no power. Bourdieu says most members of the dominated class accept their domination as logical and natural, arising from merit or some other perfectly reasonable cause. Rejectionists know they are in the dominated

class and they are angry about it because they hold the truth.

The Rejectionists hate the cultural elites who mock them and their ideas. It's the one thing that unites them. On the other hand, they almost all accept their domination by the economic elites, either on Calvinist grounds or other ideological grounds.

Over the last 60 years the economic elites eroded and then ended the truce with the cultural elites, and began to treat them as the enemy. The Rejectionists were suddenly reinforced by operatives of the economic elites in attacking the cultural elites. One of the political parties cannot win elections based solely on policies. They need the votes of the Rejectionists. To get those votes, they have to recognize the Rejectionists outright as in the case of the Religious Right, or obliquely, as with the rest of them.

Rejectionists suddenly found themselves with more capital. The first group of Rejectionists to grab political power was the Religious Right. However they are now joined by the rest of the rat's nest. These groups reinforce each other. And while there must be some of the Religious Right who openly reject these allies, they are rare and feckless.

The economic elites didn't share Rejectionist views, but they were happy to tolerate them, because their economic power insured that they would not be affected. They didn't practice those ancient hatreds or preach those weird conspiracies, so they were insulated from attacks. It wasn't necessary to support these groups. Repressing them is a constant struggle, because as we learn from Horkheimer and Adorno, the Enlightenment did not stamp out superstition and myth. Rejectionists feed on those ancient hatreds. All they need is toleration, and the occasional wink. This process is similar to the way the Nazis used festering anti-semitism as part of their to rise to power, as Hannah Arendt shows in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*.

The economic elites do not manage the dirty work themselves. Others do that. And it wouldn't happen if the economic elites didn't tolerate it and support it financially. The alliance with operatives of the economic elites and the lack of push-back from the cultural elites allowed those with Rejectionist capital to demand the rejection of the parts of Enlightenment thinking that offended them, and to impose their fundamentalist ideas on those who offended them.

The schools and universities that house the cultural elites, the media, the movies and other are also under attack for not teaching their theories, debunking their fake histories, and teaching their children to think for themselves. Rejectionists despise the culture that rejects their primal hatreds. They think the cultural elites and their institutions are the cause of everything that has gone wrong with their lives, ignoring the actual causes. They take great delight in Trumpian Motion because anything that distresses their tormentors is brilliant. They happily join in the noise-making, and make stupid threats and wave their fetish guns and chant about walls and jail for their political opponents with the vigor of every mob since forever.

The holders of Religious Capital are thrilled with their new power, and are willing to sacrifice anything to keep it. That includes blessing every Republican regardless of their violation of religious principle. They are the equivalent of the apostate Catholic priests and bishops who happily blessed Henry VIII when he created a new church.

Other rejectionist groups are using their moments of freedom to grow their numbers and their influence as documented by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

One final group of beneficiaries is not-crazed Republicans. They are happy to accept the alliance with the Rejectionists and even to enact some of their policies because they get their tax cuts and cuts to social programs. They

see that Trumpian motion benefits them by arousing their allies, and they don't even have to take the blame. In earlier times, some of them, perhaps a large number of them, could have been reached on the grounds that Trump rejects dominant cultural values. But the cultural elites have lost their status, and the great mass of Republicans do not care about their approval any more than the Rejectionists do.

So what happened to the cultural elites?