

2012/06/02-----Basically **Done** . . . . . Finally---and after rather a bit of a break, adding some last notes.

Basically done. At this point I want to rephrase bits of sections 14E, and 15. So currently the plan is to park things for a bit while I catch up on a pile of totally unrelated reading, and then get back to that bit of polishing---read W. L. Warren's biography of Henry II, will add a bit more to the final sections, have read a good deal more after deciding I should see if I need to add to "bourgie"

2016/03/15---bloody need to get around to adding in the Henry II notes and then do another sweep through all the text . . . Ah, Well.

Note: See also Cooper and the ad with the fridge being on display in the living room.

Add note: The biggest overall identifier for peons is the social and cultural Kick Me sign that all peons have taped to their butts. Given that peons make themselves no better than totally witless children, the choices left to a patrician are to totally ignore them and their inevitable failures, or, upon the equally inevitable occasion when they get in the way, drop kick them into the next county.

When one is upper class patrician, there are only three times, ever, when one gets into the news for who one is, and there may be only one time that one gets into the news for being genuinely, completely, absolutely unique when compared to the entire nation, or even more than the entire nation. When one is upper class, the only time one gets into the news is when one is born---or one's children are born---when one is married, and when one dies. The only other time that one is ever in the news is when one is elected to be the President Of The United States, or becomes the Prime Minister of Great Britain, or something of that scale, or when one becomes the first person to land on the moon, or when one becomes the first person to fly across the Atlantic, by oneself.

When you are some upper class peon, the only time you get into the news is when you are born and thus your parents also get into the news, and when you totally and utterly and completely screw something up because you are a peon, and not a patrician. And, the only other time you ever get into the news is when you die, so that the rest of us are finally rid of you, where England's Edward VIII is just one notable example.

Only peons rely on lies and smokescreens as a regular practice. A patrician doesn't bother wasting the time. A patrician will always acknowledge that when a project is running low on nails, either the project or that phase of the project is about to end, or there is need to get more nails.

When a peon attempts to refer to some costume piece as "daring" and thinks the reference is to style, the only available reality is that the fabric has been drenched in gasoline and lit matches are being waved nearby. In reality, the continuum of eminently commendable clothing ranges from style through getting dressed, and after that is the utter descent into trying to guess what the point is of the costume piece or attempted accessory which that hipster/preppy/yuppy/fail/peon is wearing.

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## Patrician or Peon

Cassiel C. MacAvity

Patrician and Peon: "Would you like a cup of tea?" vs "I Have Tea, You Will Admire Me!!"

A Matter Of Class--Three historic forms, and fourth that joins everything together

A review of three forms of class: Cannadine, Cooper, Fussell, Beyer, Fox, and Buckle, et al.

--David Cannadine; *The Rise And Fall Of Class In Britain*

--Jilly Cooper; *Class*

--Paul Fussell; *Class*

--William Beyer; *Breaking Through, Selling Out, Dropping Dead and Other Notes on Filmmaking*

--Kate Fox; *Watching The English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour*

--Richard Buckle, Editor *U & Non-U Revisited*

Combining three historic forms into a new form

References and footnotes and attributions, whether from life or fiction

William Beyer and *Juniors And Heavies*

1. Upscale, better known as extremely, overtly, blatantly, deliberately, tacky, tasteless, and devoid of any style whatsoever.

---Approximately 362 words

2. Patricians I:

The action performed remains most important, money is just a tool.

---Approximately 517 words

3. Patricians II:

Money is just a tool, the action performed remains most important.

---Approximately 930 words

4. The U.S. Mortgage fiasco, the 2011 English riots, and Occupy Wall Street, all made simple and easy:.

The issue is not "the haves vs the have-nots

---Approximately 1706 words

5. The patrician conserves cash, the peon inflates credit.

---Approximately 1723 words

6. Science and Religion, and mere faith.

---Approximately 1787 words

7. conservative and liberal

---Approximately 2712 words

8. On Film, Tasteless Fad, And Fashion, Or, How the Nineteen-Empties became the undoubted, bar nothing, butt-ugliest decade of the entire twentieth century

---Approximately 2408 words

9. Tea

---Approximately 2943 words

10. Al Grey, By Thomas Ricks

---Approximately 2834 words

11. The undoubted middle class spiralist wannabe of the equally undoubted middle class Oakland, California, neighborhood called Rockridge.

---Approximately 3446 words

12. The peon just talks, where a patrician does something and occasionally says something.

---Approximately 3470 words

13. The peon is the idiot that the patrician travels past, or otherwise just runs over.

---Approximately 4955 words

14. The powerful, the weak, and the deluded..

---Approximately 6315 words

15. Solitude And Leadership, By William Deresiewicz

---Approximately 5905 words

16. Four examples of the same failure:

16A: Socialist Realism,

16B: Cargo Cults,

16C: Inept Sympathetic Magic,

16D: Regarding the sapeur across several continents, Or, The Blatantly Fantasized Historic And Heroic Inevitability Of "Banana Navy" and "Amberguzzle And Ralph", stop giggling. Everyone knows this is serious we tell you, serious, and, like, absolutely envied. Totally. 'Cause, like, just everybody deeply respects this.

16E: Four of a kind

---Approximately 13341 words

17. The Peon, as contrasted with aspects of the reign of the Plantagenet King Henry II

---Approximately 17092 words

## **Patrician and Peon: "Would you like a cup of tea?" vs "I Have Tea, You Will Admire Me!!"**

Let us consider some fellow who, to pick an interest, doesn't have a great familiarity with varieties of champagne. Or "Sparkling Wine" in such a case, or just a bottle. Like me he may even have taste buds that totally can not stand the taste of alcohol, so aside from the occasional very ceremonial large thimble full, he too doesn't drink any alcohol. Let us say that he works as the head gardener/groundskeeper at a vineyard, so he does spend a lot of time around a lot of varieties of wine, or at least sees a lot of grapes go by. Overall, if he had the inclination, at most he may only get just a bottle here and there, or something like that, because even though he works at a winery, he really doesn't have a lot of familiarity with wine.

Let us consider this head groundskeeper as most assuredly not a peon. On a scale made of patrician and peon, this fellow can only class as a patrician.

Let us consider the fellow who wanders out of one of the vineyard administrative offices, taking a break from sorting out taxes, planning the vineyard expansion, and lining up assorted contracts with buyers across at least three continents. Several layers of employment up from the groundskeeper, he owns the vineyard and if inclined could buy the entire schooling of all of the groundskeeper's children, from preschool all the way out to a Ph.D apiece at name any quality university, because the children will also genuinely Get Taught and bloody well will earn those Ph.Ds, with honors . . . .

Certainly a peon does not successfully own and operate a viable vineyard. On a scale made of patrician and peon, this fellow must also therefore be a patrician.

Now let us consider as the groundskeeper and the vineyard owner both look off thataway and in unison have the same reaction of Oh, bugger, here comes the peon . . . .

Now let us consider a couple of people who have indeed just arrived at the vineyard. One of them has had too interesting a week, and just wants to stare at something else, and yeah, a vineyard qualifies as something else. While at the vineyard, why not pick up a couple of bottles, or maybe some more, but only if generally convenient. The other one does have a definite interest in varieties of wines, but given the nature of this book, the interest could equally involve varieties of authors and their novels, types of furniture or details of architecture, or the subtleties of different quilts, or any number of things. In this example the second person picked the vineyard to tour, really wants to see what the vineyard offers, will very likely buy quite a bit of wine, if inclined, and then afterwards the two of them will go off to dinner somewhere, perhaps, they will see what they feel like doing.

Let us consider that these two also definitely do not fit the description of the peon. On a scale made of patrician and peon, these two must therefore also get noted as a pair of patricians enjoying a day in the country.

Now finally let us consider a couple, and maybe two or three more as well. All are very insisently scanning for "The cool place and people to hang out with" and they don't mean temperature. Very particularly their absolute primary reason to show up at a winery is to be seen being at a winery. Back during the horrors of the Nineteen-Empties, these entities regularly made absolutely certain they had at least one set of football pads on. Even though style did finally return by the early twenty-first century, a number of them still go about wearing pleated pants, and these days usually turn up in clam diggers, or culottes, or "capris", or knee breeches---those really weird looking costume pieces that are too long to be shorts, and too short to be trousers. The collar has gotten pulled on end, and whenever possible the shoulder seams still manage to creep towards the elbows. Such hatred of style has given us the axiom that the lower the arm seam, the lower the class, and these walking examples are actively proving the case. Any and all of the several of them all insist that either they must always get considered the center of attention, or become extremely offended when anyone with taste and a life inevitably recognizes them as banal and boring. The limit of their concept of taste and style and behavior is a display of cheap and overpriced brands, a demand that they must always do what causes the greatest attention, a delusion that being seen being tacky and tasteless clearly takes precedence. To their limited imagination and minuscule intellect, everything else exists to revolve around them, and their all time fantasy remains not only to get mistaken for the stylish, but to also get mistaken for the

genuinely important. During all of this, their ongoing screaming insecurity keeps them perpetually having to ignore reality, or to try and actively oppose it. Yes, these creatures, by their own choice, with no room for any doubt whatsoever, are each perfect examples of the peon.

In very, very simple terms, this book is about two very different and opposing concepts.

One concept states: "*I have Tea. Tea is what patricians have, and I have tea. Because I have tea, you are to admire me and openly acknowledge that I must be considered important.*" Rather clearly and simply, this is the undoubted and documented worldview of the peon.

Completely in contrast, and forever the superior of the peon is the opposing concept: "*Would you like a cup of tea? I don't care who you are, I don't care where you come from. If you don't want any tea, that is perfectly fine. At this moment, I can offer a cup of tea. Would you like a cup of tea?*" This second and opposing concept is the worldview of the patrician.

Another way of noting the division is Me, Me, Me, vs Me And My Environment.

With Me, Me, Me, the peon fantasy is *I am required to have this car, that house, this brand name, these clothes, so that I will automatically be admired by everyone around me, and I will do absolutely everything that I can think of to make certain that this happens, and I don't care what else happens as long as everything focuses on Me, Me, Me.* Of course the handiest observation that comes to mind is to ask the peon what the point is of being enslaved by any other and that other's opinion of The Car, The House, of That Shiny Thing and having to have The Brand Name.

With Me And My Environment, the patrician notes the reality that that one makes one's own decisions, but one always makes those decisions in the context of everything else. The first concern for the patrician is indeed *I am required to be able to do anything that I wish to do, therefore if anything prevents me--and also therefore anyone else whomever just like me--then that is a problem that I must solve.* The ideal is that when the patrician simply feels like just sitting around and staring into space, that is done and the opinion of some mere peon remains totally irrelevant. And then when the roof leaks and the nearby road is a sea of potholes, and someone else is illiterate, then the patrician may get rained on, the road may destroy the patrician's car, and some illiterate can screw up something for the patrician through not being able to read. Therefore, the patrician response is to repair that roof and road and teach the illiterate to read—and if needed, the patrician is the one who does it.. If some legislative position needs to be filled and no one is running, the patrician runs for office. If there is or is going to be shortage of dentists, the patrician becomes a dentist. And, the general situation that tends to occur is when there is no shortage of many more-or-less equal possibilities for the patrician to work on. In that situation, the patrician looks over what is available, and seeks out the one that looks like it'll be the most fun. After all, as the point of being a patrician is to be able to just sit and stare into space when one feels like it, when one can not do that, one really should have fun with whatever that required alternative is.

Naturally, this ongoing occurrence of fantasy preempted by reality regularly bewilders and enrages the peon as the patrician continues to pay no attention to the peon and instead focuses on the moment. Note that in some instances, maybe the moment is that some patrician just feels like having That Shiny Thing, just because the patrician happens to like it, and really doesn't care what someone else thinks. One patrician may decide that for what is needed to be done, the patrician will acquire The Car, and The House. Immediately, the peon misses the point and notes The Car and The House. Another patrician feels like working on something else, something completely different, and in doing that does not have The Car, and The House, and has a lot of fun getting things done as needed, in the best way, and once again, the clueless peon is left with no idea of what is really going on.

A declaration has turned up at times of *You can never be too rich or too thin.* As numerous historians and anthropologists document repeatedly and unceasingly, anyone making that claim is and will never be anything more than too middle class and too tasteless, and with the greater the emphasis the lower the class.

Class and all style and taste associated with it has never been about money.

### **A Matter Of Class--Three historic forms, and a fourth that joins everything together**

The overall issue, basically, does indeed become that of class, both social and taste. Class has become one of those subjects that one allegedly does not speak of, while pretending it has ceased to exist, and then the next peon to come along instantly drags back into the open the certainty of class and the peon's lack of any.

Admittedly, even if it may not get openly talked about, very common knowledge is that these two worldviews of patrician and peon do exist, along with the awareness that by definition, the patrician is superior to and more important than the peon. Such common knowledge does then beg the question of why bother to write another book on the subject?

One reason is that as much as one would prefer, the peon keeps being around, and the patrician keeps having to clean up the resulting mess. One can argue that the early twenty-first century recession, the collapse of the Icelandic and Irish economies, all those individuals with multiple mortgages and nothing but debt and ongoing demands for even more credit, all are fiascoes that only the peon would ever practice. Certainly no patrician is that idiotic and seeing the level of ongoing screwups that the peon manages to stage, a review and reminder of what one just does not do is always in order.

At the same time, another reason for writing comes from the assorted studies of groups of people and their histories, and noting that assorted levels of sophistication, or for the peon, the lack of sophistication, just do keep occurring. Initially, what one sees with a review of these studies is that over time a number of conflicting models have been developed for discussing social classes. There tends to be a general agreement that three general models do pretty much explain and demonstrate the various types of classes. However, even with such general agreement, a particular set of oddities does keep getting noticed that so far the three models just have not been able to address. The recurring issue is the matter of trying to explain and define class while comprehensively answering the question of where the peon fits among the classes, aside from the inevitable "Take that creature somewhere else".

Following a bit of review, this book notes that as others have documented, the models that class follows do indeed have three main varieties of A) Us vs Them , B) the ever resilient three level form of upper, middle, and lower, and also C) the general gradual spectrum from lower to upper. From there, however, this book notes that there is an additional fourth model which comprehensively combines the first three and ties off all the loose ends caused by the peon. In doing so, this book explains how it is that even while the patrician is universally admired and preferred, blatantly obvious examples of the peon do still turn up in the seemingly oddest spots, even as in its own way each peon remains just like every other peon, and below everyone else.

### **A review of three forms of class: Cannadine, Cooper, Fussell, Beyer, Fox, and Buckle, et al**

Over quite a period of time, an immense number of discussions of class have occurred and this book cites a few of them. Some of these sources clearly discuss aspects and details of assorted classes and class structures. Some of these sources have more of an oblique approach. Quite a few repeatedly echo the others, albeit in their own way and phrasing. All of these sources relate to the discussion.

The main sources discussed here are:

---David Cannadine; *The Rise And Fall Of Class In Britain*, 1999

---Jilly Cooper; *Class*, 1979, revised 1999

---Paul Fussell; *Class*, 1983

---William Bayer; *Breaking Through, Selling Out, Dropping Dead and Other Notes on Filmmaking*, 2004

---Kate Fox; *Watching The English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour*, 2004

---Richard Buckle, Editor *U & Non-U Revisited*, 1979

In addition, some other sources noted particularly are:  
---Janet MacGaffey, Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga, *Congo-Paris: Transnational Traders on the Margins of the Law*, 2000  
---Thomas . E. Ricks, *Making the Corps: 10th Anniversary Edition with a New Afterword by the Author*, 2007  
---Larry Smith, *The Few and the Proud: Marine Corps Drill Instructors in Their Own Words*, 2006  
---William Deresiewicz, *Solitude And Leadership*, 2010.

### **David Cannadine; *The Rise And Fall Of Class In Britain.***

Sir David Cannadine is a British historian, and the inside front cover of his book provides a description of the book's argument.

“Cannadine proposes that “class” may best be understood as a shorthand term for three distinct but abiding ways in which the British have visualized their social worlds and identities; class as “us” versus “them”; class as “upper,” “middle,” and “lower;” and class as a seamless hierarchy of individual social relations. From the eighteenth through the twentieth century, he traces the ebb and flow of these three ways of viewing ”British society, unveiling the different purposes each model has served.”

Cannadine covers British society over about three centuries, looking at historic movements and moments. As he does so and in excellent detail and reason, this book grabs some large chunks of text from the introduction and conclusion sections of his book .

. . . How, across a long time span and from a broad geographical perspective, can we recover the ways in which Britons saw and understood the manifestly unequal society in which they lived? For a suggestive answer, we might usefully turn to Montpellier in 1768, when a bourgeois citizen set out to "put his world in order" by describing the social structure of his town. He concluded that there was no single comprehensive or authoritative way in which this could be done. Instead, he offered three very different yet equally plausible accounts of the same contemporary, social world. The first was Montpellier as a procession: as a hierarchy on parade, a carefully graded ordering of rank and dignity, in which each layer melded and merged almost imperceptibly into the next. The second was Montpellier divided into three collective categories of modified estates: the nobility, the bourgeoisie, and the common people. And the third was a more basic division: between those who were patricians and those who were plebeians. Clearly, these were very different ways of characterizing and categorizing the same population. The first stressed the prestige ranking of individuals and the integrated nature of Montpellier society. The second placed people in discrete collective groups that owed more to wealth and occupation and gave particular attention to the bourgeoisie. And the third emphasized the adversarial nature of the social order by drawing one great divide on the basis of culture, style of life, and politics.

Thus Montpellier in 1768, *and thus Britain during the last three hundred years*. That, in essence, is the argument that I advance and unfold in the following pages. When Britons have tried to make sense of the unequal social worlds they have inhabited, settled, and conquered, across the centuries and around the globe, they have most usually come up with versions or variants of these same three basic and enduring models: the hierarchical view of society as a seamless web; the triadic version with upper, middle, and lower collective groups; and the dichotomous, adversarial picture, where society is sundered between "us" and "them." These were, and still are, the conventional, vernacular models of British social description used by ordinary people, by pundits and commentators, and by politicians, and it is with the history of these three models that this book is primarily concerned. Strictly speaking, they were mutually exclusive, using different criteria to describe the same unequal society in very different ways and often (though diminishingly) using their own specific languages. Thus regarded, these three

depictions of society do not amount to what the sociologist Gordon Marshall would call "a rigorously consistent interpretation of the world. Far from it; indeed, quite the opposite.

But in practice and like the Montpellier bourgeois, most people move easily and effortlessly from one model to another, recasting their vision of British society to suit their particular purpose or perspective. And one of the reasons they were able to do so was that they gradually came to use the same language, regardless of the particular model they were employing. Often it was the vocabulary of ranks and orders. But it was also, and increasingly, the language of class that was most commonly used for describing all three models of contemporary British society: class as hierarchy; class as "upper," "middle," and "lower"; and class as just "upper" and "lower." Thus regarded, the history of class is not the master key that unlocks the entire historical process: the history of class struggle as classes come into being and do battle with each other. Nor is it the history of innumerable subjective social identities exclusively constituted by language. Rather, it is the history of the three different ways in which, across the centuries, most Britons have visualized their society: the history of three models of social description that are often but not always expressed in the language of class. Redefined and understood in this way, the history of "class" should properly be regarded as the answer to the following question: how did (and do) Britons understand and describe their social worlds? It is that answer, and that history, that this book aims to provide.

"All societies," George Watson has rightly noted, "are unequal; ... but they describe their own inequalities variously." In the British case, it is these three idealized models, not always but often articulated in the language of class, that have lain behind most popular perceptions and descriptions of social structure since the early eighteenth century. Like all such popular perceptions, they were the jumbled product of custom and habit, history and experience, politics and inquiry, information and misinformation, ignorance and prejudice; then, as now, there were limits to what Britons knew about the social worlds in which they lived. None of these three idealized models constitute what Ernest Gellner recently called "real social knowledge." All of them are ignorant oversimplifications of the complexity of society. Yet they have remained remarkably enduring, and they are still in existence in Britain today. Indeed, it is precisely because of their continued existence that Britain cannot possibly be described as a "classless society" and that historians are mistaken in dismissing class from their current agenda. For if we are to understand class historically, we need to understand how it is over time that these three models of society have coexisted and why it is that for different people, and at different times, one or another of these models has been the preferred account of how things are."

### **Jilly Cooper; *Class***

Another quality discussion of class comes from British author Jilly Cooper. Her book, called *Class*, gives a direct overview of types of classes in Britain in the late twentieth century. Originally published in 1979, Cooper then updated and rereleased the book in 1999. In the introduction to the 1999 update, Cooper notes that regardless of the attempts of the Thatcherites in the interval, while she does outline in very general terms, with just a few changes the descriptions did hold up very well over the twenty year period. Like Cannadine, Cooper also notes the difficulties in nailing down the details of class, and that two particular issues also very quickly turn up; The initial trendy claim that class has become defunct gets very quickly followed by a detailed outline of the various classes.

From the introduction to the 1999 edition;

"In the middle of the seventies when I tentatively suggested writing a book about the English class system, people drew away from me in horror.



`But that's all finished, they said nervously, `no one gives a hoot any more. Look at the young. They sounded as if I was intending to produce a standard work on coprophilia or child-molesting. It was plain that, since the egalitarian shake-up of the 'sixties and early 'seventies, class as a subject had become the ultimate obscenity.

What struck me, however, as soon as I started the book was the enormity of the task I had taken on. It was like trying to catalogue the sea. For the whole system, despite its stratification, is constantly forming and reforming like coral. `Even a small town like Swansea,' wrote Wynford Vaughan Thomas `has as many layers as an onion, and each one of them reduces you to tears.' To me the system seemed more like a huge, striped rigger shirt that had run in the wash, with each layer blurring into the next and snobbery fiercest where one stripe merged with another.

I found, too, that people were incredibly difficult to pin down into classes. John went to a more famous boarding school than Thomas, who has a better job than Charles, who's got smarter friends than Harry, who lives in an older house with a bigger garden than David, who's got an uncle who's an earl, but whose children go to comprehensive school. Who is then the gentleman?

A social class can perhaps be rather clumsily described as a group of people with certain common traits: descent, education, accent, similarity of occupation, riches, moral attitude, friends, hobbies, accomodation and with generally similar ideas and forms of behaviour, who meet each other on equal terms and regard themselves as belonging to one group. A single failure to conform would certainly not exclude you from membership. Your own class tend to be people you feel comfortable with -'one of our sort'- as you do when you are wearing old flat shoes rather than teetering round on precarious five-inch heels. `The nice thing about the House of Lords,' explained one peer, `is that you can have incredibly snobbish conversations without feeling snobbish. Yesterday I admired a chap's wife's diamonds; he said they came from Napoleon's sword, and before that from Louis XIV.'

Cooper's solution involves a cast of characters running from top to bottom. She has the division of three, but even within these multiple divisions, she does also note an intriguingly particular better and worse division.;

“The aristocracy and upper classes are represented by The Hon HARRY STOW-CRAT. . . . He now runs his diminishing estate, selling the odd Van Dyck to make ends meet, but does more or less what he pleases . . . He has a long-suffering wife, CAROLINE, . . . He has numerous mistresses, but none to whom he is as devoted as to his black labrador, SNIPE. He has had many moments of frustration and boredom in his life, but never any of self-doubt

To illustrate the three main strands of the middle classes we again fall into archetypes, with GIDEON and SAMANTHA UPWARD as the upper-middle-class couple, HOWARD and EILEEN WEYBRIDGE as the middle-middles and BRYAN and JEN TEALE as the lower-middles. . . .

The upper-middle classes are the most intelligent and highly educated of all the classes, and therefore the silliest and the most receptive to every new trend: radical chic, health foods, ethnic clothes, bra-lessness, gifted children . . . .

As they can't be the most upper class in the land, Samantha is determined that they shall be the most 'cultured'.

In the last fifteen years, the upper-middles have aimed at a standard of living they can't afford, taking on many of the pastimes of the upper classes . . . they are both so worried about making ends meet, they're drinking themselves absolutely silly. . . .

Howard Weybridge lives in . . . some smart dormitory town . . . His children join the young Con-servatives and the tennis club to meet people. He buys a large modern house and ages it up. . . . Eileen . . . thinks the upper-middles are terribly scruffy . . .

The Teales are probably the most pushy, the most frugal and the most respectable of all the classes, because they are so anxious to escape from the working classes.

the lower-middles . . . as they are obsessed with cleanliness, and like everything nice, they buy a small modern house and fill it with modern units which are easy to keep clean. Jen and Bryan have . . . a very clean car.

. . . To avoid any working-class stigma she . . . talks in a 'refained' accent, raising her little finger when she drinks.

Our archetypal working-class couple are Mr and Mrs: DEFINITELY-DISGUSTING.

. . . the working classes . . . put a premium on enjoying pleasure now, drinking their wages, for example, or blowing the whole lot on a new color telly . .

Traditionally working class virtues are friendliness, co-operation, warmth, spontaneity, a ready sense of humour and neighborliness. . . . characteristically saving up not for something solid, like the deposit on a house, but for a good blow-out

. . . he feels inadequate because he is inarticulate. he is thought of as being bloody-minded and rude by the middle classes because he can't express himself and to snort 'Definitely, disgusting', in answer to any question put to him, is the only way he can show his disapproval.

The other couple you will meet are the NOUVEAU-RICHARDS, of working-class origin but have made a colossal amount of money. Boasting and ostentation are their salient characteristics. At coffee mornings, Mrs. Nouveau-Richards, who lives in lured, asks anyone if they've got any idea 'whether gold plate will spoil in the dishwasher'. She has a huge house and lots of servants, who she bullies unmercifully. She is very rude to waiters and very pushy with her children . . .

As noted, this book proposes a fourth and all encompassing view of classes which factors in the peon whenever the peon turns up in what seems a very odd place. Where Cannadine tends to stick to the three models with his ongoing overview, Cooper has also noticed the additional division, both at the top and the bottom;

"While writing this book I found that there were very much two strands in the character of the aristocrat: first the wild, delinquent, arrogant, capricious, rather more glamorous strand; and second the stuffy, 'county', public-spirited, but publicity-shy strand, epitomized by the old baronet whose family were described 'as old as the hills and infinitely more respectable'.

Or, as a small boy writing in my son's school magazine pointed out: 'Gentleman are of two types: the nose-uppish and the secluded.'

And continuing with that thought, Cooper notes the same behavior with the working classes;

The working classes divide themselves firmly into the Rough and the Respectable. The Rough get drunk fairly often, make a lot of noise at night, often engage-in prostitution, have public fights, sometimes neglect their children, swear in front of women and children, and don't give a stuff about anything---just like the upper classes, in fact. The Respectables chunter over such behaviour, and in Wales sing in Male Voice Choirs; they are pretty near the Teales. They also look down on people on the dole, the criminal classes and the blacks, who they refer to as 'soap dodgers'.

### **Paul Fussell; *Class***

Another excellent view comes from a 1983 book of the same name, this time by American Paul Fussell, and about the American class system.

From the early pages of Fussell's book:

In his book *Inequality in an Age of Decline* (1980), the sociologist Paul Blumberg goes so far as to call it "America's forbidden thought." Indeed, people often blow their tops if the subject is even broached. One woman, asked by a couple of interviewers if she thought there were social classes in this country, answered: "It's the dirtiest thing I've ever heard of!" And a man, asked the same question, got so angry that he blurted out, "Social class should be exterminated."

Actually, you reveal a great deal about your social class by the amount of annoyance or fury you feel when the subject is brought up. A tendency to get very anxious suggests that you are middle class and nervous about slipping down a rung or two. On the other hand, upper-class people love to talk about the subject because the more attention paid to the matter the better off they seem to be. Proletarians generally don't mind discussions of the subject because they know that can do little to alter their class identity. Thus the whole class matter is likely to seem like a joke to them - the upper classes fatuous in their empty aristocratic pretentiousness, the middle classes loathsome in their anxious gentility. It is the middle class that is highly class-sensitive, and sometimes class-scared to death. A representative of that class left his mark on a library copy of Russell Lynes's *The Tastemakers* (1954). Next to a passage patronizing the insecure decorating taste of the middle class and satirically contrasting its artistic behavior to that of some more sophisticated classes, this offended reader scrawled, in large capitals, "BULL SHIT!" A hopelessly middle-class man (not a woman, surely?) if I ever saw one.

If you reveal your class by your outrage at the very topic, you reveal it also by the way that you define the thing that's outraging you. At the bottom, people tend to believe that class is defined by the amount of money you have. In the middle, people grant that money has something to do with it, but think education and the kind of work you do almost equally important. Nearer the top, people perceive that taste, values, ideas, style, and behavior are indispensable criteria of class, regardless of money or occupation or education. . . .

Fussell also notes the division of upper and lower, and the grouping in threes, and himself proposes a list of nine:

My researches have persuaded me that there are nine classes in this country, as follows:

Top out-of-sight

Upper

Upper middle

Middle

High proletarian

Mid-proletarian

Low proletarian

Destitute

Bottom out-of-sight

### **William Bayer; *Breaking Through, Selling Out, Dropping Dead and Other Notes on Filmmaking***

William Bayer has worked as a filmmaker and writer, and his book has a primary focus on making movies, film production, aspects of film financing, film related interpersonal and organizational filters, among other things. The book itself consists of a collection of short essays listed in alphabetical order by topic. One such essay has the title of *Juniors and Heavies* and itself clearly discusses that particularly in making movies can one find patricians among an immense sea of peons. As well as such can get discussed, the chapter outlines the differences as a number of discrete statements, somewhat like the arrangement of this book. He has a particular comment on the essay in his revised and updated edition to the book.

When this book was published this section (inspired by Susan Sontag's 'Notes On Camp') was the most controversial. Many people told me it was their favorite part of the book; some even said it was the only part worth reading. Still others found it perplexing, and stared at me with furled brows as if I were some kind of psychopath. All I can say is if you get it you will get it, and if you don't you probably never will.

### **Kate Fox; *Watching The English: The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour***

Kate Fox is an English anthropologist whose book of observations on the English came out in 2004. Regarding her book, she does state specifically that it is an overview of, indeed The English.

#### THE 'GRAMMAR' OF ENGLISHNESS

We are constantly being told that the English have lost their national identity – that there is no such thing as 'Englishness'. There has been a spate of books bemoaning this alleged identity crisis, with titles ranging from the plaintive *Anyone for England?* to the inconsolable *England: An Elegy*. Having spent much of the past twelve years doing research on various aspects of English culture and social behaviour – in pubs, at racecourses, in shops, in night-clubs, on trains, on street corners – I am convinced that there is such a thing as 'Englishness', and that reports of its demise have been greatly exaggerated. In the research for this book, I set out to discover the hidden, unspoken rules of English behaviour, and what these rules tell us about our national identity.

The object was to identify the commonalities in rules governing English behaviour – the unofficial codes of conduct that cut across class, age, sex, region, sub-cultures and other social boundaries. For example, Women's Institute members and leather-clad bikers may seem, on the surface, to have very little in common, but by looking beyond the 'ethnographic dazzle' of superficial differences, I found that Women's Institute members and bikers, and other groups, all behave in accordance with the same unwritten rules – rules that define our national identity and character. I would also maintain, with George Orwell, that this identity 'is continuous, it stretches into the future and the past, there is something in it that persists, as in a living creature'.

So while the overall point of the book is indeed not necessarily class, in time Fox does particularly note that the English do have a very particular awareness of class, and also notes that while there are noted forms, the forms do shift depending on circumstances.

When this book was in the planning stages, almost everyone I talked to about it asked whether I would have a chapter on class. My feeling all along was that a separate chapter would be inappropriate: class pervades all aspects of English life and culture, and will therefore permeate all the areas covered in this book.

Although England is a highly class-conscious culture, the real-life ways in which the English think about social class – and determine a person's position in the class structure – bear little relation either to simplistic three-tier (upper, middle, working) models, or to the rather abstract alphabetical systems (A, B, C1, C2, D, E), based entirely on occupation, favoured by market research experts. A schoolteacher and an estate agent would both technically be 'middle class'. They might even both live in a terraced house, drive a Volvo, drink in the same pub and earn roughly the same annual income. But we judge social class in much more subtle and complex ways: *precisely* how you arrange, furnish and decorate your terraced house; not just the make of car you drive, but whether you wash it yourself on Sundays, take it to a car wash or rely on the English climate to sluice off the worst of the dirt for you. Similar fine distinctions are applied to exactly what, where, when, how and with whom you eat and drink; the words you use and how

you pronounce them; where and how you shop; the clothes you wear; the pets you keep; how you spend your free time; the chat-up lines you use and so on.

Every English person (whether we admit it or not) is aware of and highly sensitive to all of the delicate divisions and calibrations involved in such judgements. I will not therefore attempt to provide a crude 'taxonomy' of English classes and their characteristics, but will instead try to convey the subtleties of English thinking about class through the perspectives of the different themes mentioned above. It is impossible to talk about class without reference to homes, gardens, cars, clothes, pets, food, drink, sex, talk, hobbies, etc., and impossible to explore the rules of any of these aspects of English life without constantly bumping into big class dividers, or tripping over the smaller, less obvious ones. I will, therefore, deal with class demarcations as and when I lurch into them or stumble across them.

At the same time, I will try to avoid being 'dazzled' by class differences, remembering Orwell's point that such differences 'fade away the moment any two Britons are confronted by a European' and that 'even the distinction between rich and poor dwindles somewhat when one regards the nation from the outside'. As a self-appointed 'outsider' – a professional alien, if you like – my task in defining Englishness is to search for underlying commonalities, not to exclaim over surface differences.

### **Richard Buckle, Editor *U & Non-U Revisited***

In 1954 a British linguist named Alan Ross wrote an article on choices and tendencies in language usages. English writer Nancy Mitford then cited his paper in an article of hers which then triggered ongoing and convoluted commentary. Particular examples of that commentary, along with Mitford's article and a version of the paper by Ross, were gathered into a book published in 1956 called "*Noblesse Oblige: an Inquiry into the Identifiable Characteristics of the English Aristocracy*"

In 1978 *U and Non-U Revisited* was published. In the words from the dust jacket;

In 1956 a little book edited by the late Nancy Mitford and called *Noblesse Oblige* hit the world like a bombshell. Profiting from the researches of the philologist, Professor Alan C. Ross, who had coined the expressions 'U' and 'non-U' - that is 'Upper-class' and 'non-Upper-class' - she set about telling the man in the street just how common he was.

Overnight, aristocrats who had spoken and behaved in a certain way from the cradle upwards found themselves giggling self-consciously when they offered each other 'a glass of sherry' as they had always done, instead of 'a sherry' as they were now told the vulgar did. At the same time, lower-middle-class people, who had always thought they were living graciously when they said 'Pardon?' instead of 'What?' or, on greeting a stranger, 'Pleased to meet you', learned that they were being 'genteel', which their betters considered the most ludicrous thing of all.

In the present book, Professor Ross has brought his lists of U and non-U words, expressions and pronunciations up-to-date. He takes part in a discussion with Philip Howard, erudite contributor to *The Times*, and with Richard Buckle, a self-confessed ballet critic, an exhibition designer, and the author of *Nijinsky* and other books. Mr Buckle, who edits the present volume, also contributes a pitiless expose of 'his own blighted life.

Diana Mitford (Lady Mosley), author of *A Life of Contrasts*, describes how her sister Nancy got into the U and non-U business by accident. Christopher Sykes, whose *Four Studies in Loyalty and Lives of Lady Astor and Evelyn Waugh* have become classics in his lifetime, discusses men's

clothes. Sir Cecil Beaton, photographer, stage designer, diarist and the greatest social success of our century, tells all. Patrick Montague-Smith, editor of Debrett's Peerage, shows how not all peers are aristocrats and not all aristocrats peers. The Earl of Harewood, Managing Director of the English National Opera, describes how it feels to be working-class.

Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that Ilk, an authority on heraldry, genealogy and Scottish clans - subjects in which only about fifty million people can conceivably be interested - was merely asked to contribute because he is the world's acknowledged master snob.

Mr Timothy Jaques's so-called illustrations in fact serve a practical purpose, for they contain several portraits of living people, at least one of whom is wanted by the police.

The curious discovery that all the writers of this book are related or genealogically connected, which not all of them knew when they started off, can no doubt be interpreted as a searing indictment of something or other. Three pedigrees included to show their cousinship disclose that they mostly have a common (in the sense of 'shared') Royal ancestor, though Lord Harewood is the only one who is the grandson of a King." Writers/contributors include: Sir Cecil Beaton, HB Brooks-Baker, Richard Buckle, Earl of Harewood, Philip Howard, Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that Ilk, Bart Patrick Montague-Smith (Editor, Debrett's Peerage), Lady Mosley (Diana Mitford), Alan S.C. Ross, Christopher Sykes.

This book also draws from other sources and examples regarding the peon and the tendencies of one, such as aspects of the reign of Henry II of England, Socialist Realism, military hierarchy and why it exists, and the post WWII pacific island cargo cults. As various topics get touched on in time, these and other related matters will get discussed in turn.

### **Combining three historic forms into a new form**

Having noted the three variations of cataloging class that have turned up over time, let us consider the fourth way of sorting, which encompasses all the others. The assorted forms do serve well, but as Cooper has noted, a somewhat conflicting better and worse division does keep turning up where one would think it shouldn't. While the lower classes have their division of, basically, the lower class and an underclass, that two part division of something, and then the underclass, also turns up with the upper classes. The existence of an unmistakable upper class remains rather evident, but what does one do with an equally unmistakable variety of underclass that clearly remains separate and distinct from the upper class, but also remains distinct from anything else?

The answer to this apparent contradiction proposes to borrow from chemistry and the periodic table of the elements. When one sees the classes as a periodic table, this view lets one note the fact that the peon manages to somehow relate to separate groups but at the same time always and uniformly insists on staying at the bottom of every column, forever remaining the underclass, below everyone else and culturally in line with the totally destitute. In doing so, this table easily manages to include and extend from the models of the class spectrum of individuals, the upper/middle/lower, and the Us And Them, all three varieties of sorting out the classes.

Of the table outlined below, to keep this grid view down to a single page, all notes describing each particular area follow the table. Also, numeric status added to each layer and area tie them to the related section of notes.

To make use of the three part view of the classes, the upper, middle and lower classes provide one set of parameters and are lined up in vertical columns.

To make use of the two part view of the classes, the first section outlines and defines the patrician, whether working class patrician, middle class, or upper class. The last section and row at the bottom constitute the underclass, the peon, the class below all patricians of all levels.

To make use of the spectrum, the descriptions remain very general and each patrician layer or area does blur into the next, as always. Of the patrician layers or areas, they can even combine together, depending on the person, depending on the situation. A useful indicator here borrows from military structure and rank. Just as with civilians, what the assorted ranks do have changed over centuries, but where civilian titles and labels constantly change, the military ranks themselves have remained.

<p align="center"><b>The Patrician: The Upper, Middle, and Lower/Working Classes</b></p> <p>The three general patrician divisions, and further subdivision of Low, Mid, and High</p>			
	<p align="center"><b><u>Lower Class</u></b></p> <p>Work on things, build things, move things.</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Middle Class</u></b></p> <p>Run things, work on ideas, follow ideas, follow instructions related to ideas</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Upper class</u></b></p> <p>Create, refine, and run the ideas, the companies, the areas, the countries.---But <u>run</u> them, not merely hold office.</p>
<p><b><u>The High</u></b> Upper class, within each division,</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>High Lower =3</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Sergeant Major</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>High Middle =6</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Major, Colonel</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>High Upper =9</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Marshal</b></p>
<p><b><u>The Mid</u></b> Middle class, within each division,</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Mid Lower =2</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Sergeant</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Mid Middle =5</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Lieutenant, Captain,</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Mid Upper =8</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>General or Admiral</b></p>
<p><b><u>The Low</u></b> Lower class, within each division,</p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Low Lower =1</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example, see notes; below. Military example; <b>Private</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Low Middle =4</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Cadet, Second or Third Lieutenant</b></p>	<p align="center"><b><u>Low Upper =7</u></b></p> <p>Civilian example; see notes, below. Military example; <b>Lower ranking General or Admiral: Major General, Brigadier General, Rear Admiral, Etc.</b></p>
<p align="center"><b>The Peon: The underclass,</b></p> <p>The Peon is the one who passes out in a societal, metaphoric, literal, or reality show gutter. The Peon constitutes the poser, the one totally devoid of any taste or class, the pretender, the destitute, and demands that class be decided solely by how much money one has, or spends.</p> <p>The <i>individual</i> peon can and does get out of and rise above this gutter and thus stop being a peon, but the Actions and Indicators and Behavior of the peon do not.</p> <p>As a note, the military peon is a very odd situation. In any organized military, the peon never gets in, or gets washed out very quickly. In any disorganized military, the peon gets killed off very quickly, either by opposing military, or by the peon's own military.</p>			
<p><b>The destitute:-- found literally in the gutter</b></p>	<p><b>Lower class peon =0</b> yobbo, yob, upscale, the underclass, trendy, sapeur, plebeian, plebe, pimp, neighborhood based street gang, ned, InsertRelevantSlangOrCodeNameHere, hoi polloi, fail, chav</p>	<p><b>Middle class peon =0</b> yuppy, yobbo, yob, upscale, the underclass, trendy, preppy, plebeian, plebe, InsertRelevantSlangOrCodeNameHere, hoi polloi, hipster, gatsby, fraternity/sorority, fail</p>	<p><b>Upper Class Peon =0</b> Veblen's roasted king, the underclass, England's Edward VIII, and others of that ilk</p>



### **Upper class**

Creates, refines, and runs the ideas, the companies, the areas, the countries.---But runs companies and countries. The Duvaliers and the Marcos' stayed and remain middle class. Running a country does not necessarily mean holding office or having a title.

**High Upper =9**

Invisibly out of sight, the inhabitant of an entire privately owned complex that includes the surrounding land and can include an entire chunk of forest, entire hotels or an entire block of apartments.

The high upper class dresses like everyone else of quality, looks just like everyone else of quality, always blends in, never stands out. The high upper class almost never appears in headlines, Any headlines . . . . .

Because Edward VIII is cited here as a preeminent upper class peon, two immediate counter examples of the high upper class patrician are his father, George V, and his brother, George VI.

As is shown in the 2010 Oscar winning picture *The King's Speech*, George VI had absolutely no interest in being king, and if Edward VIII had been a patrician, there would have been no need. Unfortunately, Edward VIII proved to be a total and undeniable complete peon, blatantly failed to lead or follow, and only got out of the way as a result of immense pressure. Finally, once he stepped down, that left George VI, an equally undoubted and quite despairing patrician, to pick up the pieces, to take up the crown, to be the basic upper class leader that his position placed him in, regardless of his dislike of the situation.

As a further example of the complete and blatant failure of Edward VII in all things, the motto of the Prince Of Wales, the heir to the British throne, is "Ich Dien"--"I serve."

One older example, Henry II, is cited below. From later in the English monarchy, Cooper specifically notes Shakespeare's summary of Henry V and continues with the sense of responsibility that forever divides the definitively ephemeral trendiness of the peon from the peon's ever demonstrated leader and master in the form of the patrician. As she points out;

"Dear Kate", said Henry V, "You and I cannot be confined within the weak list of a country's fashion: we are the makers of manners, Kate; and the liberty that follows our places stops the mouth of all find-faults."

As the maker of manners, many of the aristocracy, while feeling they have a duty towards to community as Sheriffs and Lord-Lieutenants, are indifferent to public opinion.

The high upper class drives some basic reasonable car that works for the moment and next moments. The upper class car never gets noticed in the sea of other cars just like it.---For an actual very high end vehicle, usually custom made, the act of very particularly engineering results in an individually crafted item, one clearly not confused with the mere lowest middle class Volvo or BMW. Particularly when custom made, the emphasis for the upper class vehicle remains reliability and quality and not what someone else cares about or claims must be considered important. The only possible concern regarding any opinion of another may occur if peon attention has ruined the brand---the Prius, for example, has far too much usefulness to ignore---see later notes about Range Rovers and actually using heavy duty vehicles as heavy duty vehicles. By the way, too bad about what the fixation and attention of the peon has done to BMW and Volvo, they seemed like nice products . . . .

The advantage of custom craftsmanship, when one can afford it, comes from the custom craftsman---male or female---who produces the best possible result, crafted by a well trained and very capable individual or team of such individuals.

The middle class, in turn, go to malls, a fact that underlines the universal awareness that the surreal concept of "upper class mall" remains totally non-existent.

Yes, one does duly note that regardless of class, that while being middle class defines any and all instances of "mall" one bloody well does still acquire where one feels like, regardless of the source---custom craftsmen don't bother making blue jeans, CDs, DVDs, or the average mass produced book because they don't need to bother. The upper class has no problems wandering through any mall, random grocery store, or the like, regardless of how middle class any such is because the overriding issue is whether or not one has some item that one wishes or needs to get.

The high upper class remains an extreme supporter of quality, so opera and ballet and symphony and theatre will tend to get attended or at least somehow supported, even while totally bored.

While possession of or access to money does get well noted, the very definite emphasis remains of money as being only a very useful tool. Even while one notes that acquiring money can require a lot of work, mere money does remain only just one tool of many.

As always, ever, forever, without end, the high upper class person remains separate from the environment----a peon with money remains an underclass git and all do expect that money to soon depart. A penniless upper class patrician remains of the upper class.

“There's always room at the top for brains, money, or a good pair of titties.”  
---Peter Barnes, from his play, *The Ruling Class*,

For the military equivalent, the high upper class equates to the marshal, the military rank that outranks admirals and generals.

### **Mid Upper =8**

Tends to have a family history of building ideas, running ideas. Family may or may not mean literal family, as the mid upper class may also “adopt” in one of many ways, just like the high upper.

Military example; General or Admiral.

### **Low Upper =7**

An individual who builds ideas, countries, companies. Such can be a writer, researcher, someone who develops an idea and builds a company around it. Unlike the mid upper, may not have a background of doing the same, may be the first, may be working alone.

Military example; Major General, Brigadier General, Vice Admiral, Rear Admiral, Etc.

### **Middle Class**

Run things, work on ideas, follow ideas, follow instructions related to ideas

### **High Middle =6**

Run ideas, work on ideas. Senior management who finds out what to work on, and develops from there.

Military example; Captain, Major, Colonel

### **Mid Middle =5**

Work on ideas; keep ideas moving, pass notes down to the next levels.

Military example; Lieutenant

### **Low Middle =4**

Follow ideas, follow instructions related to ideas. The junior manager that's learning the job. At best, just needs the local guidebook, and will go from there. At worst, just a hair above the middle class peon, frantically trying to keep up, at least has the sense to not be the peon.

Consider P.G. Wodehouse's Jeeves and Bertie. Jeeves is a Sergeant Major. Bertie is a mere Third Lieutenant.

Military example; Cadet, Third Lieutenant

### **Lower Class**

Work on things, build things, move things.

When in the military, always follows the dictum:

If it moves, salute it,  
if it doesn't move, move it,  
if you can't move it, paint it.

The unquestioned supreme military example; The Sergeant Major.--- S.Ms work, assemble, and run entire military sections.

### **High Lower=3**

The high lower patrician particularly leads or command those who do things. The senior plumber, carpenter, electrician, the senior police officer short of command.

". . . A noncommissioned officer is not referred to as 'sir' Do not refer to me as 'sir' I know who both my parents are. I work for a living. . . ."  
---Robert Frezza, A Small Colonial War"

Consider P.G. Wodehouse's Jeeves and Bertie. Jeeves is a Sergeant Major. Bertie is a mere Third Lieutenant.

Military example; Sergeant Major

### **Mid Lower=2**

Regular staff, knows what do in various situations, has seen one occurrence or another before.

Military example; Sergeant, Corporal.

### **Low Lower =1**

Just started, still learning, waits for instructions, follows instructions.

Military example; The Private

### **The Peon: the underclass**

The Peon is the one who passes out in a societal, metaphoric, literal, or reality show gutter. The Peon constitutes the poser, the one totally devoid of any taste or class, the pretender, the destitute.

The peon is the one who demands that class be decided solely by how much money one has, or spends. Only the peon gives any credence to the fatuity "One can never be too rich or too thin."

The peon stays literally, completely, dysfunctional, where the permanent condition of remaining unable to operate from day to day remains a permanent status and not merely as a temporary personal mishap.

The *individual* peon can and does get out of and rise above this gutter and thus stop being a peon, but the Actions and Indicators and Behavior of the peon do not.

As a note, the military peon is a very odd situation. In any organized military, the peon never gets in, or gets washed out very quickly. In any disorganized military, the peon gets killed off very quickly, either by opposing military, or by the peon's own military.

### **Upper Class Peon=0**

The only significant identifier of the underclass UCP is being totally brainless. At best it is merely very crudely clever. When in its worst form, the UCP is the trust fund child who then gravitates towards and wants to look and behave like the lower class peon. A clear and at the time ongoing example of the UCP remains England's King Edward VIII, who then became the Duke of Windsor. At best, the UCP finally learns to just sit in the corner and not say anything: The servants will at least keep the UCP fed, watered, washed, and dressed. When the UCP does get into trouble, some other and lower class peon tends to be involved---In the case of the Duke of Windsor, the very obvious lowest middle class peon who was responsible for this is Wallis Simpson.

While Edward VIII currently remains the preeminent example of the UCP, many others certainly can be found. There is a possibly apocryphal story told by Thorsten Veblen and others, where if someone can find an actual historic person, I would like to find out whom is referred to. According to Veblen, from his book *The Theory Of The Leisure Class*, ". . . a certain king of France, who is said to have lost his life through an excess of moral stamina in the observance of good form. In the absence of the functionary whose office it was to shift his master's seat, the king sat uncomplaining before the fire and suffered his royal person to be toasted beyond recovery. But in so doing he saved his Most Christian Majesty from menial contamination." In turn, there is an apparently rather obscure series of books called *The Eclectic Museum Of Foreign Literature, Science And Art*, where in volume 41 there is a section that starts with "One of the Spanish Bourbons was roasted to death in his own palace by the force of etiquette.", stating that ". . . To remove himself was never heard of in Spanish annals: to remain where he was, was to be burned alive. . . ." and goes on to tell that ". . . all the court stood around the royal carbonisation, all commiserating, but not daring to outrage etiquette by interfering . . ."

A patrician in such a situation will just move himself or the chair, or both.

### **Middle class peon =0**

Examples and euphemisms include: yuppy, yobbo, yob, upscale, the underclass, trendy, pretentious, preppy, plebeian, plebe, InsertRelevantSlangOrCodeNameHere, hoi polloi, gatsby, fraternity/sorority, fail.

Actively and openly fantasizes about being mistaken for upper class, sometimes claims that the peon's entire neighborhood is clearly upper class and everyone must agree---See Spiralists, in the notes below. Always practices and insists on LOOK AT ME!!!!!!!!!!!! Fantasizes getting mistaken for being Executive. One behavior favored in the early twenty first century is being seen talking on a cell phone while behind the wheel of a vehicle in motion, which is clearly not driving and just delineates that the practitioner is an idiot. Fantasizes being on a "reality show". Demands to be seen in the vicinity of those who are publicly visible for any reason. Crashes White House or any other parties.

### **Lower class peon =0**

Examples and euphemisms include: yobbo, yob, upscale, the underclass, trendy, sapeur, pretentious, plebeian, plebe, pimp, neighborhood based street gang, ned, InsertRelevantSlangOrCodeNameHere, fail, hoi polloi, chav.

Often admires criminals, has no capacity for any success at same. Fantasizes being a peon with more things

### **References and footnotes and attributions, whether from life or fiction**

As far as references listed here, the basic bottom line is that as far as I know, the periodic table is the only new item, everything else has been stated, quoted, noted previously, leaving the great majority of the text here being one long series of reminders regarding a very old and established body of fact and practice.

All of these, as well as other resources, join to remind that the peon is the frantically underclass poser that claims that all must accept its demands to be seen as important. Totally by contrast, the patrician doesn't care what the peon thinks, doesn't really care what anyone thinks, simply knows where things are and what is going on, or doesn't need to and doesn't bother, and remains quietly and therefore elegantly focused on the requirements of the moment. The patrician quietly does a crossword or Sudoku puzzle or runs a country. The peon proclaims Hey, Everyone!!! Look at my things!!! The peon fantasy is that all will notice and applaud because the peon is to be seen as having "Arrived". The patrician queries if such a concept comes up is "Arrived?? Was I away?"

In all such, the reader is encouraged to cross reference and verify at will. Where source titles and authors appear they do get immediately named and quoted, and sometimes quoted in great detail with entire chunks of text. Of these references and examples, some have fictional origins, but then this is a long list of reminders.

The reliance on military ranks in the table is not a suggestion or indicator of anything more than the reminder that the peon does not survive in a function or else environment such as the military. At the same time, for a primary reason for citing the military ranks and not including comparable civilian status, consider the profession of the horse buggy maker. At the end of the 1700s, such a job would be done by a skilled craftsman, one of very many. At the end of the 1800s, such a job might be done by a sort of skilled craftsman, one who assembles the prefabricated parts that were created in a factory. At the end of the 1900s, such a job will be custom work done at high cost and labor by a master craftsman, because by that point a definite demand remains, but horse buggies have not been needed by anyone at all in nearly a century--the demand has become a totally optional luxury or niche item. And of other civilian professions, entire industries and who owns, runs, and works in them can appear and disappear in less than a year.

In like manner, getting back to the military ranks, there is easily another underlying reason why the table is a fact and why the middle class peon is the underclass that is beneath even the lower or working class patricians. Consider that the senior officer such as the colonel and the general do rather outrank any sergeant major, but at the same time, the sergeant major is also ranked at the same relative level as the marshal, and above the other very senior officers. The reason why is the well documented situation that when any sergeant major with ten and twenty years experience decides that he or she has something to say, that S.M. will have every officer in earshot paying very close attention, because a sergeant major does salute the officers, but the sergeant major tends to have that much more experience.

### **Ongoing continuity**

Fussell writes of Americans, Cooper and Fox write of British and the English, but as with Beyer, what I would argue, for a variety of reasons, and citing a number of sources, is that the ongoing awareness of class differences is not limited to one particular country or culture.

In addition, what is of distinct interest is the ongoing continuity that one sees from Buckle et al and Cooper to Fussell when crossing the Atlantic, back to Cooper 20 years later, and then Fox in 2004. In their own ways and words, what each author notes is that across time and from place to place, the same sets of behaviors continue to appear. The peon is clearly the underclass, and regardless of whether one considers any patrician from working class through upper class, the patrician is the unshakable superior of the peon.

For any claims of "unfairness to the peon" or not PC or anything of the like, "PC" in this instance is the frantic avoidance of reality. All of this is perfectly fair and accurate because the peon so chooses to be a peon, and therefore cripples itself, where likewise only the peon, individually, will make the choice to grow up and be an adult.

Cooper's 1999 update begins with a general review which quite thoroughly notes that while the precise forms shift, the overall practices remain. Cooper also notes that the best practice is the closest and most direct description, and the euphemism is the favorite tool of the peon.

When *Class* was eventually published in 1979, it caused a fearful rumpus. Having written most of it hiding in the potting shed, to avoid our creditors, I was enchanted when it stayed on the best seller list for 20 weeks. Less fun was promoting it around the country. I was berated by tattooed and nose-studded radio presenters. I was shouted down by miners, egged on by Lord Monatague Of Beaulieu.

The Duke of Edinbrough attacked me at a Hatchard's party, snarling that the class system no longer existed.

"That's odd," I said politely, 'According to the 1971 Census, which categorizes people by their occupation, Princess Anne, as an event rider, is the same class: 111 (Non Manual) as a game keeper.'

Rubbish,' thundered the Duke, 'Keepers are working class.'

I got the most flak for being beastly to the working classes, by calling the couple who portrayed them: Mr and Mrs Definitely Disgusting. This was not because I thought them remotely disgusting, but because, as I point out, in reply to questions on everything from encroaching gypsy encampments to rocketing gas bills, they would tend to snort:

'Disgusting! Definitely.'

The main difference today is that they would probably say:

'Disgusting! Definitely. "Social" wouldn't unblock our drains for nuffink, and they didn't offer us any counselling neither.'

Having suffered so much opprobrium when *Class* came out I have hardly glanced at the book since, only opening it with colossal trepidation, like Pandora's Box, because my publishers suggested in view of this beautiful new reprint, I might like to draw readers' attention to how the class system has changed.

My first reaction was how on earth had I been brave or crazy enough to write all these things. But settling down, I realized I had been looking at a different era. For in 1979, everything changed. Margaret Thatcher came to power, and suddenly the English became obsessed with making money, buying their own houses, and rising socially. The Yuppie was born. Throughout the same time, recession kicked in, the stock market crashed, the power of the unions was broken. More tragically a, new cardboard boxed underclass, suffering appalling poverty, grew up, which had hardly existed when I was writing.

Another tragedy I hadn't anticipated was the demise of the miner. Back in 1979, he was the ultimate macho hero, king of the working classes. Mining, as I write on page 150, was regarded as much grander than building because it was a steady job. I also singled out miners, power workers, dockers, engineers and lorry drivers as the new elite, because by striking they had the power to bring the country to its knees.

Their hour of glory was brief, as pit after pit closed down. Today with short-term contracts, loss of pension and no certainty of a job for life, or in the poor miners' case, no job at all, the majority of the working classes have suffered.

I also state on page 149 that becoming a shop steward was the easiest way for a working class boy to get on, but since the weakening of the unions, this no longer applies.



But not only the working classes lost clout. `Lorses' at Lloyds decimated the upper classes more effectively than any revolution and the middle classes, who are light years behind the working classes when it comes to working social security and the black economy, have also been laid off in the most brutal way. There's no kudos in working at a desk if it has to be cleared in an afternoon.

Much of what I wrote on my chapter on education, I think, still stands, except that since 1979 drugs have invaded all schools, and girls most of the public schools.

Eton has been one of the few schools resisting the latter.

`If one is caught in bed with a girl,' grumbled a young Etonian, `one gets chucked out, but if you're caught with a boy, you get two hours gardening.'

Other changes were more of detail. Only the poorest of the working classes no longer have refrigerators. Mrs Definitely Disgusting has a hair dryer now instead of wearing her curlers to the corner shop and working class streets are entwined with satellite dishes like columbines. Upper class girls flaunt tattoos and nose-studs like radio presenters. Upper class mothers no longer wear fur coats and only think babygros are common if they have logos on. Many of the regiments I wrote about have sadly been amalgamated or disbanded. Many men's clubs now allow in women and are particularly charming to them.

Generally though, I was surprised and pleased, despite these changes, how the archetypes I'd created behave in just the same way today, and can be found in Harry Enfield's working class couple, Wayne and Waynetta, in his chinless wonder, Tim Nice But Dim, and in the socially mountaineering Hyacinth Bucketall characters we love as we laugh at them.

As a writer, one must stand by one's prejudices. I have therefore only made a dozen or so small changes to the text, where I felt I had been totally inaccurate or unnecessarily cruel or insensitive.

I realize the entire book is wildly politically incorrect. This is as it should be, because political correctness with its insistence on verbosity and the use of euphemisms, like `lone parent', `replacement mother', `sibling', `vertically challenged' for short, `young woman' for girl, `member of the homeless community' for tramp, the dreadful `partner' for lover, is irredeemably genteel and lower middle class.

As Class is a study of twenty years ago, we have left people's titles, prices and figures as they were then. It was a happy day when you could get a temporary secretary for 50 pounds a week.

Flipping through the pages, I felt a huge sadness that so many of the friends who'd helped me with the book or contributed marvellous anecdotes: Frankie Howerd, Frank Muir, Larry Grayson, Dick Emery, Reginald Bousanquet, Jean Rook, to name only a few, are now dead.

When I went on Yorkshire television with the splendidly redoutable Miss Rook in the early seventies, the interviewer began most embarrassingly by saying:

`Now here you are: two columnists from Yorkshire but from very different backgrounds. You're working class aren't you, Jean. And Jilly, you're upper class?'

We both shrieked with horror.

`I'm middle, not upper,' I muttered going scarlet. `I'm upper-middle,' said Jean witheringly, `I know lots of duchesses.'

Even people, who pretend class doesn't exist, are affected by it. I am reminded of a psychiatrist who was treating an aristocrat for depression. A month went by and they seemed to be making little progress.

`I want you to be completely honest,' said the psychiatrist at the next session, `and tell me exactly what's in your mind at the moment.'

`I was thinking,' said the aristocrat apologetically, 'what a vulgar little man you are.'

It was their final session. The psychiatrist was unable to go on because he'd completely lost any feeling of ascendancy.

`And so,' wrote John Coleman in the *Sunday Times*, 'the old movements of social advance and recoil go on, just as much as they always did. It is the perpetual inaccuracy of imitation that makes up the English social comedy and tragedy.'

But there is plenty of comedy. As a small boy at my son's prep school once pointed out in an essay,

`All people should be gentlemen except ladies, but it puts a bit of variety into life if some are not.'

I am very aware of the inadequacies of this book. I have made many sweeping generalizations, which I hope people won't take too seriously, because other classes are not better or worse than one's own, they are merely different.

One need look no further for an example than Dame Barbara Cartland being interviewed, back in the seventies, by Sandra Harris on the *Today* programme and being asked whether she thought the class barriers had broken down.

`Of course they have,' said Dame Barbara, `or I wouldn't be sitting here talking to someone like you.'

### **The Peon individual is not trapped at the bottom of all society, only the peon's choices are.**

As several authors note, not only does the peon fail at being anything other than the defining underclass, the matter of being a underclass peon or instead being a patrician is indeed very much a choice of the individual.

Related to this, additional peon fantasies that are regularly destroyed are that no one can ever rise up, that the peon is to be considered patrician, and that anyone not a peon must be below the peon.

English playwright Peter Barnes wrote a play called *The Ruling Class*, about goings on in an English aristocratic family, the Gurneys. In 1972, Peter O'Toole starred in the highly acclaimed and quite excellent film adaptation, playing the 14th earl. The play features eccentricity, insanity, custom, ongoing infighting, and one extremely telling comment by the 13th earl very early in both the movie and play. The comment echoes throughout the play, underlines this book, and totally undermines any and every attempt by the peon to be anything more than mere underclass. The earl's matter of fact proclamation is; "There's always room at the top for brains, money, or a good pair of titties." That order of importance never changes and the complete lack in that list of Some Fashionable Item, Trendy Fad, or Pretentious Practice also never changes.

Cooper notes a pair of issues in detail, that of a person being able to shift, and the sorts of problems that can occur when not making such a shift

Of the former,

When men marry up, they usually move away from their home town, buy horses and farms and take up patrician pastimes like hunting and shooting. They also become totally bilingual, putting on very grand voices when they're out hunting, and lapsing into their mother tongue when they're talking to garage mechanics.

And she also notes that . . .

Georgie Stow-Crat . . . is often bi-lingual and will lapse into mid-atlantic or disc-jockey when he's with his friends . . .

And Cooper also notes those who wind up overwhelmed by a new situation . . .

### *MARRYING UP*

No one understood the nuances of class better than Chekhov. At the beginning of *Three Sisters* Natasha, Andrey's fiancé, is seen as a lower-middle-class social outcast. Everyone laughs at her and the three sisters tell her her clothes are all wrong. Then she marries their brother and gradually she gains ascendancy. She starts bossing the sisters about, henpecking her husband and being beastly to the old servants (I don't like having useless people about'). Soon she is cutting down trees on the estate and moving the sisters into smaller bedrooms, until by the end they are meekly taking criticism from her about their clothes.

People who marry up are more insistent than most on having their new status recognized. I'm sure that Cophetua's beggar maid, despite her lovable mien, made a perfect nuisance of herself queening it over everyone, and we have all seen how the middle-class Princess Grace became far more regal than royalty once she landed Prince Rainier.

One woman who married a duke suddenly insisted on having a room to herself at the hairdressers, 'because I'm not just anyone anymore.' Often they can't quite master the new vocabulary.

'We're spending the weekend at Bath's seat,' said a secretary who'd just landed a peer.

Women who marry up also become frightfully strict about their children's manners, because they're terrified that any lapse in behaviour will be attributed to a mother who doesn't know what's what. In the same way, stupid women who marry clever men are pushy about their children's education. Middle-class women who marry into the upper classes say 'se-uper' a lot, and become very good cooks to cope with picky aristocratic appetites.

. . . If you marry someone who constantly tells you you're pretty, you begin to think you are. In the same way if you marry someone who thinks you're frightfully grand, you begin to believe him. As a result lots of middle-class women married to working-class men get very smug and think they're far more upper-class than they really are. Men who marry up often put their wives on pedestals and then run around with other women. Parvenus, in fact, are invariably unfaithful. It's a back-handed blow for the class war. John Oshome's Jimmy Porter is a classic example, as was the late President Kennedy. Upper-class women, brought up to expect infidelity, can handle this; that's why they build up that network of jolly nice girlfriends to fall back on; and anyway they're so busy sitting on committees, organizing charity balls and wondering what to wear at Ascot that they

don't miss sex much.

Cooper certainly has the worst case scenarios. The forward from *U and non-U revisited* notes that such shifts, when done, are indeed a rather matter-of-fact occurrence and that any particular problems caused by a peon are basically caused by that peon and are not the result of the overall situation.

*Foreword*

H. B. BROOKS-BAKER MANAGING DIRECTOR DEBRETT'S PEERAGE

Are the English the most snobbish people in the world? Why have the English upper classes evolved a system which enables even a foreigner to detect whether an Englishman is socially acceptable or not, simply by his choice of words or his accent? Although these two questions are frequently asked by people all over the world, in my opinion England is among the least snobbish and class-conscious countries. Far less so than America, for example, which basks in the reputation of being the most democratic of nations. However, this does not mean that snobbishness is rare in England. On the contrary, it is prevalent to some degree in most areas of society; and the peculiar characteristics of language and behaviour which come naturally to the English upper-classes and are often imitated in vain by the middle-classes are dealt with in some detail below.

Until recently, and to a certain extent even today, any family in the Southern states of America whose position and land were acquired after the War of 1861 was generally regarded as being beyond the pale. Yankees refer to this as the 'Civil War', while southerners would consider it bad form to call it anything other than the 'War Between the States'. When I was living in the South as a child, a French nobleman arrived to visit the plantations in our area. Being a planter himself, he was conversant with every aspect of farming life, and the people who were involved in it. Two of the largest plantations he visited were owned by a Colonel C., who was descended from a pre-war family, and by Mr B., who belonged to a post-war family. Shortly after he had surveyed Mr B.'s plantation, the Frenchman attended a luncheon at Colonel C.'s antebellum house, to which all the leaders of local society had been summoned. In the course of conversation, he expressed his enthusiasm at the new methods of farm production Mr B. had introduced. Colonel C. agreed that his neighbour's technological methods were indeed superior to his own, but added that one should not, of course, take this too seriously, since 'ol' Mr B is a self-made man'. 'That must have saved God a lot of trouble', was the Frenchman's response. Although I was only twelve at the time, this devastating observation made its impression.

This type of American 'colonial' snobbishness is not rare, even today, and it is much more severe and unyielding than its English equivalent. People of many different origins can be found to have established themselves in English society. The Astor family, for example, arrived in England from Germany via America relatively recently, for the first of that name was naturalized in 1899, but they are now fully integrated into the English social scene. Members of noble English families, and this, of course, includes those of Scotland, Ireland and Wales, have frequently married French, South American, German, Belgian, Jewish, southern American, and even Yankee wives, as the following list of twenty examples, which go back no further than the 1930s, will show:

*Denmark:* Birgitte (*nee* Henriksen), Duchess of Gloucester

*America:* Pamela (*nee* Colin), Lady Harlech

*America:* Virginia Fortune (*nee* Ryan), Countess of Airlie

*India:* Clara Evelyn (*nee* Wadia), Countess of Strafford

*China:* Hsiao Li (*nee* Wen Chi), Lady Lindsay of Birker

*Yugoslavia:* Stanka (*nee* Losanitch), Countess of Lauderdale

*France:* Nicole (*nee* Schneider), Duchess of Bedford

*France:* Athenais (*nee* de Mortemart), former Countess of Rosslyn

*France:* Jacqueline (*nee* Gelpi), Lady Kenilworth

*Finland:* Helena (*nee* Backstrom), Viscountess Margesson

*Belgium:* Pamela (*nee* Chimay), Marchioness of Hertford

*Belgium:* Regine (*nee* d'Ordorp), Lady Rodney

*Hungary:* Judith (*nee* Marffy-Mantuano), former Countess of Listowel

*Germany:* Irene (*nee* Harrach), late Lady Howard de Walden

*Holland:* Elizabeth (*nee* van Swinderen), Lady Inchyra

*Italy:* Cristina (*nee* Casati), late Countess of Huntingdon

*Spain:* Maria (Mima) (*nee* Alvarez-Builla y Alvera), Countess of Iddesleigh

*Austria:* Otilie (*nee* Losch), late Countess of Carnarvon

*Norway:* Anna (*nee* Sommerfelt), Lady Congleton

*Philippines:* Luthgarda (*nee* Fernandez), former Lady Moynihan

Every craft, profession and trade is also represented in the inner circles of English society, which is not the case in most countries. In Silver jubilee year, a 10 year-old French girl who was given an elaborate birthday party in London was told that she must do her best to look chic, because not only had several royal relations been invited, but her socially prominent Sainsbury cousins (owners of a chain of food stores) would also be present. So astonished was the girl at the idea of inviting commercial people to her party that she asked her mother whether it would not be a good idea to invite the Safeways and the Fortnum and Masons while they were about it.

In reality the Belgians, the French, the Americans, the Austrians, the Germans, the Italians and the Spanish, in that order, are the leaders of twentieth century snobbishness. What, then, has created the U and non-U system\* that Nancy Mitford and Professor Ross revealed to the world a quarter of a century ago?

\* U means upper class, non-U means not upper class

As we have seen, anyone, provided that he is liked and appreciated, can be absorbed into English society, but this made it inevitable for a secret system to be evolved which separated those who were initiated from those who were not, *i.e.* the masses. It has long been my contention that the English U and non-U system, which so subtly divides people into social groups, was necessary

because the majority of English people are very similar in looks and temperament. (However, one must accept the fact that the Nordic type is not the only one encountered in the British Isles.) Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Little Lord Fauntleroy* is a story that could only be Anglo-Saxon, for the blonde-haired, blue-eyed son of one of the wicked Earl's tenant farmers might easily be exchanged for the Earl's grandson in England. This would not happen in most continental countries, where the difference in appearance between the children of a peasant and those of an aristocrat is so startling that one could easily conclude they come from two entirely different races.

From here one starts getting into the subtleties of peon vs patrician. Remember, the patrician is quite comfortably patrician, and matter-of-factly goes about doing whatever is needed in the moment, regardless of how the peon reacts. The peon keeps mentally peering over its shoulder to be certain that everyone is aware of it being a peon, aware of it being pretentious, and regularly missing the point---just like Cooper's insecure social climbers. Of the two, only the peon will note a difference and try to get the difference seen as lesser. The patrician will note a difference, may simply point out that the difference is there, to be corrected or remembered or ignored or whatever is most useful or helpful in the situation. As Brooks-Baker continues:

George Bernard Shaw explained in *Pygmalion* how the inadvertent use of one incorrect word can reveal an intruder into society, and Evelyn Waugh observed that every upstart wants to draw the line immediately below himself. The fashions of U and non-U were gradually evolved by those who thought along snobbish lines in the early fifteenth century, when French passed out of common use and English began to be spoken by people of all classes. Historically speaking it is not very long since the nobility began to send their children to schools where they learned Latin and Greek, instead of having them tutored in these languages at home. Through the knowledge of Latin lay the path to Church and State, while the mastery of Greek opened the door to intellectual pursuits. The Latin pronunciation taught at public schools, particularly at Eton, was so peculiar that at the Congress of Berlin in 1878 the English delegates were able to use it among themselves as a secret language. It would certainly have been considered non-U for them to have spoken Latin in any other way.

Being U not only means that one speaks with the right accent, but it also means that a person must choose the right word or phrase. The list of acceptable and unacceptable words that follows this Foreword shows the pitfalls that await the unwary who have not yet been admitted into the inner circles of English society. The book itself will further illustrate how these words should and should not be used. Although the choice of words and accent is vitally important, clothes, clubs, vocations and hobbies are also U and non U, as well as such things as the way in which a person walks. A bouncy walk is just as non-U as a rapid scuttle. Furthermore, it is even claimed by certain reliable authorities that it is distinctly non-U to be uncircumcised.

From the time that U children are very small, they are subtly conscious that they are members of the elite. This was most eloquently demonstrated by the nineyear-old Daisy Ashford in her charming book, *The Young Visitors*. At one point she disapprovingly described the `jellus' Mr Salteena as being `flustered with his forks' and unable to cope with his finger bowl.

In all instances, the patrician will choose the elegant and simple option over the uselessly complicated. Also, if the patrician is uncertain of a situation, two likely variations are to ask for assistance, or to not bother asking, and in either case to keep going while at the same time not committing the error of claiming that can be no error. Only the peon will insist on the idiotically complicated, and that the idiotically complicated be considered normal.

Brookes-Baker noted the same;

. . . . Mr Howard, who has written a series of scholarly articles on the misuse, or over-use of certain modern words in the English language, has shown how the incorrect use of such words is unattractive, and therefore non-U. He observed that this was particularly true in the over-use of technological terms in everyday speech. A U person never uses words that are longer, or more

complicated than necessary. If Nancy Mitford were with us today, she would undoubtedly agree that a statement like, 'As of this moment in time, it was deemed necessary to escalate before finalizing ...' was not only ugly, but definitely non-U.

Here is another refinement. An Englishman who is *afraid* of appearing non-U would never dream of placing his knife and fork at the end of a course anywhere but in the middle of the plate. The knife would be on the right and the fork on the left, the prongs towards the centre of the table. One who was certain of his acceptance in society would do just as he pleased, for he would be unconcerned by what was 'done' or 'not done'.

Lady Mosley objected to the idea of her sister, Nancy Mitford, writing on the subject of U and non-U twenty-two years ago, because she feared that it would cause harmful controversy, and lead to new friction between the classes. However, she has kindly agreed to write a brief chapter for this book, for even though she deplores snobbery, she does realize the sociological and historical value of her sister's observations. In *Noblesse Oblige*, the witty Nancy Mitford dragged out an ancient skeleton from the cupboard, and enabled us to study - and even be amused by a subject that had hitherto, by tacit consent, been considered unmentionable. *U and Non-U Revisited* examines the changes that have taken place in the U and non-U syndrome during the last quarter century.

Nancy Mitford's own sister also comments, also emphasizing that the peon's attempt to declare a set pattern of behavior just reveals the peon lack of class. Again, the patrician stays with the moment as is needed and not the claimed form that relies on the approval of another peon.

*Nancy Obligated*

THE HONOURABLE LADY MOSLEY (*Diana Mitford*)

I believe my sister Nancy Mitford got into the 'U' business by mistake. She had an article to write for *Encounter* the subject was aristocracy. When she had said everything she could think of the article was still much too short; in those days there was nothing as amusing as honours lists *now* to comment on. While she was pondering how best to pad it out, Professor Ross sent her his interesting thesis about the use of language, and after asking his permission to do so she put it all in. It fascinated the public and the newspapers and *Encounter* sold out in no time at all. For a few days Nancy's interpretation of Professor Ross's research pushed murders and rapes on to the back pages. Perhaps I exaggerate, but it certainly got a lot of publicity in unexpected places.

What she had written also made quite a few people cross, which was fatal with somebody like Nancy who enjoyed nothing so much as teasing. When she realized it had annoyed she was naturally overjoyed, and entered into the spirit of the thing, collaborating in a book called *Noblesse Oblige*. In the long run perhaps she wished she had thought of something else to put in *Encounter*, because she preferred to be known as a novelist and a biographer rather than as an expert on etiquette or whatever it was.

The whole affair seemed to me at the time, and seems to me still, quite silly and unimportant; not Professor Ross's work on language, but the way it was blown up and exploited. It is a mistake to erect unnecessary and imaginary new barriers in England, where there is a certain amount of rather absurd 'class' feeling which should be encouraged to wither away. In fact, it is withering away, and 1956, the year of *Noblesse Oblige*, seems a very long time ago. The generation which has grown up since then would laugh at all these arbitrary and fiddling little rules.

There are certainly fashions in words and expressions, and fashions in accents, but they have very little to do with 'class'. Within one family differences can be noted. My grandmother

pronounced all her a's short, her a's in 'France' and 'dance' were like ours in 'ash' or 'can'. She pronounced 'Gloucester' 'Glawster', while we said 'Gloster'. She never sought to impose her pronunciation upon us, or told us that her way was right and our way wrong. Similarly my grand children are inclined to laugh because I pronounce 'offer' 'orfer'. Neither they nor I would assert that one way is correct and the other incorrect.

People now say 'absolutely' when they mean 'yes', and 'this is it' when they mean 'that's the point'; those under thirty-five pronounce 'room' 'rume'. Are they being 'U' or not? It seems completely irrelevant.

The English language, spoken all over the world, constantly evolves and absorbs new words, or gives new meanings to old words. Expressions often come from America. I like the way Americans use the word 'great'. When they say of some dogsbody 'So and so is great', it is very nice, and when they comment on some plan like a luncheon invitation, 'Yes, that will be great.' Occasionally one hears an American murmur 'Great, great,' to himself apropos of nothing at all. This might catch on in England; if it does, will it be accepted by these experts, or not? Does anybody care?

In future there can be no argument about the accents and expressions used by individuals, because what they say has been recorded. We know that Bernard Shaw had an Irish accent, and that the Duke of Windsor spoke 'mid-Atlantic'. How intensely interesting it would be to hear Frederick the Great's French, and his German; to have a record of Shakespeare's voice, or Queen Elizabeth's, or Julius Caesar's; to discover whether Napoleon spoke French with an Italian accent. Biographers of twentieth-century characters can hear their subjects' voices, and their choice of words, both of which are important and revealing.

When my autobiography was published in 1977 an American journalist, Alistair Forbes, gave it a very bad review in *The Spectator*. Nobody likes bad reviews, but this one was entitled 'The only non-U Mitford book', which, as far as I was concerned, more than made up for the text.

In the same manner, Sir Iain Moncreiffe of that ilk notes that patrician history just is, and even lack of history just is, and any claims and objections of any peons remain irrelevant.

#### *The Expectancy and Rose of the Fair State*

SIR IAIN MONCREIFFE OF THAT ILK, BART. CHIEF OF THE CLAN MONCREIFFE

It was pitch dark. We were cold, wet and uncomfortable. I had been blown up by a shell, punctured a bit by shrapnel, ignominiously crushed by a dislodged boulder, and could only limp at a crawl while my soldier servant Guardsman Fraser carried my equipment. So I had remained behind on the mountainside at midnight with our patrol officer Dicky Buckle and his rear party, who were laying mines on the goat track to cover the Brigade's withdrawal. We weren't sure how close the enemy were on our heels. It was the end of the first (unsuccessful) battle of Monte Camino, now a battle honour on the Colours. We were the last on 'the Hill', a fine moment, we felt, in regimental history. Naturally, therefore, we were discussing heraldry.

Having established the basic fact that the Buckles were fairly nouveau, springing from an Elizabethan burgher who was Lord Mayor of London, we had got on to considering the ninety-four quarterings that Dicky had inherited on his mother's side. These were quite impressive. I recollect that we had reached the exact point when he said:

"I quarter Hoo."



"Who?" I replied, mishearing him in mental transliteration.

"Hoo".

"Yes, but who?"

"Hoo", Dicky went on hooting like an owl. Suddenly it dawned on me that he meant the simple *argent & sable* coat of the mediaeval Lord Hoo of Hoo, an unpopular Knight of the Garter much derided in song by the revolting peasantry at the time of Jack Cade's rebellion. This exact moment remains fixed in my mind, as we were recalled to our rather macabre modern surroundings by a loud explosion followed by yells mingled with oaths. One of the mines we'd just laid had claimed their first victim.

Now, politeness apart, the true U reaction to the information that Dicky quartered the arms of this obscure mediaeval peer would either be boredom or interest. So too would doubtless be the reaction of most ordinary people. But a standard non-U reaction would be to resent him and feel he needed "taking down a peg" for "showing off". The middle classes, perhaps sensing some outflanking Jones, would raise their plaintive bleat: "Who does he think he is?" I well remember a peer, giving a public lecture about his stately home, mentioning (for it was relevant) that he descended from King Charles II. The non-U female next to me turned in typical misunderstanding to express her shock at such conceit. Her Pavlov-bitch comment ended resentfully: "*I descend - Period.*"

This is a succinct form of the standard non-U crack, when any forebears are mentioned, that "we all descend from Adam." The funny thing about most of the people who make it, is that few of them realise it's actually true. Biologists, when prodded hard enough, have to admit that every man who has ever lived since the world began has inherited his Y chromosome (the genetic factor that makes him a man) from the same single humanoid being, just one person who lived at a particular moment long long ago - however he in turn was evolved. The biologists dislike admitting this even more, when it's pointed out that we had a convenient name for this being even before my coz Darwin postulated him. For *adam* is simply a very ancient Mesopotamian word meaning Man. And, as I've written elsewhere, to the similar crack

*When Adam delved, and Eve span, Who then was gentleman?*

I always reply 'Adam. How could it have been Eve?'

In Adam, therefore, we have the embryo gentleman. But just as from the original equidae there evolved race-horses and cobs and cart-horses for different purposes, so too it has been with mankind - though fortunately we are continually crossbred.

Meanwhile, a moment's reflection will show that even had we all remained in an egalitarian Garden of Eden like lilies of the field, toiling not nor spinning, some of you would have evolved into nature's gentle men, and other of us into natural boors. For, whenever the brotherhood of man is mostly loudly proclaimed today, one would have to be pretty tone-deaf not to hear the primaevial voice of Cain.

This jealousy of our more fortunate or distinguished brethren, and especially of their children, is the deepest stain that marks out the present day as the Age of Envy. It's rather ungentlemanly, to say the least: and hardly brotherly love.

Owing to the crossbreeding that has kept mankind inter-related throughout the aeons, we've all had forefathers of every rank whether we can trace them or not. The most recent serf from

whom I can personally trace my descent was freed by the Bishop of Zagreb in 1552: the most recent king from whom I can do the same died exactly ten years earlier. We shouldn't look down on those rude forefathers of the hamlet, without whose romps in the hay we could never have been horn. But it ill becomes us also not to look up to the achievements of those grander forebears who led our nations upwards, and who evolved polite codes of conduct -- courtesy means the manners of the Court -- that weren't always honoured only in the breach. Nevertheless, 'the boast of heraldry' aptly sums up the poet's distaste for overdoing it.

In fact, therefore, everybody has as many ancestors as everybody else. No family is older than any other. We weren't each evolved separately like Pooh-Bah from some different personal amoeba or primordial protoplasm. It's simply that some families have maintained a known position, and their doings have been recorded longer than those of others. The Sackvilles of Buckhurst, for example, are the only Norman family who can actually prove that they were not at the battle of Hastings. But 'the 14th Mr Wilson' (to recall the 14th Earl of Home's famous retort when quizzed about a fellow Prime Minister) cannot prove that his direct male line ancestor wasn't one of the leaders in that battle. All the same, most people assume that descents that can't be established aren't likely to be distinguished.

As a result, U people in England - except among the tiny group of interbred ancient Catholic families like the Stourtons and Berkeleys - have an unease of discussing family history unless quite sure they are among themselves. They don't want inadvertently to make some middle-class worthy of uncertain pedigree, who might chance to be present, feel out of it. On the Continent, indeed, grand pedigrees and family histories tend to be limited to a fairly well-defined aristocratic group. But in England, precisely because the division between U and non-U is so blurred, and can so easily be crossed, delicacy imposes discretion.

In Scotland, of course, there is no such inhibition about discussing ancestry. This is for two reasons. First, we are so small a country that everybody can know who everybody else is, and there's neither need nor opportunity to pretend. But secondly, and this is a Good Thing, our noble clannish traditions are divided vertically between Names, not horizontally between classes. Campbells or Grahams may be dukes or dustmen, but they all share the same Roots, have their own special tartan and historic tradition. Moreover this is often demonstrable in practice as well as in principle. For instance, my late wife, as Countess of Erroll in her own right, was Chief of the Hays and thoroughly imbued with Hay tradition. But so equally was Mr Hay, the (unpaid) cox of the Fraserburgh lifeboat. He told me that when he joined the Royal Navy as an ordinary seaman, his father had reminded him that his forefathers had served before the mast in every generation since before Trafalgar and that, while ever mindful of the traditions of the Service, he must never forget that that he was a Hay and always live up to the great traditions of his Name. His first nautical ancestor had been an impoverished eighteenth-century cadet of the Hays of Rannes, and I could trace his line back without difficulty to a Hay baron of the thirteenth century. Here *noblesse oblige* was visibly at work in its most classless Scottish sense. Such collective nobiliary tradition is nowadays expressed particularly through the numerous and flourishing clan societies.

To revert to the contrast between the English and the Continental ideas of U, great confusion arises because a foreigner uses the word 'noble' to mean an *untitled* gentleman of known ancestry, whereas the English use the same word to mean only a Peer of the Realm and his immediate titled relations. Few English people therefore understand what is meant when it's explained that Napoleon Bonaparte was a noble by birth. Toqueville (by the way, my French friends have always told me it's non-U to refer to anybody as 'de' unless you use a prefix, *e.g.* you can refer to Monsieur de Monbrison, Amaury de Monbrison, or plain Monbrison, but never just to 'de Monbrison') observed that, as the position of a French untitled noble was fixed and unchangeable, they could know whom they pleased; but as the position of an English gentleman was judged rather by his way of life, Englishmen were anxious to avoid meeting the wrong sort of people and getting ranked with them by association.

On the Continent, apart from the Church, the upper class of noble gentlemen were expected to serve the Crown, for instance in the Army or Navy or in diplomacy, rather than engage in commerce for their own benefit: and indeed were only modestly paid but long freed from taxation as a result. Originally the knightly families holding manorial estates, the immemorial *uradel*, they were reinforced over the centuries by statesmen, by commanders in war (the *noblesse d'epée*) and by parliamentarians and judges (the *noblesse de la robe*). However, the great cities of Italy and the Empire produced patrician families of equivalent status; and grand banking families like the Medici and the Fuggers attained princely rank. But always the concept existed abroad of the legally identifiable gentleman.

In England, similar considerations applied only to the extent that in my youth, if a gentleman already had enough money, he was expected on the whole to enter the armed services or the Diplomatic Service for modest pay, otherwise the Church or the Law, and only commerce on the grand scale, with a bias in that case in favour of merchant banking. And there was always too the Empire, to go out and govern. But trade followed the flag. Though Napoleon was mauled by what he called the English leopards, he summed them up in his famous epigram as 'a nation of shopkeepers'. It is of the essence, however, that the English are romantic shopkeepers, at their best in war. So the English gentleman came to differ widely from his Continental counterpart, although every gentleman was still a potential officer in war or a potential justice of the peace, in that he was not demeaned by engaging in commerce for his own benefit - so long as he behaved like a gentleman. And in time, an able man could rise to become a gentleman by his way of life. For though it's no longer birth alone that counts, still less is it wealth alone, but rather certain indefinable attitudes of mind that go with the gentlemanly concept.

On the other hand, it would be idle to pretend that birth and at least a modicum of wealth are not a head start. If it wasn't so, there would soon be nothing much to emulate. Obviously excellent heredity combined with excellent environment tends to give good results. Without elite, or if the elite had been deliberately held back by egalitarianism, we would never have left the caves. When a man dies in primitive New Guinea, his hut is burned and his cooking pots smashed, because his children already have huts and cooking pots of their own: as it were primitive council houses. By this 100% Capital Transfer Tax they are safely held back to the lowest common denominator even more firmly than we are going to be after a generation or two of (say) 60% CTT. Meanwhile, however, we still have some gentlemen of ancient birth with the freedom to speak their minds that goes with private means.

Within these limits there's great scope for teasing. If the Duke of Westminster, head of the house of Grosvenor, is a multi-millionaire grandee of impeccable Norman lineage, it's possible to trump him by producing a Scrope. The head of the equally ancient Norman house of Scrope is the squire of Danby. But in 1385 their positions were reversed. Sir Robert Grosvenor was a simple Cheshire knight. Lord Scrope was Lord High Chancellor of England. They came up here to bash us Scots, and started a rival row instead because they found themselves both wearing the same coat of arms: *Azure a bend Or* (a golden diagonal band on a blue field). The celebrated case of Scrope v. Grosvenor in the Court of Chivalry went on for five years. Everybody sided with the great Lord Scrope against this obscure Grosvenor knight. It was pointed out that although one of them, a Chief justice, had been put into a legal career ('mis a la ley'), the Scropes had been 'grandes gentilhommes et de noblez' since the Conquest. The poet Chaucer, Harry 'Hotspur' and Henry of Bolingbroke (afterwards King Henry IV), all gave evidence for the Scropes.

Eventually the Lord High Constable gave judgement in favour of Lord Scrope. When Grosvenor appealed to King Richard II, he was told he had lost and must change his coat-of-arms to a wheat sheaf (now well-known to clients of the National Westminster Bank). The Grosvenors never forgot their lost *bend Or*, and after the 1st Duke of Westminster won the Derby in 1880 with his racehorse Bend Or, his grandson and heir was nicknamed 'Bend Or'. As 'Bend Or' Westminster he was recommended for a Victoria Cross in the First World War.

Meanwhile, the Scopes had refused to change their religion at the Reformation, so had been banned for centuries as Roman Catholics from all office and preferment, and their peerages had gone into abeyance among co-heiresses. The head of the family is still lord of the manor of Danby, which they inherited during the Wars of the Roses. He is Major Scrope and the Duke of Westminster is the Duke of Westminster, yet in the inner U world he still commands a special respect. People no longer wear coats-of-arms over their armour. But the Scopes still have the last laugh. They wear a special family tie: Blue with diagonal gold bands - *Azure a bend Or*. Lady Leonora Grosvenor and Miss Diana Scrope have both stayed with me at Easter Moncreiffe simultaneously without a fracas. But Victor Grosvenor of the Life Guards, definitely a Hon. out of Nancy Mitford's Hons cupboard, has given me a standing order to find a very small Scrope for him to bash.

This brings us to Nancy Mitford's original article on 'The English Aristocracy' in *Noblesse Oblige*, and Evelyn Waugh's 'Open Letter' in reply to it, that caused such a furor some twenty years ago. The fuss was primarily because it drew attention to Professor Alan Ross's work as a philologist, in which, as a professional observer, he had noted the linguistic demarcation of upper-class English, for which he coined the abbreviation U as opposed to non-U'. This work, while of natural interest to his fellow philologists, was perhaps rather embarrassing when publicised socially through no fault of his. It only made U people self-conscious when talking naturally in the way to which they'd always been accustomed, and could obviously hurt or at least irritate non-U people.

It's rather like our perennial problem in Scotland. Most, but not all, U people in Scotland speak in the accents, use the expressions, and behave in the ways, described as U by Professor Ross. They don't do this by affectation, but because it's the way their parents talked before them. The Scottish aristocracy have in fact always tended to speak the language of the political centre. My own forebears have almost certainly lived here at Moncreiffe since Pictish times, although we only assumed the surname from our lands some seven or eight centuries ago. By the end of the Dark Ages they spoke Gaelic (Moncreiffe is the Old Gaelic place-name *Monadh Craoibhe*), then at the Court of St Margaret perhaps briefly Anglo-Saxon. During the Scottish War of Independence in the twelve and thirteen hundreds they spoke Norman-French. (Whatever languages they spoke to their followers - Welsh or Northumbrian or Gaelic - if Wallace and Bruce met they talked to each other in Norman-French.) From the fifteenth century onwards my forefathers spoke Court Scots; but after the Union, with the move of the political centre from Edinburgh to London, they gradually came to speak what Professor Ross defines as U English.

This is, of course, nothing like the accent or mode of speech of the Elizabethan English courtiers, which doubtless survives in some of the Southern States of the USA. It has, instead, been evolved collectively by the U British since the Union. People aren't surprised that Lord Devon doesn't nowadays speak broad Devonshire, nor the Duke of Norfolk with a Norfolk accent, yet they are somewhat surprised that Lord Glasgow doesn't use a glottal stop and say 'Hoots rnon'. On the other hand, the situation would doubtless change naturally once again after a generation of Home Rule.

I myself, however, don't want to get involved in any embarrassing U-pontifications, except to support the well-known quip: 'If it's me it's U.' This is a modern version of the famous remark by a sixteenth-century highland chief misplaced by his host: 'Wherever Macdonald is sitting, that is the head of the table'. Earlier in this book, Professor Ross has brought readers up-to-date with U speech today, and the other contributors have described U life so much better than the What the Butler Saw sort of peeps we get from non-U playwrights and novelists. Lord Harewood in particular serves to remind us that most U people work just as hard as most other classes, differing principally only perhaps in outlook, and of course rather harder than those who have the 'right' to strike. The principal workaday U feature, I rather think, is that off duty all ages tend to converse naturally and associate in their homes and clubs without undue regard to age or position, whereas the urban middle classes tend to move in the same age group and income group from the cradle to

the grave. I noticed this especially when I was ADC to a U general and attache to a U ambassador. But it's only the gossip columnists who pretend that aristocratic life is one unending holiday - which is no doubt what many of their readers (vicariously but mistakenly) would like their own lives to be.

When she was preparing her celebrated article on 'The English Aristocracy', Mrs Peter Rodd, better known as Nancy Mitford, asked me if I would help her over points of fact, as she was in Paris most of the time. Her questions shewed a desire to be thorough. She wanted to know how many peers had been divorced? About one in eight. How many living peers had done well in the War? She obviously meant any war: Lord Dunmore, for example, had won his Victoria Cross in 1897 but was still alive. Taking all living peers of all ages, apart from peeresses in their own right and minors, nearly a quarter had either been mentioned in despatches or decorated in battle. How many peers were Roman Catholics? I telephoned to Lord Mowbray. He asked if I included Irish peers; we settled for members of the House of Lords only; he looked in the Catholic Directory; the answer was 47. How many peers were patrons of livings? I hadn't the foggiest idea. And so on.

Perhaps her most interesting question was, how many peers really belonged to old families? This was interesting because I was surprised by the answer as it unfolded. For I discovered that well over a third of our hereditary peerage still belonged to families that had borne arms in the direct male line since the Middle Ages. So I was rather pleased when Evelyn Waugh, in his excellent Open Letter to Nancy Mitford, wrote: 'You say that 382 peers have arms granted before 1485 and have inherited them in the male line ... The statement staggers me'. But then I was distinctly miffed, if that's the right word, when he went on to suggest that her adviser had overlooked the passage of old names through heiresses to new husbands' families: 'I think you should have questioned your pursuivant more closely before accepting his figures'. I didn't know him well enough in those days to ask him not to teach his grandmother to suck eggs, and indeed always had a special respect for his brilliance as an observer of contemporary life. But I did know enough, for example, to realise that the ancestor of the present Noel earls of Gainsborough in 1485 was not a Noel, but the Red Douglas in person, or that in the male line Lord Eglinton is a Wintoun and not a Montgomerie, or that Lord De La Warr is a West and not a Sackville. The real reason for the surprisingly high number is that, almost without exception, the peers of Scotland help to swell this pre-1485 category.

Eventually, Nancy Mitford sent me her typescript. She didn't, nevertheless, accept any of my criticisms of it, some of which followed the lines of Evelyn Waugh's later Open Letter. She seemed to me to compound the different muddled misusages of the words 'noble' and 'aristocrat'; and then to link them to the ridiculous notion that they applied only and automatically to all peers. She set so much store by the courtesy style of Hon., dependent on the title conferred on her grandfather in 1902, as though she was very nouveau *noblesse de la robe*; when all the time she was immemorably *uradel*, descended in the direct male line from the mediaeval Mitfords of Mitford (what the Austrians would call zu Mitford and the Scots Mitford of that ilk) whose beautifully simple coat was, and is, *Argent a fesse bettween three moles Sable*. Her forefather, Sir John Mitford of Mitford, was Knight of the Shire for Northumberland in 1369, and a later Mitford of Mitford fell at the battle of Towton in the Wars of the Roses. How could she have thought that her old mediaeval aristocratic family were made into aristocrats by getting a bit of paper from Edward VII? Sir Percy Blakeney would have turned in his grave. Evelyn Waugh put the true situation snob-wise very well: 'the basic principle of English social life is that *everyone* (everyone, that is to say, who comes to the front door) *thinks he is a gentleman*. There is a second principle of almost equal importance: *everyone draws the line of demarcation immediately below his own heels*'. This is a typically English version of FieldMarshal Prince Windisch-Gratz's famous crack that *der Mensch Beginnt beim Baron*, mankind begins with barons. But there is another aspect, summed up in its negative form in the martial offence of 'conduct unbecoming an officer and a gentleman'. Its positive form should not, in my opinion, simply follow that of the good fairy Do-as-you-would-be-done-by in *The Water Babies*. For this can give *carte blanche* to fanatically self-righteous opinionated do-gooders, upsetting people 'for their own good'. Rather it should be Do-

as-they-would-like-to-be-done-by. As Dicky Buckle himself once put it to me, a gentleman should not take pleasure in class distinctions, but should rather seek to ignore them. He should of course lay more emphasis on kindness - for instance, he shouldn't ostentatiously stick to Ushibboleths when drinking with or greeted by non-U speakers who say 'cheers' or 'pleased to meet you', but should try to respond courteously in like manner. Of course it rather goes against the grain.

Of course, too, the nobility and gentry who formed the old aristocracy didn't always live up to their ideals. As Sir George Sitwell pointed out, one of the earliest recorded gents was 'Robert Erdeswyke of Stafford, gentilman', who in 1414 was charged with 'procuring the murder of one Thomas Page, who was cut to pieces while on his knees begging for his life'. But their ideals were there as a shining example all the same. Everybody understands what is, or rather ought to be, meant by one's word of honour as a *gentleman*. Nobody would have accused Hitler or Stalin of being gentlemen. Nor would anybody describe them as noble characters. Yet the word *noble* has so often denoted 'of lofty character or ideals' that that's got into the dictionary as one of its meanings. Of course there's always the danger of the gentleman becoming the genteel man. However, 'truly noble' or 'a perfect gentleman' still mean something less unattractive than 'a complete boor'. *Aristocracy* is from the Greek words 'aristos' meaning 'best' and 'kratia' meaning rule, though the best people can so easily become the Best People. It's of course impossible to have both quality and equality, which latter is the opposite of equality of opportunity. But true quality can stagnate into the Quality. Courtesy - I repeat, the manners of a Court - and Chivalry, the code of the chevaliers, cannot but be a Good Thing, much to be encouraged in the young as one gets older (though note that one shouldn't treat people 'cavalierly' oneself). Though birth counts for less nowadays, most people would still rather behave as though they were 'well-bred' than 'ill-bred'. As we become increasingly classless financially, the English concept that a gentleman is recognised by his code of conduct and manner of life must make it possible for more and more people to be gentlemen because they have chosen to be, and so are.

But don't take all this too seriously. Gents should never appear too keen in public, nor lose their sense of humour. Naturally they are accustomed to excel, but equally to appear to do it with ease and not too openly.

Fine models of gentlemen are to be found in the kindly heroes of P. G. Wodehouse or in the subtle good-humoured concealed character and remarkable but apparently effortless achievements of the Scarlet Pimpernel. For a debonair gentleman - we can alas no longer say a gay, debonair cavalier - so often conceals the skilled professional behind an apparently amateur facade.

Nancy Mitford went in for the occasional quiet tease herself. Her broad thesis was that in U speech a novel French word shouldn't normally be used when an old English one *will do*, e.g. she preferred 'napkin' to 'serviette'. Into the novel French 'refained' category she had wrongly consigned the word mirror, which in fact came over with the Conqueror. When she visited us in Scotland, I pointed out in vain that Shakespeare used the words 'mirror' and 'looking glass' in the same passage. At last, I wrote to her in Paris to play my trump card. My children's ancestral uncle, Sir Alexander Boyd, beheaded in 1469 after kidnapping the boy king, James III while instructing him in knightly exercises, was known to his contemporaries (long before the French governesses of the industrial revolution's *nouveaux riches*) as 'a Mirror of Chivalry'. How was I to describe him to my sons?

She sent back a postcard: "Did they really call him that? How vulgar of them."

Kate Fox has particular comments on her childhood, and notes the experiences of herself and her own siblings also working across multiple cultures. Of her observations, the overall question came from the cultural or ancestral

background of an individual, but what she finds does rather delineate the level of individual choice, when that individual so chooses.

Race is a rather more difficult issue, and again was raised by all the friends and colleagues with whom I discussed this book. Having noted that I was conveniently avoiding the issues of Scottish, Welsh and Irish national identities by confining my research to 'the English' rather than 'the British' or 'the UK', they invariably went on to ask whether or not Asians, Afro-Caribbeans and other ethnic minorities would be included in my definition of Englishness.

There are several answers to this question. The first is that ethnic minorities are included, by definition, in any attempt to define Englishness. The extent to which immigrant populations adapt to, adopt and in turn influence the culture and customs of their host country, particularly over several generations, is a complex issue. Research tends to focus on the adaptation and adoption elements (usually lumped together as 'acculturation') at the expense of the equally interesting and important issue of influence. This is odd: we acknowledge that short-term tourists can have a profound influence on their host cultures – indeed, the study of the social processes involved has become a fashionable discipline in itself – but for some reason our academics seem less interested in the processes by which resident immigrant minority cultures can shape the behaviour patterns, customs, ideas, beliefs and values of the countries in which they settle. Although ethnic minorities constitute only about six per cent of the population of this country, their influence on many aspects of English culture has been, and is, considerable. Any 'snapshot' of English behaviour as it is now, such as I am attempting here, will inevitably be coloured by this influence. Although very few of the Asians, Africans and Caribbeans living in England would define themselves as English (most call themselves British, which has come to be regarded as a more inclusive term), they have clearly contributed to the 'grammar' of Englishness.

My second answer to the race question concerns the more well-trodden area of 'acculturation'. Here we come down to the level of the group and the individual, rather than the minority culture as a whole. To put it simply – perhaps too simply – some ethnic-minority groups and individuals are more 'English' than others. By this I mean that some, whether through choice or circumstance or both, have adopted more of the host culture's customs, values and behaviour patterns than others. (This becomes a somewhat more complex issue in the second, third and subsequent generations, as the host culture in question will have been influenced, at least to some degree, by their own forebears.)

Once you start to put it in these terms, the issue is really no longer one of race. When I say that some ethnic-minority groups and individuals are more 'English' than others, I am clearly not talking about the colour of their skin or their country of origin: I am talking about the degree of 'Englishness' they exhibit in their behaviour, manner and customs. I could, and do, make the same comment about white 'Anglo-Saxon' groups and individuals.

We all do, in fact. We describe a social group, a person, or even, say, just one of that person's reactions or characteristic mannerisms, as 'very English' or 'typically English'. We understand what someone means when they say, 'In some ways I'm very English, but in other ways I'm not,' or 'You're more English about that than I am'. We have a concept of 'degrees' of Englishness. I am not introducing anything new or startling here: our everyday use of these terms demonstrates that we all already have a clear grasp of the subtleties of 'partial' Englishness, or even 'piecemeal' or 'cherry-picking' Englishness. We recognize that we can all, at least to some extent, 'choose' our degree of Englishness. All I am saying is that these concepts can be applied equally to ethnic minorities.

In fact, I would go so far as to say that Englishness is rather more a matter of choice for the ethnic minorities in this country than it is for the rest of us. For those of us without the benefit of early, first-hand influence of another culture, some aspects of Englishness can be so deeply in-

grained that we find it almost impossible to shake them off, even when it is clearly in our interests to do so (such as, in my case, when trying to conduct field experiments involving queue jumping). Immigrants have the advantage of being able to pick and choose more freely, often adopting the more desirable English quirks and habits while carefully steering clear of the more ludicrous ones.

I have some personal experience of such cultural cherry-picking. My family emigrated to America when I was five, and we lived there for six years, during which entire time I steadfastly refused to adopt any trace of an American accent, on the grounds that it was aesthetically unpleasing ('sounds horrid' was how I put it at the time – dreadful little prig that I was), although I happily adapted to most other aspects of the culture. As an adolescent, I lived for four years in rural France. I attended the local state school and became indistinguishable in my speech, behaviour and manners from any other Briançonnaise teenager. Except that I knew this was a matter of choice, and could judiciously shed those elements of Frenchness that annoyed my mother when I got home from school in the evening – or indeed deliberately exaggerate them to provoke her (some teenage behaviours are universal) – and discard those that proved socially unfavourable on our return to England.

Immigrants can, of course, choose to 'go native', and some in this country become 'more English than the English'. Among my own friends, the two I would most readily describe as 'very English' are a first-generation Indian immigrant and a first-generation Polish refugee. In both cases, their degree of Englishness was initially a conscious choice, and although it has since become second nature, they can still stand back and analyse their behaviour – and explain the rules they have learnt to obey – in a way that most native English find difficult, as we tend to take these things for granted.

My sister had much the same experience when she married a Lebanese man and emigrated to Lebanon (from America) about eight years ago. She became very quickly, to her Bek'aa Valley family and neighbours, a fully 'acculturated' Lebanese village housewife, but can switch back to Englishness (or Americanness, or indeed her teenage Frenchness) as easily as she changes languages – and often does both in mid-sentence. Her children are American-Arab, with a few hints of Englishness, and equally adept at switching language, manners and mores when it suits them.

Many of those who pontificate about 'acculturation' are inclined to underestimate this element of choice. Such processes are often described in terms suggesting that the 'dominant' culture is simply imposed on unwitting, passive minorities, rather than focusing on the extent to which individuals quite consciously, deliberately, cleverly and even mockingly pick and choose among the behaviours and customs of their host culture. I accept that some degree of acculturation or conformity to English ways is often 'demanded' or effectively 'enforced' (although this would surely be true of any host culture, unless one enters it as a conquering invader or passing tourist), and the rights and wrongs of specific demands can and should be debated. But my point is that compliance with such demands is still a conscious process, and not, as some accounts of acculturation imply, a form of brainwashing.

My only way of understanding this process is to assume that every immigrant to this country is at least as bright and clever as I was when we emigrated to France, just as capable of exercising free will and maintaining a sense of their own cultural identity while complying with the demands, however irrational or unfair, of the local culture. I could crank up or tone down my Frenchness, by subtle degrees, in an entirely calculated manner. My sister can choose and calibrate her Arabness, and my immigrant friends can do the same with their Englishness, sometimes for practical social purposes, including the avoidance of exclusion, but also purely for amusement.

All of these examples show that patrician just is, and is by choice, that peon just is, and is by choice.



A related variation on this is those arguments of there no longer being any class structure at all. Let us consider commentary from Cannadine:

Toward a "Classless Society"?

It is alleged that the French historian Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie classified his professional colleagues neither in hierarchical nor triadic terms but as forming two distinct categories of scholar: the parachutists, who survey the broad landscape of the past from a great height, and the truffle hunters, who immerse themselves in the dense morass of evidential detail. Both approaches have their advantages and their dangers: the parachutists seek to comprehend the overall picture but at the price of a certain unavoidable superficiality; the truffle hunters know the facts but lack the wider conceptual framework in which to place them. Ideally, and as Leopold von Ranke pointed out well over a century earlier, historians need to move back and forth between the universal and the particular, the telescope and the microscope, and this book has tried to adopt just such an approach, blending general argument with specific detail. But, on balance, it is more about generalities than it is about specifics: it has surveyed a large, complex, much-disputed, and massively researched historical problem and drawn extensively on the detailed writings of other scholars, even as it has developed an argument to which most of the authors cited and thanked would probably not themselves subscribe.

The explanation and resolution of this apparent paradox have been well put by W. H. McNeill, a historian who has always been on the side of the parachutists. "Every increase in historical detail," he rightly notes, in words that apply to both the subject covered in this book and the way it has been treated, "risks losing sight of larger patterns which may be more important for public action and understanding." We must not, he insists, be weighed down by too much erudition; "what matters is perspective and proportion, not detail." Although there is an abundance of detail in these pages, it is only a tiny fraction of the total amount of knowable, available, and pertinent evidence. Inevitably and unapologetically, this book has been primarily concerned with tracing patterns, adopting perspectives, and establishing proportions.

Such a focus is also the approach for this book. Of Cannadine's commentary, while his focus is particularly on the forms of British society up through the end of the twentieth century, I find that the discussion of forms and layers of social classes also applies elsewhere.

While his overall emphasis is inspired by the statements of British politicians in the late twentieth century, his outlines of the most repeating forms of viewing class definitely remain independent of location.

Back to Cannadine . . . .

Long-Term Retrospective

The arguments advanced in this book may be easily summarized. During the last three hundred years, British society has been observed and imagined, envisaged and understood, by most of its inhabitants in only three basic ways. Nor should this occasion any surprise, given that these models have been in use at least since the medieval period. The first was hierarchical, which described society individualistically as an interlinked, finely layered, and elaborately graded procession; the second was triadic, which divided it into three collective constituencies, usually upper, middle, and lower; and the third was the dichotomous, which saw society as polarized between the two extremes of "patricians and plebs" or "them and us." Across the centuries, these three models have been astonishingly resonant and appealing, not only at a popular level but also among intellectuals and commentators, from Burke and Paine to Marx and Mallock and beyond. One indication of this is that when A. H. Halsey recently set out to revise his justly famous book on social structures and social change in twentieth-century Britain, he felt obliged to choose among what he described as "the vulgar Marxist theory of two classes at war," "the simplification

of three social strata of social classes," and "the vulgar liberal conception of a continuous hierarchy of prestige or status."

It is also clear that at all levels of society, and across the centuries surveyed here, Britons have moved back and forth from one of these models to another. These pages have presented many examples. Edmund Burke was a defender of organic, traditional, individualist hierarchy, but he also regretted the rise of a middle class between those above and below and on other occasions divided society into a virtuous elite confronted by the "swinish multitude." Disraeli and Mallock (and Winston Churchill) idealized hierarchy, but they also feared Britain was divided into "two nations." As a son of Liverpool, Gladstone saw society triadically; as an "out and out inequalitarian," he envisaged it hierarchically; when backing "the masses" against "the classes," he viewed it adversarially. And from Robert Roberts via George Orwell to Jilly Cooper, many twentieth-century commentators have had recourse to all three models. As such, these visions of British social structure and social identities have coexisted not just within the same society but within people's minds. Small wonder that in 1988 the sociologist Gordon Marshall concluded, in words that merit quoting again and at greater length, that "the 'class consciousness' of the majority of people is characterised by its complexity, ambivalence and occasional contradictions. It does not reflect a rigorously consistent interpretation of the world."

Indeed, it is in part the very vagueness and superficiality of these three models of society that has enabled Britons to live with them for so long and to move so easily from one to the other. For they were and are essentially ideal types, not wholly divorced from social reality but very much simplifying it. British society has never been a single, unitary, integrated hierarchy; it has never been divided into three hermetically sealed and homogeneous collectivities; and for all the exhortations of revolutionaries from Paine to Marx, Orwell to Scargill, it has never been so deeply divided that the masses were likely to rise up and overthrow their betters. All these versions of society were (and are) simplified imaginings or rhetorical constructs. They are not "real social knowledge" so much as "imagined constructions" or "rhetorical devices," what George Eliot once memorably called "picture-writing of the mind." In their purest forms, they are clearly incompatible. But in practice, most Britons have easily moved from one model to another: from individualist, integrated hierarchy to adversarial, collective "us" and "them"; or from a three-stage to a two-stage model, by dividing the middle class into patricians and plebs; or from a three-stage model to hierarchy, by assigning people individual status rankings. When thinking about society and when thinking about themselves, this is what most Britons are constantly doing: silently and easily shifting from one social vision to another.

The simplicity and the stamina of these three descriptions of British society have been insufficiently appreciated and inadequately studied, and the same may be said of the facility and frequency with which Britons have always been able to move from one version to another.

But this is not just because the models can be easily molded and melded and merged; it is also because the same language has often been used to describe all of them. To be sure, there were (and are) vocabularies that are specific to hierarchy or to the three- and two-stage models, and many instances have been given in this book. But there is also language that applies with equal appropriateness to all of them. The vocabulary of rank, station, order, and degree, which is often associated exclusively with hierarchy, turns out on closer inspection to have been used frequently in describing three- or two-layer societies, and that practice is with us still. The same applies to the language of class, which has been exclusively associated by historians and sociologists with collective categories and identities but which has always been commonly applied to all three models of society, as it continues to be today.

This in turn means that the models of British society are more important in the constitution of our social understandings and the construction of our social identities than the language in which they are expressed and articulated. For the language of ranks or of class cannot by itself create

social descriptions or social identities, because it might be referring to any one of the three available models of society and does not by itself make it clear which. Perhaps this was what Paul Fussell meant when he observed that "nobody knows for sure what the word *class* means." Here are two examples by way of illustration. When Britons talk, as they regularly do, of "the class system" that they believe prevails, they might be referring to class as hierarchy, to class as upper, middle, and lower, or to class as "us" and "them." From the language itself, it is impossible to tell.

A major emphasis of any discussion of class is indeed in the attention to detail. As any peon regularly demonstrates, the hope of the peon is that by blindly flinging words about, everyone will encounter the words and assume the peon has expertise, rather than matter of factly noting what words and which circumstance and who is trying to stage what deception. In the latter the peon is shown as the fraud, and the patrician continues on in superiority and adherence to reality. Cannadine particularly notes that probably unintentionally, even major politicians, such as one even named Major, can provide both uncertainty, and the reminder to seek for the greater detail that will clarify the statement and the situation.

And when John Major spoke of wanting to create a "classless society," did he mean the abolition of hierarchy, or of the distinctions upper, middle, lower, or of the divide between "us" and "them"? Once again, the words cannot tell us. As these examples suggest, the connection between social vocabularies and social identities is more complex and contingent than generally recognized. The "language of class" is not the real issue; the real issue is the models of society that it and other languages articulate, make real, and bring to life.

It is, then, mistaken to suppose that the so-called rise of the language of class in Britain during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries happened because new collective classes were coming into being--perhaps three, perhaps two--that overturned and superseded the old individualist hierarchy. Yet it remains a widely held belief that the period from the 1790s to the 1830s witnessed the origin of contemporary "class distinctions" in Britain. But class, like rank, often meant hierarchy, and it is the failure to recognize this that helps explain one of the greatest gaps in modern British historical writing: the lack of due attention to hierarchy as a way of seeing society and as a system of social belief.

One fascinating point that Cannadine stumbles across here is the immense gulf between the political right and left, on one hand, and the rest of us, on the other.

It has been ignored by historians of the Right, who tend to take its continued existence for granted, and by historians of the Left (and most sociologists), because they take its disappearance no less for granted." Yet as E. M. VV. Tillyard pointed out two generations ago, the Elizabethan world picture did not die with the Elizabethans. "We shall err grievously," he noted, "if we imagine that the Elizabethan habit of mind [seeing the world hierarchically] is done with once and for all. If we are sincere with ourselves, we must know that we have that habit in our own bosoms somewhere." One of the purposes of this book has been to urge that we cannot understand the history of modern British society unless we recognize the continued existence of hierarchy as a way of seeing and making sense (of) it.

Further discussion of such a political gulf between the extremes and the majority, and the problems that this gulf causes, will come later. For now, back to Cannadine that that class Just Is.

Marxists and Marxisant historians (to say nothing of sociologists) have not generally been at ease with hierarchy, and in largely ignoring it, they have been much in error. But non-Marxists, and anti-Marxists are no less in error in asserting, along with Margaret Thatcher, that class is exclusively "a communist concept" that "groups people as bundles and sets them against one another." Class, as this book has sought to show, has not only meant three different ways of looking at British social structure, one of which is very strongly individualist and consensual rather than collective and conflictual. Class-in all its three guises--was alive and around in Britain

for more than half a century before Marx, and-again in all its three guises-it is clearly going to survive in Britain long after Marxism's day is done. Since Marxism's day does seem to be done, this is an appropriate point to add two final observations on this subject. The first is that, in asserting in *The Communist Manifesto* that "society as a whole is more and more splitting into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other: bourgeoisie and proletariat," Marx was wrong in his own day and has become even more wrong since his death. The second is that, in describing society as deeply riven, he was merely offering the most elaborately worked out (and generalized) version of a very commonplace (yet ~specific) model.

. . . . One purpose of this book has been to argue that three models of British society have been continuously present during the last three hundred years, that for much of the time they have easily coexisted in people's minds and imaginations, and that the hierarchical vision of British society has been the most pervasive and persuasive. . . . .

. . . . But this book has not been entirely about unchangingness. One reason for this is that each of the three models of British society that I have discussed carry with them an implicit temporal dynamic and perspective that is part of their appeal. Hierarchy is generally about how society was, a backward-looking picture of an ideal way of ordering the world that needs to be preserved or restored. The three-stage model tends to be about how society is, especially when viewed, as is usual, from the vantage point of those in the middle. And the two stage model is often concerned with how society might be, perhaps for good (if you are a would-be revolutionary), perhaps for ill (if you are not).

### **William Beyer and *Juniors And Heavies***

William Beyer focuses on the two stage model and provides a parallel example of a rather emphatic situation of differing strata. While his discussion is clearly the two stage model that is rather like the patrician and the peon, it also emphatically makes clear that background and origin remain ultimately irrelevant, and only the ever changing current moment and its chosen action remain totally paramount.

For those who missed it, Sontag's "Notes On Camp" was a numbered list of statements about the concept of camp, which tends to have nothing to do with backpacking, bonfires, or tents. Bayer borrowed the creating of a list of numbered statements, as he too had more of a generally detailed concept than a singularly nuanced single point. As awareness of the peon also is more of an accumulated assessment rather than a progress to a final decision, this book also is a cluster of assorted notes.

In being such a collection of notes, this book discusses a scattering of characteristics, where the issue of being patrician rather than mere peon can involve as much what one chooses to do as much as what one can do. Given that Bayer's commentary is indeed of a variety of discussion of patrician over peon, we will start with a more detailed overview selection from his commentary.

### **Juniors and Heavies**

If you work in film for very long, you will meet a great number of people. Some will become friends and some will become enemies; there will be people who will cheat you and people who will be straight with you; you will meet young people and old people, winners and losers; in short, people of every type. Of all the distinctions you must learn to make, the most important is the difference between a heavy and a junior, and, for that matter, between things in film that are heavy and things in film that are light. The importance of this distinction cannot be overestimated. It applies to everyone in film, from actors and agents to producers and directors, and to every aspect of film, from screenplays and packages to films themselves. It is a distinction that is partly, but not

always, qualitative; that has something, but not everything, to do with achievement; that reflects both objective and subjective standards; that is important and unimportant, irrelevant and basic, all at the same time. The ability to make these distinctions cannot be taught; there simply comes a day when the recognition of what is heavy and what is light, who is heavy and who is junior, is plain and intuitive. The terms involved cannot be defined, but the following notes may serve as a guide for the reader who must, in the end, define them for himself:

(1) Heaviness and lightness are words that do not pertain to bulk or to physical weight, or, for that matter, to heavy-handedness or to a "light touch."

(2) Within a corporation, relative titles and positions on a company organization chart do not necessarily express relative degrees of heaviness. A heavy is a prime mover and he may or may not be the company president.

(3) A heavy gets things done. When he speaks, people listen. When he says he is going to do something, he does it. When a junior speaks, people begin to stare at the floor. When a junior says he is going to do something, you cannot be sure that he will.

(4) Heavies in the film business do not refer to somebody not present as the "boss," unless they are being deeply ironic. Although a heavy may be an employee, he is not supervised. He may be fired for making a mistake, but he is never called on the carpet.

(8) A heavy is not difficult to get to see, the first time around. A heavy returns your calls or else lets you know that in the future you had better speak to somebody else. A junior is very difficult to reach, and makes a point of not returning your calls.

(9) Heavies use juniors as messenger boys; juniors pretend they have messenger boys of their own.

....

(11) Heavies make mistakes, which they are happy to admit. Juniors are always right-at least according to them.

(12) Heavies are frequently ungraceful. They also tend to dress simply and without pretension. Juniors are mod and hip, and their grooming is contrived.

.....

(14) Heavies are often impolite. This is not intentional; many of them are simply crude. When a junior is rude, it is usually with a purpose.

....

(16) A heavy is just as likely as a junior to cheat you, but he will do so on a much grander scale.

(17) Sexual orientation is irrelevant to heaviness.

....

(19) Women, of course, can be heavies. There are many, particularly among actresses. A common error is to confuse a woman who is a killer with a woman who is a heavy.

(20) Heavies, like certain *maitres d'hotel* in first-class dining rooms on transatlantic passenger liners, have seen a great deal of the world and are impressed by very little. Juniors are very easily impressed, especially by success.

....

(22) Heavies form the aristocracy of film. Their proportion to juniors is roughly that of one to a hundred.

(23) On many occasions it is fun to deal with juniors, but one must always remember that one is playing a game, and that nothing exists until it has been certified by a heavy.

....

(34) A heavy, like any big-time gambler, will take a loss with a shrug. A junior will brood upon one endlessly. A junior will also restage conversations in his mind, turning heroic phrases which did not occur to him when he was under pressure.

....

(36) Heaviness may have something to do with knowing who or what one is. Lightness seems to surround people and films that are seeking a category for themselves.

....

(39) Heavies can fail, but only juniors can overachieve. The words "heavy" and "overachieve" are contradictory terms and cannot be used together, because there is no limit to what a heavy can do.

....

(45) It is necessary to understand the difference between juniors and heavies, and between light things and heavy things, because without this knowledge it is impossible to survive.

**1. Upscale, better known as extremely, overtly, blatantly, deliberately, tacky, tasteless, and devoid of any style whatsoever..**

A completely and intentionally misleading concept has turned up, one which absolutely screams the presence and practice of the peon and how the peon limits itself. This concept is the existence and use of the blatantly cobbled together mess called “upscale”, a blatantly unmistakable signal of insecurity, insufficiency, and uncertainty. While the usage desperately hopes the reader is going to be impressed, fascinated, and attracted, the reality is that “upscale” is a product of the peon, so all that is achieved is abhorrence and abject failure.



Elegance and quality, the complete opposites of upscale, remain observing and confirming evaluations that are totally self contained and isolated from separate and thus irrelevant references. Quality is independent of opinion and often can be a matter of demonstratable fact. Elegance is the basic essence of that which is, that which has achieved all it needs to be, and has no need, reason, or cause to be more.

Upscale screams the presence and intent of utter, terrified, overfocus as opposed to the quiet specialization of quality. Upscale spends its little existence perpetually peering over its shoulder, always desperately comparing itself to anything else in a frantic hope that it may get mistaken for being something.

Upscale is the self aware infant screaming I DEMAND TO BE CONSIDERED THE CENTER OF ALL UNIVERSES AND YOU WILL ALWAYS ACKNOWLEDGE THAT FOREVER AND NEVER NOTICE THERE COULD BE ANYTHING ELSE AND YOU WILL FOREVER ALSO INSIST THE SAME IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES!!!!

Upscale is the ever and increasingly demanding cheap and overpriced and tacky, gaudy and glitz, fake and contrived, the forced attention that immediately reveals the total lying fiasco that is in progress, the continuing, and ever increasing greater and greater failure, degradation, and humiliation of everyone present and taking part. See, for example, the “upscale restaurant” the “upscale hotel”, the “upscale clothing”, any “upscale place or event” and the intent that one is to be drawn in and imprisoned by that situational screaming infant.

By contrast, there will always continue to be the isolate, the eternally independent, the ongoing and ever occurring, the absolutely understated and supplanting subtleties of elegance and quality.

**2. Patricians I:**

**The action performed remains most important, money is just a tool.**

The patrician just is, regardless of any additional resources. The peon just is not, and demonstrates that with fantasies that demanding more things and of people will make the peon more than a mere peon. The patrician, being the patrician, works alone and with other patricians. The peon must always rely on all patricians and the failures of other peons, and fantasizes of being the center of everything.

The patrician remains aware of the largest picture, lines up details as they are needed, and discards details that are not needed, for the moment, as a part of the moment, being aware that the next moment may or will bring change. The peon fixates on random details, and fantasizes that such fixation is the only situation that has and will ever occur. The patrician gets things done and keeps getting things done, as and in spite of the peon, who demands that, as an example from the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, neckties must be worn.

A movie remake of Faust with a name of "Bedazzled" provides a short summary of the basic nature of how and why patricians continue on and how and why the peon is an irrelevant failure. In the movie, Dudley Moore plays a short order cook named Stanley Moon who is actively tempted by Peter Cook's George Spiggott.

SPIGGOTT: Your great-great-great-grandfather, Ephrain Moon, sailed for Australia in 1782 on a ship of the Line. Set himself up as an apothecary. The business flourished and by the time he died it was worth something in the region of two thousand pounds - a large amount in those days.

MOON: Yes.

GEORGE SPIGGOTT: Your great-great-grandfather, Cedric Moon, by skilful management and careful husbandry, increased that sum a hundredfold. This in turn was inherited by your great-grandfather, Desmond Moon, who expanded, diversified and built up a personal fortune of well over a million pounds.

MOON: That's a lot of money.

SPIGGOTT: A great deal of money, Mr Moon, and this gigantic sum was inherited by your grandfather, Hubert Moon, who returned to London and frittered it away on wine, women and loose living.

MOON: Er ..... where does that leave me, then?

SPIGGOTT: Penniless and on the brink of suicide! (*sniggers*)

Andrew Carnegie was born in Scotland in 1835 and moved to America with his family when he was around 13. By 1860 and the American Civil War, he was building and merging companies. In 1868, when he was around 33, he proposed to retire at 35 and live on only \$50,000 a year, using the rest of his money to expand education and other areas in the United States and British Empire. By comparison, \$50,000 a year in 1868 would be about \$750,000 to \$800,000 a year in 2008. While his businesses and personal associations did have some very damaging issues, the greater impact that started even before his death in 1919 has been the very long list of gifts, grants, philanthropic organizations, and the like, many of which still continue.

Andrew Carnegie is a typical patrician. Hubert Moon is a typical peon.



**3. Patricians II:**

**Money is just a tool, the action performed remains most important.**

Peon vs patrician is not a matter of how much cash one has. Even more so the issue is not how much credit. As the American and elsewhere economy started its slide into the early twenty-first century recession, I read a very particular news article on people's reactions to shifts in financial matters. I apparently didn't grab a copy of the article at the time or I could cite in more detail, but as I recall, one lowest middle class peon being interviewed actually stated something to the effect that he had considered himself to be upper class, until the bank cut off his line of credit, after which he then only had the income from his current job. Or, in simple terms, all he had ever had was that income, and only for as long as that job might last. He might have had a middle class background, at no time had he ever risen any higher, and with the ability to lie to even himself, that clearly put him in the underclass and made him a peon.

Of course money is a useful tool, but money is only a tool.

Fussell:

“One thing to get clear at the outset is this: it's not riches alone that defines these classes. "It can't be money," one working man says quite correctly, "because nobody ever knows that about you for sure." Style and taste and awareness are as important as 'money.' . . . When ;John Fitzgerald Kennedy, watching Richard Nixon on television, turned to his friends and, horror-struck, said, "The guy has no class," he was not talking about money.”

“And down below, the principle still holds: money doesn't matter that much. To illustrate the point, John Brooks compares two families living in adjoining houses in a suburb. One man is "blue-collar," a garage mechanic. The other is "white-collar," an employee in a publishing house. They make roughly the same amount of money, but what a difference. "Mr. Blue" bought a small, neat "ranch house." "Mr. White" bought a beat-up old house and refurbished it himself. Mrs. Blue uses the local shops, especially those in the nearby shopping center, and thinks them wonderful, "so convenient." Mrs. White goes to the city to buy her clothes. The Blues drink, but rather furtively, and usually on Saturday night with the curtains closed. The Whites drink openly often right out in the backyard. "The Blues shout to each other, from room to room of their house or from corner to corner of their lot, without self-consciousness; the Whites modulate their voices to the point where they sometimes can't hear each other. As household objects, books are a crucial criterion. There's not a book in the Blues' house, while the Whites' living room contains numerous full book-shelves. Brooks concludes: "Here, in sum, are two families with hardly anything in common . . . , yet their incomes . . . are practically identical." Likewise, it was Russell Lynes's awareness that it's less money than taste and knowledge and perceptiveness that determine class that some years ago prompted him to set forth the tripartite scheme of *highbrow*, *middlebrow*, and *lowbrow*.

Not that the three classes at the top don't have money. The point is that money alone doesn't define them, for the way they have their money is largely what matters. That is, as a class indicator the amount of money is less significant than the source. . . .“

Returning to Cooper:

“I found, too, that people were incredibly difficult to pin down into classes. John went to a more famous boarding school than Thomas, who has a better job than Charles, who's got smarter friends than Harry, who lives in an older house with a bigger garden than David, who's got an uncle who's an earl, but whose children go to comprehensive school. Who is then the gentleman?”

Commenting on the aristocrats in general;

“They used, of course, to be terribly rich . . .

Today, as a result of death duties and capital transfer tax, most aristocrats are desperately poor in comparison with their grandfathers and are reduced to renting off wings as apartments, selling paintings, turning their gardens into zoos and amusement parks, and letting the public see over their houses.

“. . . But if their privileges have been eroded, their responsibilities remain the same: responsibilities to the tenants, to the community (the good aristocrat always has a good sense of public duty) and to the house he lives in, so often to be so beautiful as to be a national monument, but to the upkeep of which the nation pays no contribution.

“As the maker of manners, many of the aristocracy, while feeling they have a duty towards the community . . . are indifferent to public opinion.”

“One doesn't care what the press say,” said the Marquess Of Anglessy at a dinner party.

'One's friends know what one likes, and that's all that matters.' The only thing he minded, he went on, was that the National Trust on television had said he was very rich."

A patrician with little money is a patrician. Many lower class patricians are poor, that does not affect how they are. Of the peon, on the other hand, the peon can have hundreds of thousands to several million dollars, at the moment, and between the garish costuming, the shiny trinkets, the contrived, label ridden costuming with collar pulled on end, the proclamation of Look At Me!!!! the peon remains common, upscale, tacky, the peon.

#### **4. The U.S. Mortgage fiasco, the 2011 English riots, and Occupy Wall Street, all made simple and easy: The issue is not "the haves vs the have-nots".**

Starting around 2006 in the United States, a housing price bubble finally went pop, and the amount of failed payments and foreclosures on a very large number of mortgages started to climb.

In August 2011 in London, reactions to a police shooting mushroomed into widespread riots over 4 days in several parts of England.

In September 2011 in the United States, numerous demonstrations started up in more and more cities across the country, with a particular focus on banking and business financial centers.

In all of these a repeated statement is that the overall situation and problem is the haves vs the have-nots . . . but that assessment then breaks down for lack of any coherent supporting detail. Even more so the issue is not right wing extremist vs left wing extremist because the reality is basically politically neutral, or at least the problems do not particularly start from either of the political extremes.

In actually, the reality is that of the peon vs the patrician.

Starting with the mortgage fiasco, let's look at a very easy outline of what has occurred, and, basically, arguably, is still occurring.

Consider a pair of peons and a pair of patricians.

One patrician is lower or middle class, has worked up to being in charge of some area at work, or has some success in business, repair or otherwise, and wants to own a house. We'll call this patrician Goodmortgage, because while Goodmortgage has some savings, the cost of a house is massively more than those savings. So with full intent to do the same sort of quality transaction that helped build up the savings, Goodmortgage goes and gets a mortgage, gets a house, and starts paying off the mortgage.

The next patrician is middle class and works at or owns a bank---and we'll call this patrician Goodbank. A mortgage is a reliable way for a bank to make money, so when Goodmortgage came looking for a mortgage, Goodbank checked the numbers, looked at what was reasonable and likely for the handling of mortgages, and drew up the papers for them both to sign. With the mortgage created, Goodbank then started collecting the incremental payments involved in having one mortgage, which was noted on the bank's balance report as being one mortgage, being paid off in increments.

Now lets look at a couple of peons.

The first peon might be middle class, but the class really doesn't matter, could be lower, middle, or upper. What matters is that this peon proclaims that the economy will always soar, or, emphatically cites The Magical Scheme that All Finances Will Be Fine, or any of a number of similar outright lies. Most importantly in this scenario, this peon also proclaims that the process of a mortgage does not have to be accountable, that money is to miraculously appear---and naturally we'll call this peon Mortgagefraud. Mortgagefraud is like Goodmortgage in that Mortgagefraud doesn't have enough money to buy a house with cash. However, unlike Goodmortgage and the one house and mortgage, Mortgagefraud chose to demand at least five houses, which Mortgagefraud and anyone else equally clueless calls homes even though they're really houses. Mortgagefraud then went to a bank, lied about the amount of money available, lied about having any intent to pay off any debt, and got five mortgages.

Clearly Mortgagefraud did not get any of the mortgages from Goodbank, because we know that Goodbank isn't an idiot, and only an idiot would let Mortgagefraud or any other peon have even only one mortgage. Such an idiot is clearly a peon, because no patrician is that idiotic. We're going to call this second peon Bankfraud. Bankfraud works at a bank, or, if Bankfraud actually has anything to do with the ownership of a bank, such ownership only followed a long string of extremely shady stock market transactions and other forms of fraud. In turn, when Mortgagefraud showed up to get the five mortgages, Bankfraud didn't check any proof of available money or any of the other practices that Goodbank does automatically as a matter of course. Furthermore, as the old story about standard peon banking goes, Bankfraud took that one cluster of five mortgages, filed the paperwork for two balance reports and . . .

*. . . sold three of them to Bankfraud's publicly listed company, using letters of credit opened by Bankfraud's*

*brother-in-law at the bank, then executed a debt/equity swap with an associated general offer so that Bankfraud got all four reports back, with a tax exemption for five reports. The rights of the six reports were transferred via an intermediary to a Cayman Island Company secretly owned by the majority shareholder who sold the rights to all seven reports back to Bankfraud's listed company. The annual report says the company owns eight reports, with an option on one more. Bankfraud then sold one report to buy six peons in government, leaving nine reports, and intends to get all the government patricians voted out of office or fired because they keep being patricians in government. No balance sheet was provided with any stage of this. Bankfraud then demanded a bailout when the economy collapsed.*

Bankfraud also vehemently screams absolute opposition to any sort of regulated banking practices that Goodbank works within anyway because all such regulations are normal business practice and always will be. But then Goodbank is a patrician, and Bankfraud is a peon, a liar, and a failure. And yes, sometimes Mortgagefraud doesn't get five mortgages, and instead only gets one fraudulent mortgage from Bankfraud, where even just that one fraudulent mortgage gets foreclosed.

Now having noted these two sets of behaviors, there are the instances where the foreclosure occurs, there is only one mortgage, the enraged howl occurs of How Dare You---such statement made to or by whomever---and Mortgagefraud is not the one with the mortgage this time.

What has happened is the other occurrence in these instances of peons screwing over each other and and also screwing over any patrician that gets within range. In this case, this particular Goodmortgage would have been turned down by Goodbank---because of perfectly legitimate and honest reasons like not enough money, or related circumstances. Goodmortgage isn't stupid or unreliable, but also doesn't make a living as a banker, doesn't specialize in juggling mortgage issues every single day, so therefore Goodmortgage's quite patrician expertise is in a different area. In this case, when the circumstances occur that Goodbank would have turned Goodmortgage down, Goodmortgage would see what could be done, pile up more money and try again, would do whatever is needed to get the mortgage to occur, even if a little later.

What happened instead is that this particular Goodmortgage went to Bankfraud. With full knowledge that there was no way to justify a valid mortgage, Bankfraud gave this Goodmortgage a mortgage that was guaranteed to fail. In time, through no fault of Goodmortgage aside from choosing hope and faith instead remaining and working with reality, the mortgage did fail, rather damaging Goodmortgage. The failure also damaged the Bankfraud bank, but, let's face it, what's going on here is that Bankfraud is a peon, not a patrician, and is rather opposed to things like accountability and honesty and trust, because such patrician practices "interfere with" Bankfraud's "lifestyle".

Now, what do patricians and peons have to do with the riots in England and the protests in America? Go back and look at the news coverage of the riots. What will be found is numerous instances of total and undeniable working and middle class peons deliberately looting, destroying, and in a few cases, committing murder. What will be found is numerous instances of total and undeniable working and middle class patricians deliberately opposing the rioters, gathering to protect stores, to protest the setting of fires, saying in one instance *"You lot piss me the fuck off! I'm shamed to be a Hackney person. Because we are not all gathering together and fighting for a cause. We are running out of Foot Locker and thieffin' shoes,"*

Of the American protests, an ongoing message that is claimed is that the point is the haves vs the have-nots, and something needs to be done about, oh, such things that, oh, aren't working.

Actually, the better and more accurate way to frame the discussion is to note that what is going on has been and is the peons vs the patricians . . . . And as patricians of all classes, working, middle, upper, what's needed is indeed to work together to see what can and will be done to eradicate or totally cripple all peons and thus make life in our society better for all of us.



## 5. The patrician conserves cash, the peon inflates credit.

There is a story about the peon that is told in many ways, and one of them is called Enron venture capitalism:

You have two cows;

You sell three of them to your publicly listed company, using letters of credit opened by your brother-in-law at the bank, then execute a debt/equity swap with an associated general offer so that you get all four cows back, with a tax exemption for five cows. The milk rights of the six cows are transferred via an intermediary to a Cayman Island Company secretly owned by the majority shareholder who sells the rights to all seven cows back to your listed company. The annual report says the company owns eight cows, with an option on one more. You sell one cow to buy a new president of the United States, leaving you with nine cows. No balance sheet provided with the release. The public then buys your bull.

As has been noted, repeatedly and accurately, class is not an issue of money, even while a greater number of upper class patricians do tend to have more money than lower class patricians. The peon, of course being the underclass, just demands credit, just because.

Regarding credit, an advantage and reason for having great reserves of cash is so that one can indeed act with the moment and fund whatever acquisition, project, concept that one wishes.

The peon gets credit and uses it to play gimme, and Look At Me!!!, and then complains when reminded that the contract of repayment did get signed and the debt is owed.

Patrician banks and bankers offer credit, working with viable businesses and people, and collect the interest as part of their business.

The peon claiming to be a banker offers credit, and uses the offer as an incentive for functional fraud, adding random phrases, obfuscation, and all out lies, where the functional fraud is in the demonstrated intent to filch every cent the peon can get, whether from the borrowers, or by claiming they now have assets they don't have.

The patrician who does not have so much cash on hand gets credit and uses it to get things, get things done, factoring the interest and other expenses into standard business and accounting transactions. At no point does the patrician ever count any credit in use as being anything other than debt. At no point does the patrician ever count any credit not in use as being available potential debt, preferably to be avoided. A mortgage on a house comes to mind, where the patrician takes out a perfectly normal and reasonable mortgage, gets the house for the purpose of having that house, and quite happily pays off the mortgage of the amount of time needed to do so.

The peon making use of a bank proclaims that credit, if acquired, is actually property, and that such is considered the peon's and not something involving a bank or other credit source. A mortgage on a house comes to mind, where cash acquired is what one spends on the cruise through the Caribbean, and the second SUV, and the additional mortgage on a second house, even as the first mortgage is still not paid off, because of course one has to have the mortgage on the third house as well. In time, when reality arrives and none of these can get paid off, such as situation is to be seen as all the fault of the bank, and the peon is to be rescued from the unfairness of actually having to pay off the debts . . . where part of the fiasco can indeed be blamed on a bank full of peons, where only a peon banker would have signed off on much more than that first mortgage, and a patrician banker, very probably, would not have.

Rather obviously, as gets noted over and over, the greatest need for banking and other economic regulation is caused by blatant and undeniable peons claiming to be and run banks and investment organizations. Rather unsurprisingly, the greatest objection to economic regulation and governmental oversight is from the peon. The

greatest support for economic regulation and governmental oversight comes from patricians, where a patrician simply operates a business, and doesn't have to keep looking out for regulators.

The peon claims that capitalism is the only successful economic model and therefore the peon must be allowed to rampage about without any regulation or limit whatsoever, claiming that any sort of oversight or regulation is against capitalism. Finally when the peon has absolutely destroyed everything that the peon could get at, the peon then demands to held blameless, and that everything must continue on as before.

The patrician notes that capitalism is the only successful economic model and therefore the patrician works within the relevant regulations or limits, being aware that all oversight or regulation are useful tools that support and reinforce capitalism.

Hyman Minsky was an economist who pointed out that while capitalism is indeed a system that requires and rewards flexibility and effort across all classes of patricians, what also exists and will always be accounted for is the peon and the peon's ongoing insistence on screwing things up.

For those not familiar with Minsky, here are some notes from Wikipedia:

Hyman Philip Minsky (September 23, 1919 – October 24, 1996) was an American economist and professor of economics at Washington University in St. Louis. His research attempted to provide an understanding and explanation of the characteristics of financial crises. Minsky was sometimes described as a post-Keynesian economist because, in the Keynesian tradition, he supported some government intervention in financial markets and opposed some of the popular deregulation policies in the 1980s, and argued against the accumulation of debt. His research was noticed by Wall Street.

....

Minsky proposed theories linking financial market fragility, in the normal life cycle of an economy, with speculative investment bubbles endogenous to financial markets. Minsky claimed that in prosperous times, when corporate cash flow rises beyond what is needed to pay off debt, a speculative euphoria develops, and soon thereafter debts exceed what borrowers can pay off from their incoming revenues, which in turn produces a financial crisis. As a result of such speculative borrowing bubbles, banks and lenders tighten credit availability, even to companies that can afford loans, and the economy subsequently contracts.

This slow movement of the financial system from stability to crisis is something for which Minsky is best known, and the phrase "Minsky moment" refers to this aspect of Minsky's academic work.

"He offered very good insights in the '60s and '70s when linkages between the financial markets and the economy were not as well understood as they are now," said Henry Kaufman, a Wall Street money manager and economist. "He showed us that financial markets could move frequently to excess. And he underscored the importance of the Federal Reserve as a lender of last resort."

Minsky's model of the credit system, which he dubbed the "financial instability hypothesis" (FIH), incorporated many ideas already circulated by John Stuart Mill, Alfred Marshall, Knut Wicksell and Irving Fisher. "A fundamental characteristic of our economy," Minsky wrote in 1974, "is that the financial system swings between robustness and fragility and these swings are an integral part of the process that generates business cycles."

Disagreeing with many mainstream economists of the day, he argued that these swings, and the booms and busts that can accompany them, are inevitable in a so-called free market economy – unless government steps in to control them, through regulation, central bank action and other tools. Such mechanisms did in fact come into existence in response to crises such as the Panic of 1907 and the Great Depression. Minsky opposed the deregulation that characterized the 1980s.

It was at the University of California at Berkeley that seminars attended by Bank of America executives helped him to develop his theories about lending and economic activity, views he laid out in two books, *John Maynard Keynes* (1975), a classic study of the economist and his contributions, and *Stabilizing an Unstable Economy* (1986), and more than a hundred professional articles.

The patrician recognizes that the essence of elegant life, business, and accounting is to have ongoing and ever correcting feedback. The peon claims that The Rules are the Big Issue and will demand that they be stared at and recited and contemplated. In reality, the patrician realizes that regulations relate to just getting things done, and that overall success has the priority.---So the patrician rearranges things at whim, uses any and all regulations as a springboard, and gets things done in the meantime without causing the environment to become unstable.

While this happens, the peon thinks that "breaking the rules" is what will make the peon recognized as important, in an attempt to claim success that the peon will never achieve. Regardless of how loudly the peon screams in opposition, actual regulated capitalism is the system where patricians of all classes expect and plan for the peon and the peon's demands for the worst practice and behavior. In actual patrician focused capitalism, open and transparent accountability at all times is an economic foundation that all patricians expect and benefit from.

The peon also benefits from such transparency and regulation, even while plotting to destroy it and everyone else in the process, because the peon claims such accounting and reason get in the peon's way and must be removed. When carrying out the results of such pointless plotting, the peon just makes a mess of things that some patrician winds up having to clean up, often while irritating the peon who claims "I'm not getting things my way!!!"

The peon despises elegance and quality in all forms, fantasizes that accounting does not exist, and utterly loathes and opposes any form of reality. In turn, when the peon gets to have no regulation, actual patrician focused capitalism does continue regardless of the hatred of the peon. The patrician continues to remain successful as the peon stages one scam or another, and when the peon demonstrates the inevitable failure and the patrician steps in to clean up the mess and again, throw out the peon, all the mess will get cleaned up at the end of the correction, instead of having been filtered out along the way.

## **6. Science and Religion, and mere faith.**

Among the peon fantasies is that just proclaiming something will make it so, claiming that peon superiority Just Is, as if such a demand were a presentation of dogma. The problems is of course that all that the peon can ever present is indeed dogma, as a proclamation of faith. The problem with such a proclamation is that outside of an insane asylum ward, there is no Great and Glorious Savior who will float down from on high and declare the peon to be upper class. If the peon is insistent enough and stamps its little feet hard enough, there still is no one who will whisk the insistent peon off to a glorious paradise where everyone also sings the nursery song about the peon being mistaken for upper class. . .

In turn, I am aware of the theological arguments that make the same claim, that if one sincerely worships or otherwise cites [choose any of the following]---Cthuhlu/Like, Totally, The Universal Goddess/Christ/That Particular Pile Of Cinderblocks Behind The Shed/The Horned One/My Teddy Bear ----, then Everything Will be Just Fine And Reality Will Just Go Away And Never Come Back.

First off, in general, of my personal practice of Buddhism, sometimes called the Buddha-Dharma, as my practice extends somewhat eclectically---and very extremely basically---from Theravada, Tantra, Vipassana, and Zen, I remain very inclined towards total reality and its apprehension and retention.

Secondly, I do have a friend who states that for all of her life from a very young age she has had Jesus Christ come to her, directly and in person, talk to her and sometimes warn her of upcoming upheavals. In her case, as those upheavals do then happen and she passes through them just fine, just as J.C. keeps telling her that she would, then just like me, she too has no faith whatsoever, because she too has her personal direct experience. What she experiences can not be transmitted to another, only told about, but as with the day to day life of the patrician, as opposed to the peon, what another thinks or claims remains irrelevant. Her direct personal experience of J.C. is her practice. Just as she and the rest of us in reality continue on independently of others, we will all remain totally distinct from all occurrences of demands by the peon to be called more than peon, and demanding that we all join it in and with its fantasies . . . . .

### **Science:**

Science is any matter or matters that can be formulated by one person as being certain knowledge, with notes and commentary, which can then get handed off to a second person, whether directly or indirectly, where the second person is able to start with the same basic facts and confirm or arrive at the same results while acting completely independent of the first person. A regular feature of science is the occurrence of two or more completely separate persons arriving at the same conclusions while completely independent of each other, with the same degree of being able to explain and prove those conclusions to any other.

Arguably the highest degree of science is mathematics, where everything is capable of being cross referenced and verified, or is very particularly noted as itself being verifiably unverifiable. Regular occurrences in the history of mathematics are of two or more individuals or groups, working independently and regularly without awareness of each other, all arriving at the same conclusion and then finding out about the work and results of the rest.

### **Religion:**

Religion is any matter or matters which get experienced by one person as being certain knowledge, sometimes with notes and commentary, but which, by the completely personal nature of the experience, can not be transmitted to any other person under any circumstance, except as very tenuous hearsay. A regular feature of religion is the occurrence of two or more completely separate persons encountering the same experience and arriving at the same conclusions, with the same degree of being able to discuss these with another who has had the same encounter or realization, but again, being unable to transmit any of this knowledge to anyone else, even each other.

A major example of religion is Zen, where the understanding is complete and what exactly constitutes the

example is something that is recognized by masters, but getting even masters to explain has issues. That there are facts is agreed upon, but the nature of the facts is unable to be transmitted, only noted as being an occurrence shared by two or more. One attempt to indeed provide a transmissible example is the term in the practice of the Buddhadharma of "thusness" which addresses the concept, but is itself the blanket term which can merely be referred to, rather than explained.

A less esoteric concept which has the same general characteristics is that of balance. A child without balance falls down, where a child that has learned balance learns to walk. The skills of balance continue and are regularly exercised by the many who stand and walk over many years, but in all that time, what is balance? How is it demonstrated, taught, learned, except by personal example and experience? There are mechanical devices which achieve and maintain balance, but while there may be an explanation of "The gyroscope provides stability" how intrinsically does balance work, without being pointed at, saying "That has balance"?

### **Faith:**

Faith is any matter or matters that can be thought up and claimed by one person as being certain knowledge, often with notes and commentary, but which, by its completely personal nature, can not be transmitted to any others under any circumstance, except as very tenuous hearsay. A regular feature of faith is endless and ongoing hairsplitting and the making of all encompassing blanket statements, with much arguing back and forth regarding what this aspect of faith involves, or that aspect, where at no point does any fact ever occur or ever get referenced in this.

The simplest example of faith is called atheism, the statement made that there is no god or gods or any supernatural forces. The demonstration that atheism is faith is simple; Demonstrate as fact, and not merely by absence, that there is no god or gods or supernatural forces. If no such demonstration can be made or led to, then that statement of atheistic faith is, thus, faith with no resemblance or instance of fact. A statement of faith has no truth, for as with Zen and balance, the truth that can not be spoken of in its elusiveness can at least be demonstrated, where faith has no truth and can not even be demonstrated. At the same time, faith is not a lie, for the proof of a lie is itself a negative fact, and thus not faith.

Statements can and are made about faith, and the existence of these statements and actions based upon faith are indeed fact, but faith itself is the practice of that which will never be anything more than random wild hearsay. If at any time whatsoever, faith becomes anything more certain than such wild hearsay, then by definition it ceases to become faith, and moves towards the regions of religion and science---but again, having faith may be fact, but faith itself is the complete and utter lack of any fact whatsoever.

Thus, clearly, the most common demonstrations of faith are any statements that there is a or any god or gods. The most common demonstrations of faith are any statements that a or any god or gods want one or more persons to do something. The most common demonstrations of faith are any statements that after death has occurred, then a or any particular occurrence will occur, be that occurrence any form of heaven, hell, or nonexistence. Additional and equal examples of faith have included the faith and demonstrated non-fact that particular costuming practices such as pulling a collar up on end denotes being stylish rather than tacky and stylized, that spending money that one does not have is considered wise and makes one a member of the upper class, that paying utterly and inflated prices for any number of houses also makes one and one's neighbors wise and of the upper class.

These latter examples also denote and reinforce that faith, by the way, has nothing to do with religion in even the slightest amount or form, for if faith did have any connection whatsoever with religion, there could be such a reality of "religious faith". In actuality and any circumstance, if at any point an individual achieves any degree of certainty, then that person is practicing religion, or, if the certainty can be achieved individually by any person independently by demonstration and logic, then that becomes science. In both such cases, faith has been left behind because in all instances the practice of religion and science are themselves the practice of having no faith whatsoever and remaining that way.

Science is the basis of life and practice, being the calculation of the building of roads and buildings, the

planning of projects, the health and teaching of health, finance, all the regularly created and transmitted matters of interpersonal and impersonal fact.

Religion is the occurrence of untransmissible personal experience, where religious experience can indeed inspire and drive someone to actions or results that can be discussed, but the driving matter can never be shared. No religious experience can be transmitted or shared in any way, or it would be science, but those who have had the same experiences can recognize such in each other, hence the term "Thusness" and other general terms.

Faith, in turn, is the ongoing and total spoiler. There are no facts, but faith claims to be supreme, where clearly faith itself is the absence of any fact whatsoever, but the claim of superiority is a blatant lie in its claim of truth. Faith is the failure to accept reality, is the reliance on non-fact, and often is the reliance on and practice of complete and total lies. Given that clear examples of faith include that there is or is not a or any god and also include that the deliberately financially bankrupt are also economically capable and to be admired, the inclusion of the latter delineates the separation of religion and faith.

With the greatest of certainty, faith, therefore, is not any part whatsoever of a or any religion.

Religious faith is therefore and will always be a total falsehood, and oxymoron. There can be and is religion, and there can be and is faith, but by the nature of each they have always been and will forever remain completely separate and opposite.

## 7. conservative and liberal

As many keep trying to point out, in American politics in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, there are more similarities than differences between the Republican and Democratic parties. I mention this because of a more genuine division within the parties, involving accusations, or rallying cries, depending on the speaker's position, of "conservative" and "liberal".

According to Funk and Wagnall, conservative means;

1. Inclined to preserve the existing order of things; opposed to change. 2. Moderate; cautious; a conservative estimate.

Liberal means;

1. Characterized by or inclining toward opinions or policies favoring progress or reform as in politics or religion. 2. Not intolerant or prejudiced; broad-minded. 3. Characterized by generosity or lavishness in giving. 4. Given or yielded freely or in large quantity; ample. 5. Not literal or strict: a liberal interpretation of the law. 6. Suitable for persons of broad cultural interests: liberal arts.

Classically, i.e., according to popular wit, a conservative is a liberal who has been mugged. More recently, friends of mine added some comments;

A conservative is in favor of limited government, low taxes, and deregulation of business, which will increase the tax base, strengthen the economy, and generate additional taxes.

A liberal is one in favor of raising taxes for programs covering anything from road building to direct welfare cash giveaways, all of such getting money to people quickly

Or,

a conservative favors low taxes, less government, no restraint on business, and stiff penalties for breaking laws

A liberal wants high taxes, large government, regulated business, and easy penalties for breaking laws

There is another rather fascinating exercise that one can play with popular perceptions as they are held in the early twenty-first centuries.

Consider the following concept: Gays/homosexuals/whatever are wrong, immoral, must be eradicated, it's all just a choice, they must be all converted back to being straight, being heterosexual. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or position considered right wing or left?. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or position considered conservative or liberal?

Consider the following concept: Private ownership of guns is wrong, immoral, must be eradicated, guns are evil and unstable and cause deaths of innocent people all the time. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or position considered right wing or left?. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or position considered conservative or liberal?

Now consider a third concept: We're here, we're queer/gay/homosexual, we are extremely and quite comfortably armed and actively ready to defend ourselves and our neighbors, because armed gays---or anyone else---don't get bashed. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or position considered right wing or left?. According to the standards of the early twenty-first century, is such a statement or

position considered conservative or liberal?

Of this third position, have a look online for the term Pink Pistols. To quote from Wikipedia:

The Pink Pistols are a gay gun rights organization in the United States and Canada. Their mottos are "Pick on someone your own caliber" and "Armed gays don't get bashed." Inspired by a Salon.com article written by Jonathan Rauch, Doug Krick, a libertarian activist from Massachusetts, founded the Pink Pistols in July 2000. The organization now has 60 chapters in 33 states and three countries that are principally made up of gun-owning LGBT individuals, though neither status is mandatory for membership.

The political orientation of the Pink Pistols is considered unusual due to the popular perception in the United States of firearms ownership as a "conservative issue" and sexuality as a "liberal issue." However, there is nothing within either of these two single-issues that is mutually exclusive and a variety of other pro-gun organizations exist for groups not typically associated with gun rights (for example the "Democrats for the Second Amendment").

I would like to argue that while the practice can sometimes be detailed, the basic theory is simple. To be conservative, pay your bills and mind your own business. To be liberal, don't pay your bills and mind everyone else's business.

I'll start with taxes, as they involve bills and seem the sensitive point for many. Consulting F&W again;

1. A compulsory contribution levied upon persons, property, or business for the support of government.

Being for or against taxes alone makes sense only as one is for or against government. Taxes, alone, carry no philosophical weight. They must be considered in relation to a budget before they can be evaluated.

Conservative taxation, therefore, prepares a set budget for a particular year and raises enough taxes to pay for it. If one year's expenses wind up generating a deficit, they get added to the next year's budget until the deficit is paid off.

I realize that this may not be popular with some people. After their 12 years of gouging taxes, inflating budgets, and staging press conferences, it must be embarrassing to realize that both Ronald Reagan and George Bush and their supporters are hard-core, card-carrying liberals. The single issue of the presidential election of 1984---and 1988, and 1992, was the American national debt. When Walter Mondale stood up on television during a 1984 national debate and said "Hello, America, I'm going to raise your taxes.", I cheered. I'm not in favor of higher taxes, I'm in favor of lower debt. To say that the government owes money is a matter of accounting semantics. As a citizen, meaning, owner, that is my money that is out there, and I don't like it.

To cover the virtues of minding one's own business, another issue which seems to be popular is immigration. A popular theory is that the first people to arrive and make lives for themselves are the only people who have a say over whoever else can come in. According to this theory, the United States is not and never has been a Christian nation, or even a white one. As they first sighted their respective chunks of North American, or nearby, Eric the Viking, St. Brendan the Irish monk, and Christopher Columbus the lost Italian mercenary should have been turned around or otherwise sunk like a rock, leaving the western hemisphere to its first arrived, Asiatic origin, inhabitants.

The current right wing liberal argument is that the United States is indeed a white Christian nation, always has been, always will be, and must be kept that way. Obviously, the original "has been" doesn't work. As for a later try, the United States of America is the result of the constitutional convention of 1789. Said resulting constitution and accompanying bill of rights states unequivocally that :

" Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free



exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

There has never been any doubt that where individuals in America may and do have their practice of religion, and also by contrast, may and do have their faith, the United States as an entity is agnostic and has absolutely no practice of faith or religion. As for assorted forms of immigration, following the original Native Americans, New York had the Dutch, Florida and Louisiana got the Spanish and French, the Carolina's, as I recall, got a lot of Scots, and there were a lot of Blacks scattered across the south. Americans are not "pure" anything, except American, and never will be.

Over time, the general philosophy developed that America is "the new world", welcoming of immigrants who will come to make new lives, etc. etc. The formal version of this can be seen in New York harbor, courtesy of a poet named Emma Lazarus. At no time has this general philosophy read "give us your (white, preferably not) poor, your huddled masses, yearning to breathe free . . ."

A classic definition of a social climbing snob is one who achieves a solely self-valued elevation who then snubs anyone just below. To object to further immigration just because someone is yellow or brown or black---and above all, recent--- makes no sense whatsoever. A genuine, honest conservative realizes and accepts that as his people came in, others must also, and that the single objection to the arrival of those yearning to breathe free is the analogy that a fifty person room cannot hold fifty-two people. I'm not a population expert, but I'm not convinced we have even forty-nine.

To cover both minding your own business and paying the bills, there is the matter of various forms of welfare, covering anything from food stamps to education to health care. Overall, such programs are forms of safety nets. The right wing liberal, i.e. extremist, reaction has always been "If they're poor, it's their problem. I'm only here for my own interests. I deserve it all, give it to me, now!" In turn, the left wing liberal, i.e. equally extremist, reaction has been "If I don't have something someone else does, I'm oppressed. I'm only here for my own interests. I deserve it all, give it to me, now!"

Of both of the liberal wings, there really is no point in claiming that only the left wing liberal extremists are the liberals, and that the right wing liberal extremists are actually the conservatives. There is equally no point in claiming that conservatives, being the mainstream, are actually to be cursed and despised for being "moderate" or "pragmatic". As has always been obvious, there really is no such existence to "moderate" or "pragmatic" in politics, there is and will remain only the conservative who works equally between the two liberal extremes.

Once upon a time there was indeed the classical liberal and the cry that the will of the individual is supreme, is not questioned, and there are no alternatives. Once upon a time the term conservative did have a meaning of right wing, the old guard, the supporters of the way we do things because they work the best, and there are no alternatives.

By the industrial revolution, the liberals had split in two. The left wing liberal claims that the will of the individual person is supreme, is not questioned, and there are no alternatives. The right wing liberal claims that will of the individual organization is supreme, is not questioned, and there are no alternatives. Both liberals get very pissy when reminded that the individual remains a variable and there are others besides themselves.

Back in that time that no longer exists, when conservative did once mean right wing, in such a sense those best ways did work for the most. Changing just to make changes did indeed lead to failure. With the new and different demand of the right wing liberal that the organization must always take precedence over the individual, this now shows that the right wing does not reason, does not calculate, does not conserve, and thus the right wing is not and will never be known as conservative.

With the clear demonstration of the right wing liberal nature and practice and absolute failure, all claims that the right wing is called conservative now only come from the ignorant, the illiterate, the inept, and the cowardly. For the actual conservative, to accept and acknowledge the total and complete contrast between the conservative and

the right wing is just as natural and truthful and accurate and blatantly evident as noting the equal contrast with the other group of agenda ridden liberals that make up the left wing.

There is no Third Way of politics, there is only The Way. The conservative supports and includes everyone, from the center of the political road all the way past both the right and left wing liberal edges of the road, so as to know, to understand, to best help and support every individual. Only the liberal demands that those who cartwheel and crash off the opposing edge of the road must be left to die.

Politically moderate is a liberal fantasy, is the liberal's crude rationalization for the ongoing and perpetual liberal failure to keep and control all the toys. The "accusation" by liberals that the conservative is "pragmatic" is merely the rallying cry of the ideologically pure, the tactically inept, the inevitable failure. The right and left wing liberal is pure, the conservative succeeds, leads, and commands.

At all times the conservative welcomes attention and discussion, for only that way does refinement and evolution and progress occur. At all times the liberal extreme points past the conservative to the other and opposing extreme, for in that way does the liberal attempt to deflect the self examination and improvement that will inevitably move the liberal away from the right or left wing and expand the liberal edge and excess to the all encompassing conservative center.

The conservative realizes that it's a big social universe, yes, but it is a limited one. The conservative realizes that there are people who would like to improve their situations, but can't, as an example, through lack of money for schooling of some sort, or even schooling of some sort. These problems can be proven and solved for those genuinely in need. Including the variations in need, and recognizing that there must be a support for such, who is to say that if, in turn, the safety nets are torn out for pillage, and those who truly need them fall, the rest of us will not follow?

Aside from the left wing liberal's argument that entitlements cannot be questioned, the counterargument of the thinking right wing liberal is that those who need a net like it that way, that they won't change, that this sort of thing "just encourages more". What both ultimately have in mind is best embodied in G.B. Shaw's "undeserving poor" from his play *Pygmalion*; As Shaw's character Alfred Doolittle puts it:

. . . I'm one of the undeserving poor . . . If there's anything going, . . . it's always the same story: "you're undeserving; so you can't have it." But my needs is as great as the most deserving widow's that ever got money out of six different charities in one week for the death of the same husband. . . . I ain't pretending to be deserving. I'm undeserving; and I mean to go on being undeserving. I like it; and that's the truth . . .

Right wing or left, what the liberal would like all of us to forget is the widow. Undeserving is a modifier of the word poor. Only the liberal claims undeserving is a substitute for the word poor.

Shaw, born in Ireland in 1856, living in England from his teens, was present in England at about that time that the liberals split into their current extremist positions. Another who was present at that time, Benjamin Disraeli, also got accused of being "pragmatic" as he served and then led his country, and in 1907 an assistant of his, John Gost, outlined in a letter the true nature of conservatism. I add [as such] only to move his definition across the Atlantic and to the United States, and aside from that, the facts that Gost outlines are unchanged.

The principle of Tory [Conservative] democracy is that all government exists solely for the good of the governed; that Church and King, Lords and Commons [the branches of government], and all other public institutions are to be maintained so far, and so far only, as they promote the happiness and welfare of the common people; that all who are entrusted with any public function are trustees, not for their own class, but for the nation at large; and that the mass of the people may be trusted so to use electoral power, which should be freely conceded to them, as to support those who are promoting their interests. It is democratic because the welfare of the people is its supreme

end; it is Tory [Conservative] because the institutions of the country are the means by which the end is to be attained.

Remember the widow.

Mind your own business.

Pay your bills.

## 8. On Film, Tasteless Fad, And Fashion, Or, How the Nineteen-Empties became the undoubted, bar nothing, butt-ugliest decade of the entire twentieth century

Once upon a time, someone asked a question of a mailing list . . . .

Soon after, there was an answer . . . . .

At 19:19 1/5/2003, Someone lit a fuse with:

>who the fuck ever thought that loafers without socks was a good fucking idea?

These would be the people who are genuinely accustomed to wandering around on the sometimes soaking wet deck of a small power or sailboat, where having socks on as well just leaves you with perpetually soggy wet feet . . .

Of course, as anyone who is sane or possessing of taste will do, once off the boat one takes the loafers Off, leaving them on the boat for the next use, and at that point, one then puts one's socks and land use sneakers or boots back on *before* leaving the dock area.

>Probably the same ppl that thought giving Debbie Gibson a recording contract was a good idea too.

Well, now Those entities would indeed be the preppy/yuppy types spawned by the joke book---ie, it was always *Only* found in the humor section of a bookstore---called "The Preppy Handbook" . . . Seeing as PYs have no sense of humor and even less of a clue, when they got a hint that someone Might be stupid enough to mistake the pretentious as being anything more than the dregs of one class or another, that time is when the rest of us then found ourselves surrounded by the undoubted, bar nothing, butt-ugliest decade of the entire twentieth century . . . with shoulder seams at the elbows, necklines that started at the nipples, waistlines dragging down to the knees . . . Football pads piled on football pads piled on football pads, like dude, Look at me, I'm Being Seen Wearing a Tie!!! . . . the baggy, pleated pants which are best remembered as "that fat people's clothing", Etc.

That bit about all the costuming---not clothing, Butt Ugly Costuming---that Might have looked like retreads of the 1930s and 1940s? Now That would be from the summer of 1981, where a couple of geniuses named Spielberg and Lucas wanted to remake the adventure serials that they grew up on, and made "Raiders Of The Lost Ark", the first Indiana Jones movie . . . Which is a *Damned* good movie, and is set in 1936, so of course all the actors are dressed as if they were running about in the 1930s . . .

On The Other Hand, on the amateur and no taste or talent end of the screen, by the fall of 1981, as I recall there were *Three* television series that involved someone in a fedora and leather jacket running around in jungles for the few short weeks before at least two, if not all, got cancelled for lack of inspiration or having a point . . . following such cancellations, however, it was out on the sidewalks when one then started seeing 1) bomber jackets on non-1930s sidewalks, where the actual bomber jackets are what were worn by ROTLA era bomber and fighter pilots as a solution to some of the cockpit atmospheric conditions they were having to deal with, 2) Gee, after awhile, like 30 or 40 years, any such original jacket is going to look really beaten up and tattered, so Of Course one that is brand new is going to look the same(???!!!!!!!), so of course 3) all of the '80s knockoffs wound up getting made to look like they'd been dragged through a gravel pit on the way out of that closet, with non '30s and '40s detailing and design to boot, thus screaming to all that the wearer is a clueless and pretentious git that would like to fantasize that he/she/it is capable of being mistaken for having taste and being successful . . . and 4) By The Way, big surprise, this exact time is exactly when the first Bananna Republic stores open, solely because the P.T. Barnums of the age had indeed noticed the interest in ROTLA "inspired" Stuff and because the "preppie" spasm had already irrevocably demonstrated that PYs Are indeed just stupid and numerous enough to fall for all this and make it profitable . . .

Oh, all those football pads? Now That would have been from 1980's "American Gigolo", with Richard Gere dressed up as a bus, where a whole bunch of movie viewers followed, uh, suit, where the ROTLA fads wound up

segueing Right into that and continuing on downhill with even more pretentiousness to boot. After all, why face the reality of being that clueless when even the latest political and economic headlines were Emphatically proclaiming "Increase Spending!!! Cut Taxes!!! Budget??? *What* Budget??!!!" So yes, the early PYs found it Much easier to claim that they should be considered to be stylish and have a clue, and after dear old Reagan proclaimed it was Morning In America, Oh Boy could we see the morning after hangover on the sidewalks after that . . .

In turn, after several centuries of having a clue regarding how to put clothing together, *How* did we wind up watching the totally distorted and warped seams on what has been ludicrously proclaimed to be clothing? That would be from 1983 and watching a woman named Jennifer Beals while she was in a Very lightweight movie called *Flashdance*. In *Flashdance*, Beals' character regularly went about in sweatshirts at least three or four sizes too large, with the neck facing deliberately ripped out, leaving garments which are Always going to be sagging here, there, and everywhere, solely because of the size differentiation *And Not Because They Are Designed And Made That Way* . . . only again, those on the viewing side of the screen had *Serious* comprehension problems, and so the same sidewalks began to also start seeing what became formally known as "unconstructed" clothing . . . In recent years, style has finally been coming back after the long darkness of the nineteen empties---err, eighties---and from what I've seen, Giorgio Armani's company seems to have indeed finally started producing clothing. However, for entirely too long, that phrase of "unconstructed" was simply the universal and despairing code word stating that *Unconstructed means that this extremely overpriced assemblage of cheap looking fabric is guaranteed to never fit and always look totally tacky no matter What size you get it in, so don't even Try to find wearable clothing these days unless you have your own private tailor.*

By 1986 and the Peter Wang movie "A Great Wall", the entirety of the clueless, pretentious, brainless masses of the 1980s were summed up in just two lines, without any need whatsoever for distortion or exaggeration. As a lack of response, from mangled hair to "vertical food" to SUVs, at no time whatsoever have *Any* of said losers and their lack of any culture whatsoever been able to even begin to offer any sort of any rebuttal. In "A Great Wall", an uncle in asks his daughter just what *Is* the costume being worn by his visiting, American born nephew? As she had been wondering that herself, and had already asked him the same question, from exactly the same bewilderment, she repeats the nephew's answer; "That's 'Style'!"

The uncle grunts and then continues, as best as I can recall, with;

"My nephew's jacket is made of burlap, and he's wearing castoff army pants. If that's the best my brother-in-law can do to dress his own son, he must be pretty bad off."

The uncle then asks his daughter if she thinks their cousins need a donation of the uncle's old Communist China, People's Army uniform.

Soooooo . . . with a decade that started with the pretentious claiming that "deck shoes" must be seen on sidewalks without socks, and then claiming from there that such who are naive enough to fall for that Must be considered to be upper class and Obvious Leaders of Society, were or are they such leaders? Uh, well, no . . . Of course not.

Think about it . . . A man, or woman, takes up plumbing or carpentry, and is Really Good at it and keeps being really good at it and is thus able to choose just about any job at will and charge fees to match the skills. In time, such a person doesn't even need to state "I am a Master and you will acknowledge that", such a level of respect Just Is, anyone of importance will recognize this, and anyone stupid enough to claim otherwise is an idiot, can be ignored, and is guaranteed to fail anyway. Such a master is the height of the working classes, always has been, and always will be.

Exactly in turn, a man or woman takes up accounting or computer programming, and is really good at it, and, in exactly the same manner, working with brain cells the way a carpenter or plumber works with tools, this master is the height of the middle classes, always has been, and always will be.

On The Other Hand, since the beginning of the 'Empties, we have been deluged in reality and in the media with masses of stereotypical PYs and rappers all screaming that They Are The Best, See The Costume, See The Jewels, See The Fine Wines, I Am Important, See The Jewelry, I Demand Respect From Everybody, See The House On Long Island, Get Out Of My Way, I Am Seen Being Seen In Expensive Nightclubs, Look At All My Money, Gimme Gimme Gimme, . . . .

Um.

Dudes, if you were the least bit capable of any of that, whether PY Or rapper, you would just reach out and receive whatever you might want or need. You never need to scream for something you already have. Actual masters just get what they want, without a fuss. That's how and why they are masters. Wannabes, losers, posers, can only paw for something they have been told will make other people think they might be seen as important.

Have you ever noticed that both these PYs and rappers are all wearing the same costuming with the same labels that are all required to be on the *outside* of the costuming, instead of quietly and with assurance being on the inside, as occurs with clothing? Consider costuming; A big heavy duty coat, boots and protective hat, and you are seeing a firefighter. A pastel outfit with simple pockets and mebbe a mask, and you are seeing a medical worker. Baggy, pleated pants that really don't fit, funny looking shoes, any of a variety of really bad hair, and sometimes Still with a collar that has gone up on end, and you are seeing a circus clown. Or a standard, witless, posing PY or rapper, where a firefighter can fight fires and save lives, and a medical worker can fight disease and save lives, and all that the posers ever do is babble as loudly as possible about how obviously important they are and how obviously everyone else sees them being important . . . .

Babble Very loudly at that.

As noted, they were and are completely the opposite of masters.

Recently someone commented to me about someone she knows who got his B.A. from , and then also got an M.A. or Ph.D from Harvard as well, and he went to Harvard, and he does whatever he does now, after going to Harvard, and so forth, and did he tell you that he went to Harvard? Yeah . . . and does Harvard University Really Like someone clearly being so insecure about what he thinks people should think of him that he comes off as being an insecure, pretentious twit who, by the way, went to Harvard?

Masters don't babble, masters don't loudly claim they are so important, masters don't worry about what they are seen doing or who does or does not see them doing anything. Masters just Do things, and don't have any personal need to talk about what they do. These PYs and such, thus, obviously aren't masters, aren't capable of anything, except being loud, tacky and incompetent. They aren't upper class. They aren't even upper middle class.

Who is the type to fall for the idea of "deck shoes" without socks, to think that people will be impressed by someone with a mass of garish jewelry? The Bottom of the classes, not the top. At the lowest of the middle classes are the "Professionals" allegedly driving their urban only jeep, then it was the BMW or Volvo, now SUV. At the lowest of the working classes are the "Being Real" wannabe (seen as) thugs . . . As Aaron McGruder noted recently in his quite excellent comic strip "The Boondocks", wouldn't it be great if every rapper who claimed to have beaten up or murdered someone, raped a woman, robbed someone, actually did genuine prison time for the claimed crime, instead of just being just another typical, failed, poser with a microphone? In the same vein, wouldn't it be great if more people actually went to some restaurant, some show, had some wine or cheese, Only because they actually wanted to, instead of in the hopes that someone would be impressed, and, by the way, also getting in all of our faces and wasting our time and energy to show that they have to be seen doing this?

Being of one class or another is Just a detail. It's Just a description, where at least in and some other places, one may genuinely decide who one wants to be . . . But at the same time, when these . . . Types . . . the ones who make and keep themselves the utter Lowest of their class start their screaming, embezzle from the employee retirement funds, demand the shiny jewelry, stage insider stock trades, look at me, gimme that credit card, all they are doing for

the rest of us is taking up our time, making us pay for their messes, making us note that yes indeed, all they are is the lost, the losers, the pretentious, the product and definition of the 1980s . . . .

>jeebus, the 80's. Perms, jelly shoes and glam rock, oh my!

Oh my, indeed.

## 9. Tea

I'm of Scottish descent and spent roughly ages four through seven in East Asia, mostly in Taiwan. With my sets of cultural backgrounds, but mainly by preference, I drink a lot of tea. I did try coffee for one high school semester of a rather overscheduled project, and at the end, blissfully took my rather annoyed taste buds back to the normality of leaf and kettle.

The peon, on an other hand, has absolutely no idea what any of that means, from actually living in a different location to actually being familiar with any of the day to day aspects of any culture. The ongoing peon fantasy is to claim to having culture, which in the case of the peon immediately reminds one of a refrigerator with fuzzy colored moving things on the back shelves.

The concept of tea remains one such area of totally error and bewilderment for the peon, particularly the American peon. The peon fantasy has arisen of an event called The Tea, an event that one takes part in to demonstrate one being a very evident member of the upper classes, as the upper classes do The Tea, and so anyone who does The Tea must also therefore be acknowledged as part of the upper classes. In the process of The Tea, various edible things such as assorted small sandwiches with obscure recipes are made available under excruciatingly convoluted circumstances and a lot of porcelain. Actual tea, the drink, does turn up, but also winds up as just one of the ingredients involving a lot of sugar, cream, and whatever else gets poured into some of the accompanying array of porcelain. And so forth. As usual, the peon remains typically irked when just the mention to a patrician of The Tea leaves the patrician very amused and the peon revealed to be a peon.

Out here in reality, tea as a drink is a drink, with leaves, hot water, and a container for the tea. Tea as anything else will be a mid to later afternoon snack or meal. The origin of this meal started with a schedule of having a noon or so meal tending to be called lunch, with an evening meal called dinner or supper. Since the evening meal would tend to be sometime in the evening, around eight, nine, or so, by three, four, five, in the afternoon, people on such a schedule get hungry and start looking for the next snack, and such is the origin of tea. In the instance of being called tea, such would come from a culture that drinks a lot of tea. At the same time, while tea the drink can thus get served as a part of tea the meal, the main emphasis for the meal remains the very non peon reality of simply and matter of factly getting fed with a minimum of stupidity and posturing, or better yet, no peon stupidity or posturing at all.

Michael Quinion is a commentator on English, and the English, where his About Me page online at <http://www.worldwidewords.org/personal.htm> states:

These days, Michael concentrates on World Wide Words and on providing citations and advice for the Oxford English Dictionary. He also wrote a third of the entries for the second edition of the Oxford Dictionary of New Words and compiled a weekly New Words column in the Daily Telegraph.

In 2007, someone wrote to him regarding confusion referring to tea. Quinion's reply can be found at <http://www.worldwidewords.org/qa/qa-spo3.htm>

Q From Gary Mason: In a recent letter to the editor in the Tucson daily newspaper, the writer claimed that spot of tea is an Americanism. Though he was born and bred in England, he had heard only Americans using the phrase and that the British would say cuppa instead. I asked a British friend about the letter and he said that spot of tea is used in Britain, but that it doesn't mean having a cup of tea, but to having tea with food. Would you discuss this in your newsletter?

A It depends on who you are, where you are, how old you are, and even what you mean by tea.



The phrase a spot of tea is certainly known in the UK as well as the US — the letter writer is wrong to suggest it isn't used this side of the Atlantic — though it sounds old-fashioned to me, being more my parents' generation than mine. British newspapers include enough examples to show that it's still about, though not to anything like the same extent as in the US. Some dictionaries report it's mainly a British expression, but the written evidence shows the balance has tilted heavily towards the US in recent decades. Quite why Americans have taken it to their collective bosoms isn't clear, though it does seem to be used very often in a tongue-in-cheek manner, as a mock-serious way of affecting to be British about consuming the drink.

By spot of tea, Americans usually mean a cup of tea by itself. It can have that meaning in the UK, but not by any means always. Your friend is right to say that it's frequently connected with food. That's because tea in Britain can refer to a meal. Which meal depends to some extent on where you live, but much more importantly on your social class.

In middle- or upper-class circles and in parts of southern Britain tea is in full afternoon tea, a light refreshment around 4pm that includes sandwiches and cakes as well as a nice cup of tea. It's not so often encountered now. Its image is of a Wodehousian country-house meal for the leisured upper classes, whose most characteristic component is thin cucumber sandwiches with the crusts cut off. It's now often the preserve of posh hotels and traditional tea shops.

In northern parts of the UK (my geography is hand-wavingly broad-brush) and throughout most of Britain among working-class families, tea refers to a cooked evening meal, one that middle-class families may instead call dinner or supper (tea as the term for this meal has also been taken to Australia and New Zealand).

At the risk of further confusing you, there's also high tea, eaten in the late afternoon or early evening; this is a cross between dinner and afternoon tea, typically consisting of a cooked dish or cold meat or fish (the definition in the Oxford English Dictionary, written a century ago, says "a tea at which meat is served"; in my family when I was young, just after the Second World War, the highlight was tinned salmon) together with sandwiches and cake. Americans often get the idea wrong, thinking that high in the name means "high-class", whereas it's more of a working-class meal and high refers to its complexity or formality. Nancy Mitford had a character describe one variety in *The Blessing*:

It's tea, you know, with cocoa and scones and eggs if you've got hens, and bacon if you've killed a pig and Bovril and kippers, and you have it late for tea, about six.

A drink of tea may be consumed with either type of meal, but as you may tell from Ms Mitford's description, it's not an essential accompaniment.

So spot of tea can refer to just a drink of tea or to a drink of tea with food, or even certain meals without the drink. It depends on where you are, who you are, the social situation, and the time of day. The meal sense turned up in an aside in the *People* newspaper in November 2006: "Six journalists were enjoying a spot of tea — that's dinner to the more well-to-do among you." Note the inverted snobbery: for southerners to call the meal tea is to be lower-class.

Incidentally, the spot part, long since fossilised into a fixed phrase, is an eighteenth-century slangy term that means a small amount or a little bit; it's the source of several other British usages, such as the outmoded spot for a small alcoholic drink and more widely known expressions like a spot of bother and a spot of rain, plus the contracted in a spot, meaning that the speaker has some problem or is in trouble.

Fox also comments on tea, and notes that there is the drink, and there is the meal.

Timing and Linguistic Indicators Dinner/Tea/Supper Rules What do you call your evening meal? And at what time do you eat it?

If you call it 'tea', and eat it at around half past six, you are almost certainly working class or of working-class origin. (If you have a tendency to personalize the meal, calling it 'my tea', 'our/us tea' and 'your tea' – as in 'I must be going home for my tea', 'What's for us tea, love?' or 'Come back to mine for your tea' – you are probably northern working class.)

If you call the evening meal 'dinner', and eat it at around seven o'clock, you are probably lower-middle or middle-middle.

If you normally only use the term 'dinner' for rather more formal evening meals, and call your informal, family evening meal 'supper' (pronounced 'suppah'), you are probably upper-middle or upper class. The timing of these meals tends to be more flexible, but a family 'supper' is generally eaten at around half-past seven, while a 'dinner' would usually be later, from half past eight onwards.

To everyone but the working classes, 'tea' is a light meal taken at around four o'clock in the afternoon, and consists of tea (the drink) with cakes, scones, jam, biscuits and perhaps little sandwiches – traditionally including cucumber sandwiches – with the crusts cut off. The working classes call this 'afternoon tea', to distinguish it from the evening 'tea' that the rest call supper or dinner.

Note the differences in the late afternoon meal variety, but that in both cases, the patrician is getting something done---having something to eat---and that only the peon claims the unnecessary labeling and the hope that another might be impressed.

### **Lunch/Dinner Rules**

The timing of lunch is not a class indicator, as almost everyone has lunch at around one o'clock. The only class indicator is what you call this meal: if you call it 'dinner', you are working class; everyone else, from the lower- middles upwards, calls it 'lunch'. People who say 'd'lunch' – which Jilly Cooper notes has a slightly West Indian sound to it – are trying to conceal their working-class origins, remembering at the last second not to call it 'dinner'. (They may also say 't'dinner' – which confusingly sounds a bit Yorkshire – for the evening meal, just stopping themselves from calling it 'tea'.) Whatever their class, and whatever they may call it, the English do not take the middle-of-the-day meal at all seriously: most make do with a sandwich or some other quick, easy, single-dish meal. . . .

### **Breakfast Rules – and Tea Beliefs**

The traditional English breakfast – tea, toast, marmalade, eggs, bacon, sausages, tomatoes, mushrooms, etc. – is both good and filling, and breakfast is the only aspect of English cooking that is frequently and enthusiastically praised by foreigners. Few of us eat this 'full English breakfast' regularly, however: foreign tourists staying in hotels get far more traditional breakfasts than we natives ever enjoy at home.

The tradition is maintained more at the top and bottom of the social scale than among the middle ranks. Some members of the upper class and aristocracy still have proper English breakfasts in their country houses, and some working-class people (mostly males) still believe in starting the day with a 'cooked breakfast' of bacon, eggs, sausages, baked beans, fried bread, toast and so on. This feast may often be eaten in a 'caff' rather than at home, and is washed down with in-

dustrial quantities of strong, brick-coloured, sweet, milky tea. Lower-middles and middle-middles drink a paler, 'posher' version, Twining's English Breakfast, say, rather than PG Tips. The upper-middle and upper classes drink weak, dishwasher-coloured, unsweetened Earl Grey. Taking sugar in your tea is regarded by many as an infallible lower-class indicator: even one spoonful is a bit suspect (unless you were born before about 1955); more than one and you are lower-middle at best; more than two and you are definitely working class. Putting the milk into the cup first is also a lower-class habit, as is over-vigorous, noisy stirring. Some pretentious middles and upper-middles make an ostentatious point of drinking Lapsang Souchong, without milk or sugar, as this is about as far removed from working-class tea as they can get. More honest (or less class-anxious) upper-middles and uppers often admit to a secret liking for the strong, rust-coloured 'builders' tea'. How snooty you are about 'builders' tea', and how careful you are to avoid it, is quite a good class-anxiety test.

At one point I helped with a documentary being done about an avant garde theatre project. Each evening as everyone showed up at the hotel that the show was staged at, the assorted actors would do their preparations and get into place, and I and the theatre director's husband would go about assembling the cameras and lights needed for that evening's recording of the show.

One evening as I was collecting assorted lenses, microphones, whatever, I headed into the main storeroom and found the extremely very native English assistant director. Following my appearance and as I went digging through assorted boxes for assorted items, he casually held up a can of Coca-Cola in one hand and a burrito half wrapped in aluminum foil in the other. That very English gentleman then quite casually announced "Don't mind me, I'm having tea."

For a concurring example of exactly these facts, there is a story that floats up here and there, usually after some aspects of some practices in Scotland turn up, or when the references are far less refined, while discussing any maneuvering related to getting the Olympics Games to appear in one's chosen city. As an example of reality vs what the peon would like to fantasize, actual tea is cited in the last of the excerpted section below.

### **Glasgow to Host Olympics**

In an attempt to influence the members of the international Olympic Committee on their choice of venue for the games the organisers of Glasgow's bid have drawn up an itinerary and schedule of events. A copy has been leaked and is reproduced below.

**Opening Ceremony** - The Olympic flame will be ignited by a petrol bomb thrown by a native of the city (preferably from the Easterhouse area), wearing the traditional costume of shell suit, baseball cap and balaclava mask. It will burn for the duration of the games in a large chip van situated on the roof of the stadium.

**The Events** - In previous Olympic games, Scotland's competitors have not been particularly successful. In order to redress the balance, some of the events have been altered slightly to the advantage of local athletes:

**100 Metres Sprint**- Competitors will have to hold a video recorder and microwave oven(one in each arm) and on the sound of the starting pistol, a police dog will be released from a cage 10 yards behind the athletes.

**100 Metres Hurdle** - As above but with added obstacles (ie. car bonnets, hedges, garden fences, walls etc.)

**Hammer** - Competitors may choose the type of hammer they wish to use (claw, sledge, etc) the winner will be the one who can cause the most grievous bodily harm to members of the public

within the time allowed.

**Fencing** - Entrants will be asked to dispose of as much stolen silver and jewelry as possible in 5 minutes

**Shooting** - A strong challenge is expected from the local men in this event. The first target will be a moving police car, the next a post office van and then a Securicor wages vehicle.

**Boxing** - Entry to the boxing will be restricted to husband and wife teams, and will take place on a Friday night. The husband will be given 15 pints of Tennents lager while the wife will be told not to make him any tea when he gets home. The bout will then commence.

No doubt of the peon fantasy of The Tea, any time that the reality occurs, all that porcelain in the peon fantasy would be excellent for throwing at one's opponent.

As another demonstration of reality as opposed to what a peon would prefer, there is also the tea ceremony as practiced in Japan,

Culling from Wikipedia and whatever source that article came from;

Tea ceremony developed as a "transformative practice", and began to evolve its own aesthetic, in particular that of wabi. *Wabi*, meaning quiet or sober refinement, or subdued taste, "is characterized by humility, restraint, simplicity, naturalism, profundity, imperfection, and asymmetry [emphasizing] simple, unadorned objects and architectural space, and [celebrating] the mellow beauty that time and care impart to materials."

In short, and again as differentiated from The Tea of the peon, the Japanese tea ceremony particularity features absolutely none of the peon's beloved posturing.

As always, the main point of tea is that the main point is not tea. I drink tea because I like tea and have tea around because I like tea. A different patrician collects stamps, another reads Shakespeare in the original Klingon, and yet another collects examples of embroidery, and in no instance is any concern of such whether someone else is watching or even cares.

## 10. Al Grey, By Thomas Ricks

In 1998, a book by Thomas Ricks called *Making The Corps* was published, and in 2007 the 10 year anniversary edition was published with a new afterword.

From the back cover:

The United States Marine Corps, with its proud tradition of excellence in combat, its hallowed rituals, and its unbending code of honor, is part of the fabric of American myth. *Making the Corps* visits the front lines of boot camp in Parris Island, South Carolina. Here, old values are stripped away and new Marine Corps values are forged. Bestselling author Thomas E. Ricks follows these men from their hometowns, through boot camp and into their first year as Marines. As three fierce drill instructors fight a battle for the hearts and minds of this unforgettable group of young men, a larger picture emerges, brilliantly painted, of the growing gulf that divides the military from the rest of America. Included in this edition is an all-new afterword from the author that examines the war in Iraq through the lens of the Marines from Platoon 3086, giving readers an on-the-ground view of the conflict from those who know it best

The book follows the recruits, drill instructor Sgt. Darren Carey, his fellow drill instructors, and some others, through training and into the rest of the Corps. Interlaced with the descriptions of the recruit training are sections that discuss Marine history, overall Marine command decisions, general history, and persons involved in some of the more recent decisions. One such person is Jim Webb, who was US Secretary of the Navy from mid 1987 to early 1988. Among the topics that Ricks comments on in his book is the late twentieth century US Marine senior leadership, and very specifically, Al Gray, the twenty-ninth commandant of the Marine Corps.

. . . just what was the post-Vietnam role of the Marines? Some defense intellectuals argued that there really was none.

Most of all, hugely looming over the Corps like a wrecking ball there was "Beirut." To Marines, that word means one thing—an event largely forgotten by the rest of America that looms in the collective memory of today's Corps perhaps as large as the Vietnam War. On October 23, 1983, a terrorist drove a truck laden with TNT into a building full of Marines executing a hazy peace-keeping mission. Some 241 Marines and other American soldiers died in the bombing attack, marking one of the worst days of the history of the Corps. To make matters worse, Gen. P. X. Kelley, then the commandant, sent a shudder through the Corps when he testified before Congress that he was out of the chain of command on the Beirut mission and so not responsible. Though in fact an accurate statement—the service chiefs don't have operational control of deployed troops—the newspaper accounts of his testimony made him look cold, as if the leader of the Corps wasn't watching the backs of his men in the field. Was the commandant someone you'd want on your flank?

"Critics of the Corps say it suffers from a lack of leadership at the top," reported Time magazine in an April 1987 piece typical of the scathing reviews the Marines were collecting that year.

"The Marine Corps was really reeling," Webb remembers. In his long conversations with the admirals and generals in the winter of '86 and the spring of '87, one Marine officer struck Webb as understanding the Corps' malaise. Webb had known Al Gray since 1984, when as a Pentagon official for reserve affairs he had gone to watch a Marine reserve brigade perform an amphibious landing. Marine aides had tried to corral Webb, provide him with an escort, keep him on the beach. Instead, Webb went aboard ship the night before and landed in a Light Armored Vehicle, ordering it to charge across the beach past Webb's designated keeper. "Finally, around noon, I surrendered," he recalls, and went to lunch with General Gray, notorious for just the same sort of get-with-the-troops antics.

The soul-searching conversations in the winter of '86 to '87 struck Webb. "I brought Al Gray back three times, not to interview him for commandant, but because he had such a grasp on the spiritual problems of the Corps."

Among the problems, Webb thought, was the current commandant, General Kelley. "After Beirut," Webb argues, "P.X. Kelley basically killed off many of the real combat leaders of the Marine Corps," mainly, Webb further argues, because he resented their critiques of his handling of the incident. "The people around Kelley hadn't made their reputations as combat leaders. The man he wanted to be commandant had been forced for medical reasons to turn down command of an aviation squadron in combat. In the two years before I became Secretary of the Navy, they had turned down nine [winners of] Navy Crosses and two [winners of] Medals of Honor for {promotion to} brigadier general." (Gen. Kelley responds, "I don't know who he's talking about. I think that's an outrageous statement.")

Gray, a fifty-eight-year-old ex-sergeant on the cusp of retirement, struck Webb as the general most likely to "make Marines feel like the Marines again." In May, Webb set up a secret meeting with General Gray in Jacksonville, Florida, to ask him to become commandant. A native of New Jersey who dropped out of Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania, and enlisted in the Marines in 1950, Gray fought in Korea and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Throughout his career he seemed to be a person the Marines turned to with tough jobs. He was one of the first Marines on the ground in Vietnam, going there in 1962 for special operations work. ("We really don't talk too much about those tours," he says, declining to elaborate.) He also was one of the last, commanding the Marine ground troops in the evacuation of Saigon in April 1975. As the Marines assigned to the U.S. embassy collapsed their defensive perimeter toward the helipad on the embassy roof, Gray directed the placement of demolition charges in the defense attaché's office at Tan Son Nhut Airport. A few years later, as a division commander, he once "secretly arranged for a unit of the 82nd Airborne to make a parachute landing in the rear of one of his own battalions and attack it," noted military analyst William S. Lind. "The result was good training."

One thing the barrel-chested, tobacco-chewing general didn't have was a college degree, but that didn't bother Webb. "He knew how to fight, he knew how to lead, and he knew how to remember," Webb says from his office overlooking the Iwo Jima Memorial. Those were the three characteristics Webb believed were essential for anyone leading the Marine Corps. "The Marines were shook up by Beirut. I never saw a memorial go up, anywhere, in some small town that lost a Marine in Beirut, that he didn't go to. He knew that you never leave behind your wounded and you never forget your dead."

But, recalls Webb, "When I brought his name up, shit flew everywhere."

General Kelley, who had his own candidate to succeed himself, fought the brash young Navy secretary over the selection of Gray. Webb says he was told Kelley went to Vice President George Bush to protest, but that Bush deferred to Defense Secretary Caspar Weinberger. "Weinberger called and said, 'Nobody's covered with glory, but I'll back your guy,'" Webb recalls. (Underscoring the intensity of feeling that still divides the two men ten years later, General Kelley flatly denies ever contacting Bush in an attempt to block Gray's promotion. Asked directly for his opinion of Webb, General Kelley simply says, "I'm not going to talk about that.")

When the news leaked out of the Pentagon that Al Gray would be the next commandant, Gray remembers, Marine Corps headquarters at first put out the word that the leak was incorrect. Gray and Webb would expect nothing less of the staff of top headquarters. There is a perpetual tension in military life between field types and staff types. Webb and Gray thought that the staff officers, especially those who worked successive tours of duty at Marine headquarters in Washington, had grown far too influential. Gray grabbed the pendulum and swung it back toward the warriors.

He set the blunt tone of his term during his first moments as commandant. "We're warriors, and people who support warriors, and we must always keep that focus," he lectured at his induction. "Some people don't like to hear about war---people who fight don't like to have to do it, but that's what we're about."

Gray also took pains to demonstrate his personal responsibility for the Corps, an important move in the wake of the Beirut bombing. Most strikingly, recalls Major Davis, director of the Drill Instructors School at Parris Island, after nineteen Marines were badly burned in a collision between two helicopters, Gray flew to the military hospital in San Antonio, Texas, where they were hospitalized. Without any introduction, the general walked into the waiting lounge of the hospital where the parents of the burned Marines had gathered and said, "I'm A1 Gray. I'm the commandant of the Marine Corps. I'm responsible for your sons being in the burn ward. I'm here to answer your questions."

Emphasizing that a new era had begun in Gray's first year as commandant, "we got eighteen retirements out of the sixty seven" generals then in the Marines, recalls Webb. "Over the course of nine months, he went to each guy personally."

The new commandant also went out of his way to encourage an independence of thought, both in preparing for war and in actually fighting. "One neat thing about Marine Corps culture is that it swings between being knuckle-dragging knuckleheads and flexible intellectuals-and Gray managed to combine the two," observes Larry Cable, a combat Marine in Vietnam who now teaches national security studies at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, just down the road from Camp Lejeune. (The Corps is a small world: Cable's unit at Parris Island was Kilo Company of the Third Battalion, the same as 3086's.)

Soon after assuming the commandancy, General Gray introduced a formal reading list, not just for officers but for all ranks from corporal up. Staff sergeants and first lieutenants, the men who run platoons, were told to read, among other books, Webb's *Fields of Fire*. First sergeants tackled Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. Captains, who run rifle companies, were assigned Tom Peters's *Thriving on Chaos*, Majors, who typically are mired in staff jobs, had to look at life differently by reading Mao Tse-tung's *On Guerrilla Warfare*, for which the author was listed, in typical Marine style, as "Mao, T.," as if he were one more shavehead recruit. Lieutenant colonels were asked to look at the very big picture: Solzhenitsyn's *August 1914*, Thucydides's *Peloponnesian War*, and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.

Most pointedly, colonels were yanked back to reality by having their noses rubbed in a library of military failure: Neil Sheehan's *Bright and Shining Lie*, about the U.S. effort in Vietnam; General Giap's *How We Won the War*, a view from the victors' side of that conflict; Paul Kennedy's *Rise and Fall of Great Powers*, about how military spending can undercut national security; and C. S. Forester's undeservedly obscure *The General*, a gloomy meditation on how good but unimaginative officers could lead a generation of British youth to slaughter in World War I.

Gray also imposed a major departure on the Corps' approach to fighting, which, after all, is the purpose of the organization. He emphatically settled a long-running debate about whether it would pursue attrition warfare or maneuver warfare in favor of the latter. As the proponents of "maneuverism" put it, the issue was whether to pile up dead Marines in front of enemy machine guns, or find ways to "hit them where they ain't." William Lind, one of the major theorists of maneuverism, defined it thusly: "In maneuver warfare, you always try to avoid the enemy's strength and hurl your strength against his weaknesses. You want to use judo, not fight a boxing match."

General Gray made even the raw recruits in boot camp think about how to be warriors. In November 1987, he explained why he was reviving combat training in boot camp, rather than

simply having the minority who would be grunts get their training later, at infantry school. Parris Island still offered some basic infantry training, but it had slacked off over the years to allow time for classes on check-writing and other matters. Grass covered the grenade range, which had been closed in 1985.

"Everyone is going to be a rifleman," the new commandant vowed in *Sea Power* magazine. "So that from now on, no matter where you are, when you see a Marine, no matter what he does, you will be able to say that guy has been through at least 160 hours of Basic Warrior Training---hand-to-hand combat training, combat shooting, and all the other things that are going to make him a pretty good gunslinger." Recruits were to fire all weapons used by the infantry, including machine guns and grenade launchers. Two years later, Gray added "Marine Combat Training" as a follow-on course after boot camp, to ensure that all noninfantry Marines knew the basics of infantry work. Gray's man at Parris Island, Maj. Gen. Jarvis D. Lynch Jr., sent a memorandum to the Recruit Training Regiment assuring it that, "I don't mind bloody or broken noses." He signed it, as he did most of his memos, "No prisoners, J. D. Lynch Jr."

Gray's effect on the Corps was enormous. He continues to loom over the Corps today---which, one suspects, doesn't make the current leadership altogether comfortable. It is as if the current pope had to deal with an influential predecessor looking over his shoulder, and occasionally offering commentary. Even now, well into his first decade of retirement, Gray looks and talks like a senior officer. His tie clasp carries the eagle, globe, and anchor of the Corps. His watchface displays the flag of a four-star general. Speaking to new officers at a mess night at the Basic School, he begins by saying that he is retired, so of course he has no influence over the Corps. It is clearly a joke. What bothers him most about today's military, he goes on to say, is careerism. It has eroded the other services, he warns, and is creeping into the Corps. The only thing you should worry about, he tells the assembled second lieutenants, is taking care of your people. In fact, he recommends adding one new little box to the officer evaluation reports: It would say, Does this officer care more about his career than about his troops? A "yes" mark would terminate that officer's career.

To many, especially to the sergeants who are the soul of the Corps, A1 Gray remains the real commandant. Walk into the Marine recruiting station in Boston, and the only officer honored with a photograph is A1 Gray, in a poster. In it, he is wearing combat fatigues. At the bottom is a quotation: "I'm looking for warriors to follow me.-A1 Gray." Sgt. Alfonso McNeil, who despite his Italian-Irish name is a black Marine from New York City, points--at the poster: "A1 Gray, he's the icon-he's the one who brought back the warrior spirit."

Most of all, Gray lives on in the hearts of the Corps' sergeants. It is striking how, in an organization of nearly 200,000 people, he managed to reach down into the lives of the enlisted ranks. Every Marine NCO seems to have some sort of story about an encounter with A1 Gray, generally along the lines of the time he showed up without advance notice to inspect a unit at quitting time, when all the snafus happen. One story retold throughout the Corps is about the sergeant who walked up to Gray at a base and said he was being unfairly discharged because he was officially "overweight," yet could run at the required times. Gray said, "Okay, show me"-and had the sergeant run right there. When he passed, Gray cleared him to stay in the Corps. It all illustrates a favorite theme of Gray's: Don't look good, *be* good.

Even 3086's DIs have tales of Gray's encounters. Staff Sgt. Rowland recalls that a friend of his was serving on the U.S.S. *Blue Ridge* and was due to be promoted to sergeant when General Gray arrived. "Gray said, 'Let's do it right now,' " and pinned the chevrons on Rowland's friend on the spot.

Sergeant Carey recalls an even more direct connection to Gray: He remembers the general fondly from the days when Gray commanded the Fleet Marine Forces, Atlantic, one of the top jobs



in the Corps. Carey was a young lance corporal in Force Recon. Gray Would speak directly to Carey's platoon, asking about equipment And training. "He came up to a short stocky guy, slapped him on the shoulder, and said, 'Hey, how ya doin', sergeant?' " recalls Sergeant Carey. "It was probably the guy who looked most like him when he was a sergeant." Even more impressively, Gray in an interview remembers Carey: "Good man, with Force Recon when we were creating Special Operations Capable forces."

"I like him for what he did for the Marines," says Sergeant Carey. "He held us to the concept of every Marine being a rifleman. Everyone always said it, but he held us to it. Also, he implemented Basic Warrior Training in boot camp, so even cooks got some combat training."

## 11. The undoubted middle class spiralist wannabes of the equally undoubted middle class, Oakland, California, neighborhood called Rockridge.

For those who've just now encountered the term wannabe, it describes anyone who want-to-be something or someone else, or, more often probably, merely wannabe seen as being mistaken for that someone or something else, particularly without actually doing or encountering any of the reality of that other. The solution is, of course, don't waste time and effort with the surreality of being a wannabe, use that interest as a target and just go and actually do whatever the interest is, and thus don't get left looking truly and totally pathetic and idiotic.

A patrician remains one such person who Just is without external references, and a part of that "just is" is the location or lack of particular location of the patrician. A patrician is located wherever a patrician is, and the patrician has no personal concern about what other people think of what is nearby. Impersonally, in all locations, the patrician is quite concerned that schools teach all equally and absolutely well, that roads and other infrastructure are in the best condition, assorted health facilities are proactively available for care and referral, and that the peon, being socially obstructive and economically deleterious, is greatly encouraged to cease being the peon and start being patrician.

The reason why this impartial and general patrician concern is that if a situation requires that the finest quality of work get done, but the quality of work that is required is not yet getting done, therefore, the someone who will be providing the extra work will be a patrician, usually one who already has something else to do. In turn, the longer the work is put off, the more work there will be, where the elegant practice of the patrician is to keep all things running smoothly *at all times*, and thus effortlessly. Additionally, if everything from schools to roads to fire departments is as it should be, then everyone benefits, and the patrician will receive the greatest benefit.

"One of the disadvantages of being a patrician is that occasionally you are obliged to act like one."

--- From the movie [Spartacus](#)

The peon, on the other hand, will loudly proclaim that wherever the peon is and whatever the peon is doing will always take precedence over everything else, and that all others must proclaim such as well and equally as much. When the peon demands to be relieved of the overhead of day to day reality, everyone is to play along. Furthermore, when the peon clusters together with others like it, the result is a chorus of the fatuous, reinforcing and repeating itself, which then inevitably becomes additionally shrill when patricians and other forms of reality inevitably arrive.

Cooper comments on

Among the great variety of middle class occupations there are three main strands which are particularly in evidence: the `burgesses', the `spiralists' and the lower middle class. The terms `burgess' and `spiralist were coined by W. Watson in his article `Social Mobility and Social Class in Industrial Communities' (1964)."

In *Middle Class Families* Colin Bell quotes a burgess describing his life. He is a typical Howard Weybridge. The Weybridge expressions are italicized.

`My *people* have always been *comfortably off*. After going into the *forces*, I went into *Dad's* business. We have several *representatives*, who have come up from the shop floor ... I am a very keen member of *Rotary* [on a par with Teacher and Doctor]. I belong to many clubs and associations because I think it's a good thing other Swansea *folk* see me at the right *functions*, and realize we are not just tradesmen. I also belong to several *social clubs* as a duty, so that I meet the important Swansea people.'

This is typical middle-class behaviour, the careerist socializing, the pomposity of expression, the desire to be a power in the community, a big fish in a small pool, and the joining of clubs, which would all be unthinkable to the working or upper classes.

The second category, the spiralist, moves from job to job and place to place, upping his salary and his status as he goes. . . .

Here you have a man, sometimes working-class, sometimes lower-middle in origin, who is prepared to sacrifice friends, children and principles to his career. In fact he's eager to leave his family and the friends of his childhood because they might be a social embarrassment. Later the spiralists often jettison their wives and trade them in for a Mark II model that goes with a new life-style.

The salient characteristic of the spiralist, whether he is from the working classes or the lower-middles is his adaptability and his total ruthlessness. He is the cog in the wheel, the corporation man who can charm his colleagues while trampling them under foot with his slip-on Guccis. His mecca is the conference.

'I've come a long way,' said one spiralist. 'My parents were working-class in the North-East; my expectations were at best tradesman. When I'm at conferences I feel how far I've come.'

On the other hand . . . he often turns into a Howard Weybridge.

I went to a conference recently where the spiralists were rampant. The 'venue', as they would call it, was the Café Royal, and it was all firm handshakes and announcing of names:

'Vic Taylor. Pleased to meet you Ji-ell' (always two syllables), accompanied by a card pressed into one's hand.

. . . The smell of Brut fought frantically with that of deodorant.

Our third strand is the lower-middles, who don't rise and who Orwell described as 'that shivering army of clerks and shopwalkers. . . .

If the ex-working-class spiralists's mecca is the conference, the lower-middle's mecca is the 'function', where, in hired dinner jackets (which they call dinner 'suits'), they play at gracious living and the 'Ollde Days'. Howard Weybridge goes to lots of such occasions and rather takes them for granted. But Bryan Teale's ambition is to be president of the Stationery Trade Representatives' Association for one year, and stand with a chain round his neck, beside his wife, who has a smaller chain and a maidenhair corsage, graciously welcoming new arrivals, and being stood up for and politely applauded when they come in to dinner. Throughout the five-course dinner which starts at 6.30 they will 'take wane' with each other and various dignitaries and past presidents and their ladies down the table. As this is a Ladies' Night, each lady will get a gift of a manicure set or an evening 'pochette' in uncut moquette by her plate. Later there will be Ollde Tyme dancing, interspersed with popular favourites. Bryan will 'partner' Jen in the valeta. They both enjoy 'ballroom dancing'. The conference gang, on the other hand, bop until their thatched hair nearly falls off. The difference between the lower-middle 'function' set and the spiralists is that the former crave the 'dignity' of a bygone age, while the latter, with their natty suits, their bonhomie and their slimline briefcases, are geared towards America and the future.

. . . . One notices, too, that, in the light of extra cash, people tend to think of themselves as being in a far higher class than they really are. . . . The working classes tend to think that class depends not so much on education and income as production and consumption. Large numbers of

miners interviewed in a similar survey called themselves upper-middle-class, whereas the Census would have called them upper-working-class.

. . . . There was once a programme on television about the inhabitants of Cheam in Surrey, in which they interviewed a lot of spiralists . . . who all talked about the importance of 'competing' and 'living in an upper class he-ome'. There was a great community feeling in Cheam, they said . . . and they all got on because they had the same sense of humor and enjoyed the same sort of hobbies . . . They all thought of themselves as living in upper class he-omes. These are the kind of people the spiralist regards as 'upper class'. He doesn't realize that the real upper classes---except for one or two like the Earl of Onslow whose family have lived near Guildford for centuries---wouldn't be seen dead in Surrey.

Oakland, in the San Francisco, California, Bay Area, has a number of assorted neighborhoods which share a number of similarities. In this area, one knows what city one is in by the city names on the passing police and fire department vehicles, where each individual city marks its borders with street signs indicating what city one is entering or leaving.

In turn, the bay area has been affected by the same economic boom, bust, and correct cycles that many other areas have been affected by, with two particular such cycles having a rather noticeable effect on the local peon, if no one else. The patricians, as always, just rode everything out as best as possible, looking at the long term, and wishing that the political office holding peon had actually bothered to do any math when passing major pieces of legislation.

Of the particular pair of economic boom and bust cycles that we're going to look at here, they are the technological dot bomb cycle of the late 1990s and early 2000s, and the resulting housing price bubble which finally started its inevitable correction by the late 2000s. The peon, seeing reality returning, have tried claiming that housing prices started collapsing rather than correcting, but then only the peon would come up with the idea of treating one's own living area as a source of money.

A very specific conjunction of spiralist blindness and economic mishap involves the North Oakland neighborhood with the name of Rockridge. Cheam started out as a village in the 1000s or so, and is now basically a neighborhood of southwest greater London. Oakland dates from the 1850s, with the neighboring city of Berkeley just to the north being created along with the University Of California and its flagship campus within the city of Berkeley. As Rockridge is part of the Northern border of Oakland on the edge of Berkeley, it is one of the neighborhoods featuring those afore mentioned border signs that one sees when crossing from Berkeley into Oakland.

One feature of the Cheam area is a number of train lines, easily available for commute, and Cheam has its own train station. In exactly the same manner, Bart, the Bay Area Rapid Transit network, was installed in the 1960s and 1970s throughout the greater San Francisco Bay Area, with one line passing from the East, into Oakland through Rockridge, and on to the Oakland downtown area. For ease of routing, the tracks and the Rockridge train station itself are placed in the center of the eight lane freeway which delineates the northern third of the Rockridge neighborhood.

When the dot bomb cycle erupted, funding, funding, and more funding poured into businesses in the neighboring San Francisco and vicinity, fueling peon fantasies of having a real company without having to actually work at anything, and having extremely expensive housing without any economic support. The failure of the former fantasy took awhile to arrive, but the reality of the latter was immediate. While the additional all time fantasy of the dot bomb peon involved living in San Francisco and displaying their underclass membership by referring to S.F. as The City, there were three problems that always got in the way of that fantasy. One problem was that rather than just one or two of the peon having this fantasy, the entire overflowing effluvia of the dot bomb peon wanted to live in San Francisco. The second problem is that San Francisco has only 49 square miles that is surrounded on three sides by very unsupportive water rather than more land. The third problem that S.F. already had its own populace already in place. Regarding the peon's attempt to move to San Francisco and rent one of the three large broom

closets that remained available on the housing market here and there, the dot bomb “salary” got nowhere when the peon just ahead had already promised to pay more.

That left the corkscrewing spiralists to find something else somewhere else, and they started hunting along the transit routes, with the Bart lines being one set of those routes, and that led a number of them to North Oakland by way of the Rockridge Bart station. For those who couldn't outbid for a back room in San Francisco, they could manage to outbid for part of an apartment or a room in a house near the commuter train station there in Oakland. And of course the next spiralist would bid even higher, and as the dot bomb hadn't exploded yet, the spiralist after that would bid even more. In very little time, a perfectly lovely middle class neighborhood in North Oakland was deluged by the spiralist peon. Each peon in turn claimed that sheer presence of the peon must clearly mean the neighborhood had suddenly acquired a very particular unmistakable new significance, with the particular unmistakable new significance requiring that all must uniformly and vehemently avert their eyes and ears from any mention that they might have something to do with the other middle class in the rest of Oakland.

Starting about the point that the dot bomb then collapsed and took all the spiralist 'salaries' with it, there arrived story after story after story from one blatantly and unmistakably lowest middle class peon after another. All these spiralists absolutely insisted that the middle class neighborhood of Rockridge was not only to be considered Upper Class, but that Rockridge is absolutely not a part of Oakland, that Rockridge is Rockridge and clearly separate. Even more surreal was the demand that everyone else, whether in Rockridge or elsewhere, also share in the same delusion. All the spiralists were right about being some sort of separate, in that they were certainly very separate from reality. Just the same, reality, like the continuing existence of Oakland, does tend to be persistent. Starting after the point that the dot bomb collapsed, the housing bubble then started to correct because, after all, mortgages and the more likely rent do involve real money, not a credit line issued to a mere spiralist.

At a point after the housing price correction had also become a demonstrated fact, a San Francisco newspaper column missed a detail on Oakland political geography. As yet another ridiculously easy refutation to the ongoing miasma of the spiralists, I wrote in a correction;

Dear Columnists:

Correctly naming the support neighborhoods does help;

Rockridge **\*is\*** a part of North Oakland, it is just **\*one\*** of the **\*several\*** neighborhoods up there . . . .

Yes, I am extremely familiar with the vacuous, pretentious, and naive newly arrived that congealed in Rockridge in the last few years. I have heard the vehement screams that a neighborhood which features an eight lane freeway, commuter train station, and is arguably anchored by a liquor store with security bars Must be declared to be ""Upper Class""---double quotes deliberate there--- And Not a part of Mere Oakland . . . solely because of the housing bubble inflated house prices of the very few last few years . . . and we're all noting where that pricing goes as the bubble continues to correct more than collapse.

Let's face it, if the Rockridge Bart station had been in a different location, then *that* different location would have had the exact same housing bubble erupt there, for the exact same reason and results---Seeing as even then the wannabes could not afford San Francisco, without that commuter train station, they would have never turned up . . . which again, underlines that they are just in *one* of the several North Oakland neighborhoods.

Of my knowing Rockridge and what really exists there, allow me to present my C.V.: I lived on Chabot for several years, and went to Chabot Elementary. I got dumped into St. Leos' instead of going to Claremont Jr. Hi, or even Montera, and soon after that moved to James, and lived on James for quite a number of years. The local library used to be at Miles and College, right next to

that same freeway, before moving to its current location at Manila and College. I graduated from Skyline High School in Oakland after finally winding up there, taking the bus to do so from just a few blocks from where I lived in the Rockridge part of North Oakland. I commuted to SF State through that perfectly innocuous and useful commuter train station just a few blocks from where I lived in the Rockridge part of North Oakland. And Eddie's Liquors, that Rockridge part of North Oakland anchor, at Lawton and College, which was, mebbe still is, owned by the family of a Skyline High School classmate of mine, was fronted by a wall of nothing but glass for many, many, many years. And then just before the pretentious and clueless started to arrive in that portion of North Oakland, that is when the security bars went up on those liquor store windows for the very first time that I am aware of---but then Eddie's Liquors is probably older than I am, and continues to be in that area of North Oakland.

. . . . And finally, I know that Rockridge is a perfectly lovely and absolutely and unmistakably middle class part of North Oakland Very, Very, Very, Very, Very, Very, Well, and I know and acknowledge that Rockridge is indeed merely One of Several parts of North Oakland . . . .

As for that local infrastructure, quality of schools and such, while patricians are in favor of quality schools, roads, hospitals, libraries, and the like, and while there is never any question that quality and elegance overshadow by far the banality and pointlessness of the peon, The Peon, unfortunately, will be with us always. While mandatory voting does have very interesting and attractive features and while patricians have gone into government, with excellent results, for centuries, unfortunately the patrician is not the only one who goes into politics, or votes.

In 1978, California Proposition 13 was passed, mandating a major cut in property taxes and blocking passage of further taxes without major legislative unity. California also has issues with the practice called gerrymandering, a mechanism which supports the election of very narrowly focused and malevolent peon, rather than the patrician who is more likely to win over a variety of voters, and then proceed to work with the fellow elected patricians.

"Prop 13", a more commonly used epithet, did indeed address certain issues of property taxes and public funding. Economic issues involving Prop 13 are detailed and complex. And among the very major issues that have had patricians screaming for a detailed readdressing of Prop 13, and of gerrymandering, is that in the 1960s, the California educational system, from the earliest schools to The University Of California, were ranked among the best in the United States. Following the passage of Prop 13, that quality dropped to being nearly the worst in the United States.

As gets noted in the Ridley Scott movie *The Duellists*; "The enemies of reason have a certain blind look."

A patrician is located wherever a patrician is, and the patrician has no personal concern about what other people think of what is nearby. Impersonally, the patrician is quite concerned that schools teach all equally and absolutely well, that roads and other infrastructure are in the best condition, assorted health facilities are proactively available for care and referral, and that the peon, being socially obstructive and economically deleterious, are greatly encouraged to cease being a peon and start being a patrician.

A peon named Leona Helmsley is best remembered for the statement of "We don't pay taxes. Only the little people pay taxes ...". Out here in reality, patricians have no objections to taxes, because that's how the government gets paid for, so that the patrician does not have to do the work that the government does.

Not only is the peon of Rockridge absolutely undeniably and unmistakably no higher than very average lowest middle class, that peon also remains absolutely generations from being the first to make such a blatantly erroneous and pretentious claim.

As has been stated in quite a number of ways in equally as many centuries, and longer, "There will always be the peon in the land. Therefore I command you to be openhanded toward your brothers and toward the peon and needy in your land."

## 12. The peon just talks, where a patrician does something and occasionally says something.

The musical *1776* is about the writing and signing of the American Declaration Of Independence. The film of the musical opens in a clock tower, where Massachusetts representative John Adams is staring out over the town. Andrew McNair, the congressional janitor finally tracks him down to take part in a vote.

MCNAIR: Better get yourself back down to Congress, Mr. Adams. Getting ready to vote, and they said they couldn't settle such an important question without Massachusetts being there.

ADAMS:  
(After a long pause)  
I can just imagine.

(After another long pause)  
All right, what burning issue are we voting on this time?

MCNAIR: On whether or not to grant General Washington's request that all members of the Rhode Island militia be required to wear matching uniforms.

ADAMS:  
(After an even longer pause)  
Oh, good God.

There are times, repeatedly, where the peon will manage to totally and completely screw up, overdo, arrange something totally unnecessary, some action which utterly screams that the peon is a peon. In many circumstances, the patrician is left rather flabbergasted because absolutely no one of any wit, intelligence, or experience would have done what the peon has done. The patrician, on the other hand, is rather predictable, in that if something makes sense, the patrician will do it, or if the action makes no sense, the patrician is quite ready to pick up any resulting pieces. The peon, on the other hand will go with whatever random thought wanders through, and actually seeing what else may get affected is never seen as an issue, and having to accept any responsibility whatsoever is utterly and adamantly rejected, and likely to need a few lawyers and police to enforce that responsibility.

A large scale blatant demonstration of the peon being the peon, where the patrician just quietly goes about actually doing, is the reality show. For every claim of "reality", the instantaneous refutation is provided by the presence of the camera crew---no crew, no activity, no show. Of the patrician, the patrician will turn up on the news because the patrician has actually done something. In instances such as a documentary or the occasional TV show that consists of figuring out the value of random objects pulled out of closets, when the camera goes away, or, in the great majority of such, never shows up, such assessment does continue, the action that one may wish to document still occurs. For just the evaluation TV show alone, the ongoing catalogs and advertisements of any auction house proves that even when a camera may not be present, real life, patrician existence, always goes on. When the camera does appear, patricians turn up in documentaries and on both sides of such evaluation sessions. Only the peon turns up on "reality" shows.

A smaller scale division of the same sort that separates mere words from actual experience is found involving the large scale improvisational acting events known as renaissance faires.

A renaissance faire is a theatrical recreation of some part of, usually, back country England more or less in the late 1500s. The entire area of the faire is a stage, where paid attendees wander about the various staging area, merchants stalls, and the like, and wander among mostly improvisational actors who are dressed and act entirely as if of England and vicinity in the late 1500s.

The staged political background often has the monarch, usually Elizabeth I, sometimes Henry VIII, visiting the local lord, and of course accompanied by the royal court. Often visiting or chasing after the monarch and court are



assorted Irish, Scots, French, and a Spaniard or two. Since the monarch and court are in town, assorted pageants and progressions get staged, ranging from the monarch and court processing through town to a meeting of the privy council to a new, or old, play by Shakespeare. On that large, several acre stage, the assorted actors demonstrate what one would see and hear in the back country of England in the late 1500s, from basic peasant all the way up to the monarch.

Of the cast and stage, there are no cell phones, no loudspeakers, no visible ATMs, no billboards, no plastic bottles of water, absolutely nothing later than the late 1500s---the ATMs will indeed be present, tucked off in a corner well behind a curtain. The part about more or less the late 1500s will come in with such things as the court playing anywhere from the 1560s to the 1590s, with any of Shakespeare plays possibly being staged, which means up through 1613.

There will be no standup comedians, there will be no trapeze artists that are obviously extending from Cirque de Soleil, there will be no mud wrestling, tattoo booths, loudspeakers screeching about upcoming events, raffles for twenty-first century off road vehicles or watercraft, or any other entertainment variations that clearly come from and blatantly remind of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries.

However, a personal greeting is a greeting and has no set year, and a small claims court proceeding of the 1500s doesn't need a set date to settle a case. There will be plastic cups sold from the drink stands, because the alternatives remain too expensive or logistically complicated, but the plastic cups will be an innocuous wood brown or pewter grey. This several acre stage will include a great number of perfectly modern garbage cans scattered about, which will all have the appearance of barrels, tree stumps, wells, and the like.

As a note, parallel productions do occur of large scale Live Action Role Playing games, or LARPs, usually stated to indeed be LARPs, where sometimes a LARP producer will fraudulently claim to stage a renaissance faire. The differences turn up where the emphasis of the LARP is absolutely not on anything historical, but is instead a random mix of characterizations or whatever else the producer is focusing on. Such a large scale LARP can have anything from Little Bo Peep to Elizabethan peasants to elves to fairies to Disney style pirates inspired by the equally fictitious Pirates Of The Caribbean movies to knights in armor, all at the same time. The elves will probably be the ones with the pointed ears, the fairies will have wings, Little Bo Peep will probably have her shepherd's crook, and so forth. As the entire LARP and all participants are clearly in the current century, cell phones and the like are also standard accessories.

Needless to say, as with the peon and the patrician, the patrician of events will be the openly declared LARP with its fairies and elves and demigods which will be quite open about being a LARP. The patrician of events will be the renaissance faire and its English political intrigues, which in turn will clearly be a renaissance faire. Being a patrician of events, no such honest and open event will claim to be anything other than what it is.

Completely by contrast, the clear and undoubted peon of events will be the very obvious LARP that claims to be a renaissance faire. And as such a LARP makes such a blatantly fraudulent claim, the paying customers will walk in, see the first set of fairy wings walk by with a Disney variety pirate in tow, see the first trapeze artist walk in, realize that the producers and supporters of the event are liars, idiots, and totally inept, and not only not come back, but also warn their friends away from the fiasco.

As with all patrician occurrences, renaissance faires tend to develop a large set of rather fanatical supporters and attendees who repeatedly go to view and play in the late 1500s. LARPs as well can enjoy a good deal of support as they stage their various events. And both will continue to utterly outclass and outdo all occurrences of all peon ridden events with fairies, elves, and "pirates" that claim to be renaissance faires.

There is one subtlety that is mildly amusing regarding the blatant and undoubted peons that show up at medieval, renaissance, Victorian, whatever theme events dressed totally out of place as Disney pirates, or as any other sort of vaguely undefined costumed attendee of a twenty-first century nightclub. Given these peons' insistence in demonstrating being underclass and peons, if they actually wanted to dress in character, they would dress as the "East India Company" representative who turns up in the second and third Disney pirates movies. Just as peons are,

he is incompetent, malevolent, utterly incapable of any sort of coherent judgment, and the last that anyone sees of him is near the end of the third movie, where he allows a very valuable command ship and crew to be utterly blown apart along with him because he, being a peon, is utterly unable to make any sort of decision involving competence, and all becomes totally paralyzed.

I have had to watch exactly that sort of behavior staged at very close range in exactly that sort of setting. My faire experience comes from working a number of small local faires, as well as at a large local annual faire during its final four years, following which it was bought out by LARP producers who tried to stage their own event. As the small events continued on as actual faires, the LARP producers did indeed try to claim that their fiasco should also be called a renaissance faire. To no one's surprise, the faire audience soon stayed away, the LARP producers soon got booted off the long time faire site by the owners of the land, and where the renaissance faire had regular attendance of some eighteen to twenty thousand people each day it was open, their LARP very quickly ceased to exist.

Needless to say, as with any other occurrence of large numbers of people, a good number of patricians participated, and we found ourselves dealing with a large number of the peon. As all well trained actors do, the patricians all showed up, got set, got costumed, and went charging out into the late 1500s environment, playing equally peasant, sailor, merchant, noble.

Of specific instances of the peon, of one that comes to mind, she purportedly was playing with a Scots portrayal group, and one year announced that the costume she was creating would include various shades very clearly from the twentieth century, and this would be acceptable. The Scots of the period did indeed have a good number of colors that they worked with and a particularly bright yellow is one such as I recall. None of the colors this peon insisted on were the least bit close to the available colors, a fact which she did get reminded of in detail. When the peon vehemently insisted and showed up in her modern nightclub LARP outfit, she was not allowed to work with the actors and sent on her way.

Of one conversation that I found myself in at one small faire, I actually have no idea what the peon actually did, who she worked with, or anything else of the sort. On another hand, the conversation seems rather telling as it consisted of ;

So, what do you do here at the faire?

Oh, I'm on court.

Ok, but what do you do here at the faire?

I'm on court.

Yes, and what do you do?

*I'm On Court!*

---and off she stomped.

Aside from faires, there are also the events that are not quite LARP or historical recreation, and a primary example is the Society For Creative Anachronism. In the SCA, the kingdoms and all other territories are fictitious, because the focus is on the form and practice of medieval reenactment, not the history. There are indeed people doing the work of being the very active and very mediievally modeled non-historical territorial monarchs, there are fighters who actively take part in full contact tournaments and wars, and so forth.

In either situation of being in the SCA as a subject of the crown or at a faire being an actor playing a part, being

on court does involve doing things. Someone on court is running errands, standing by for instructions, keeping an eye on things as they occur. In the case of a faire someone on court will be as much involved in the real activity of carrying water as the staged activity of carrying intrigue. What one will never do in either faire or SCA is merely exist on court, as if court was some exotic and static museum piece which everyone will just stare at.

Absolutely in like manner, the patrician recognizes and welcomes that change is ongoing and always shifting the moment about, and only the peon claims that time, people and society remain static, stagnant, and clearly only the peon will insistently proclaim that "I'm on court!"

In the final two years of the large faire that I took part in, and with all of us participating having no expectation of the approaching end, a particular couple showed up at the faire. He showed up To be An Actor, a perfectly fine ambition, where all of us but the merchants were actors---and the merchants actively blended in and sometimes doubled as actors. She showed up with him, and the second year, as the LARP fiasco was starting to loom, she managed to take the assistant s position at one of the production booths. By that point, to any who ran into her enough, she made it known that she is Descended From Nobility. A visit to the couple's apartment tended to feature her once again whipping out The Picture Of The Nobility that she claimed repeatedly that she was descended from.

What would have been their third year at the faire was the first year of the short lived LARP, where I and the other faire actors found ourselves dealing with LARP producers, where we attended to take part in a faire. First off, after two years experience, the wife announced that for the third year, she would not be bothered with clothing of the English 1500s, she would instead have her own costume. This was going to be a particularly interesting change as the head of her booth had left the faire to go off to culinary school, and she was going to run the booth in his place.

That year, I joined a number of actors in showing up, finding no place for us, and leaving during the first weekend. Following that start of the fiasco, even while being nowhere nearby, I still remained very wired into the local network and got to hear the complaints, gripes, and other details the surreally badly staged and executed LARP. Of the husband, the one with two years of training in what is done at a faire that portrays the 1500s, he spent the event doing twentieth century rap, at the top of his lungs, on stage. While such could arguably fir into an equally twentieth century LARP, this event was still claiming to be a renaissance faire. Of the booth that the wife was put in charge of, in previous years it had been an emphatic main choice for the faire volunteers to take part in. By contrast, the first year of the LARP, the wife and her cronies inspired all the actual volunteers to merely do some absolute minimum and then emphatically leave the hellhole environment that she of "I am Descended From Nobility" very willfully created.

Of those volunteers and the volunteer coordination group that they came from, another volunteer with a lot of experience reported to me that all of a sudden a whole new group of people had turned up in that volunteers organization. Of my friend's experience, in his time of being a member of the volunteer group, of being a leader of the volunteer group, the many experienced members would just know what was needed because they had been doing what was needed all along. As time progressed and new people joined the volunteer group, they too learned the same skills, and also just got things done. In short, these volunteers who quietly and elegantly got the work done were and are the patrician volunteers.

The very new arrivals, on the other hand, insisted on meetings and committees and decisions made by the committees, and there would be noting that was Just Done because it needed doing. As a result, at the beginning of the new LARP, the volunteer group was nowhere near being ready, and the last of the preparations needed for a renaissance faire were still going on after the LARP had its opening day. As I recall, the patrician even stated that the new committee arrangement was perfectly fine to him, as long as they got the needed work done. The very clear patrician was indeed quite annoyed that of anyone on that committee, the very evident peon could only just talk and not actually do anything.

Of that particular peon that I and other patricians had to deal with, regarding her claims of being descended from nobility, and therefore also being nobility, the claim of descent is not that far fetched---I myself, just like very many others, am a direct descendant of the unquestioned owners of most of western Scotland and all of the Scottish isles and some of the north of Ireland. A cousin of mine has traced our ancestry back to the outer isles and the

family history has story after story from being steeped in the culture---that section of my ancestors are from Nova Scotia, aka "New Scotland" in Latin.

However, in this day and age I am the owner of a quantity of movies and books rather than the administrator of a chunk of Scotland, and of my work with others, I am the sought out volunteer stage manager and general assistant and sometime supervisor of some local small events. Under no circumstances and as contrasted with the peon will I claim being anything more than the one who is doing whatever I am doing at that moment---because, as always, anything else just makes me an over inflated idiot, also known as the peon.

To be a stage manager is to fade into the background, to push and rearrange only where needed, to become visible only as a part of the staging of the event, to remain totally in the moment, and at no time whatsoever to leave that moment. A stage manager or actor will never walk into a faire and do rap. A stage manager or any other manager of volunteers will never alienate the volunteers that are needed to help coordinate and carry out an event.

Just like many others, I have no idea of the details of what my ancestors thought, said, did, but the practice of management tends to change only in the day to day details. My ancestors learned to run their chunk of Scotland very well the same way I learned to do my stage management and other administration. They had no concern about what I would do, and I have no concern about what they did. Of the peon who blatantly failed to run a production sponsored booth that relied on the production volunteers, I rather expect that if she is being truthful about having descended from nobility, then given just how far below her ancestors she's placed herself, if that nobility could utterly detach themselves and deny any connection to her, they would.

More realistically, what this peon reminds one of is one of the characters from the Christopher Guest movie *Waiting For Guffman*. Quoting from Wikipedia;

The movie is a loving parody of community theatre set in the small town of Blaine, Missouri. It chronicles the trials and tribulations of a handful of utterly delusional residents as they prepare to put on a community theater production led by eccentric director Corky St. Clair (Guest). The show, a musical chronicling the town's history, titled *Red, White and Blaine*, is to be performed as part of the town's 150th anniversary celebration.

One of the characters is Blaine councilwoman Gwen Fabin-Blunt, who gets interviewed early in the movie.

Well, I'm very proud to say that I'm a direct descendant of Blaine Fabin. I've lived here all my life. As did my parents and their parents and their parents and their parents and so on and so forth. I'm very excited about the show coming up, because ill be the first time I'll have the experience of sitting in the audience and seeing actors portray my ancestor . . . the . . . the actual Blaine Fabin. Being a Fabin is not always easy. Um, I can certainly understand how the Kennedys feel.

To return to John Addams:

I can just imagine.

### 13. The peon is the idiot that the patrician travels past, or otherwise just runs over.

A very good book on the peon which was published in 2009 is *The Narcissism Epidemic, Living In The Age Of Entitlement*, by Jean M. Twenge and W. Keith Campbell. From the website for the book; <http://www.narcissismepidemic.com/index.html>

On a reality TV show, a girl planning her Sweet Sixteen wants a major road blocked off so a marching band can precede her grand entrance on a red carpet. Five times as many Americans undergo plastic surgery and cosmetic procedures as ten years ago, and ordinary people hire fake paparazzi to follow them around to make them look famous. High school students physically attack classmates and post YouTube videos of the beatings to get attention. And for the past several years, Americans have been buying McMansions and expensive cars on credit they can't afford.

Although these seem like a random collection of current trends, all are rooted in a single underlying shift in American culture: the relentless rise of narcissism, a very positive and inflated view of self. Narcissists believe they are better than others, lack emotionally warm and caring relationships, constantly seek attention, and treasure material wealth and physical appearance. In *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*, psychologists and professors Jean Twenge and W. Keith Campbell draw from empirical research and cultural analysis to expose the destructive spread of narcissism. Perhaps most important, they also discuss treatment – what each of us can do to stop the epidemic of narcissism so corrosive to society.

The book is quite highly recommended and a general overview can be found at <http://www.narcissismepidemic.com/aboutbook.html>. Further comments on the book from that additional web page include;

There is no single cause of the narcissism epidemic; instead we point to several contributing factors in the book. Admiring oneself is now considered crucial to success in life. This began in earnest in the 1970s, became more influential with the self-esteem movement in the 1980s and 1990s, and today is taken for granted in American culture. We see this in slogans like "You have to love yourself before you can love others" and at preschools with young children singing, "I am special/Look at me."

At the core of narcissism is the fantasy that you are better than you really are (and better than those around you). Any process that allows that fantasy to exist despite the less glamorous reality is an opportunity for narcissism to thrive. For example, the Internet allows people to create phony images of themselves and seek fame and attention. Easy credit has allowed average Americans to pretend they are wealthy and successful (at least until the foreclosure sign went up). The inflation of grades and other feedback in schools has lets kids believe they are better students than they really are. And the list goes on.

Finally, the explosion of shallow celebrity culture promotes narcissism as not just acceptable but desirable. Celebrity gossip and happenings are now found on mainstream news channels. The social models we see are often advertisements for a narcissistic lifestyle.

Of course the all time problem that these examples of the peon have is when reality and patricians turn up. On a quiet day, a patrician may take the trouble to go around the peon. On a busy day, the peon will just get knocked flat by reality, and no one will care in the meantime. As an easy example, among the pictures one quite casually finds on the World Wide Web is one that does indeed show the aftermath of a peon's wild fantasy being introduced to reality. In this case the search terms I've just dropped into Google are "fire hydrant bmw".

The very first result of such a search gets me a picture of a hose that has been plugged into a fire hydrant, so presumably a fire is being fought very few feet away. As this involves a fire hose, there is no question that straight lines are a requirement, or at most very slight curves, as the water pressure coming out of the hydrant will not allow the hose to have immediate or sharp turns. The problem that is shown in this case is that some peon parked a car in front of the very obvious, very red zoned fire hydrant. Naturally with the arrival of the fire department, there was no need to bear the slightest concern for the car or the peon, because as always, reality takes precedence. The picture shows that the back windows of the car have gotten smashed out and the hose extends from the fire hydrant, in one side of the car and out the other, going through the back windows, and out the frame of the picture. Oh, and as a further reminder of the car owner unquestionably being an underclass peon, the brand of the car is BMW. Had the peon actually chosen an actual parking place, the peon would not have gotten very clearly enshrined in history.

A reason why patricians generally don't get seen this way is not that a patrician needs to hide, but that the unseen simply is not disturbed by anyone or anything. The patrician achieves this by being aware that the patrician is, and that the universe is, and that the patrician is not the center of the universe---because by even merely claiming to be the center of the universe the peon is thus totally hobbled and constricted. The advantage to not considering oneself to be the center of the universe is that one is not limited by the universe, and can therefore go and do whatever one wants.

Only the peon claims to be the center of the universe, claims to take precedence over everyone else all the time, claims to not be affected or influenced by anything about the peon. The peon eagerly demonstrates being a peon by demanding to disrupt anything and everything nearby, by demanding to do nothing, by getting in everyone's way, by complaining about getting kicked back into place, by lying about being self centered, by lying about the fact that others are around and do affect and influence the peon.

Yet another example I've run into comes from managing the online communication of an assortment of varied organizations. In this case I was running mailing lists, the very useful manner of sending an email to many people and having such emails returned, to facilitate an ongoing group discussion.

Of such discussions, in general, the patrician joins in, shares in the conversation, remains aware that this is a group conversation and shares in the group conversation. One feature of mailing lists is that several conversations can occur at once, and in such an instance, an advantage with the mailing list form is that particular markers can be set so that one can then focus on specific instances of a conversation, and not read through the other conversations.

Where the peon has a history of disrupting and disturbing is when the peon turns up and demands that all such email must be routed and occur in accordance to the peon's own will, and all reminders of the general group conversation are to be vehemently opposed and screamed down. How the peon achieves this with a mailing list is to demand that the default setting for a mailing list hijack all messages that have ever been involved back to the mailing list. Can this be done? Only on a broken mailing list that is in violation of polite communication and internet mandated regulations.

When the mailing list is correctly configured, when someone posts to the mailing list, that message is then routed through the mailing list and on to everyone signed up to the list. When a recipient of the message wishes to take part of the general conversation that is taking place through the list, the recipient uses the reply all or reply to list feature of the email program to send a reply back through the mailing list, and thus on to all who are signed up for the list. In turn, when a recipient wishes to send a private reply to the source of a message, the recipient uses the standard reply feature to send a perfectly normal, standard, and direct private reply to the person that the message came from.

Where the peon violates this communication is when the demand is made to break the mailing list by hijacking all replies back to the mailing list, regardless of the intent or wish of anyone on the list. Such being in violation of custom, understanding, polite behavior, reason, and being something that only the underclass peon ever supports, the result in every instance is that private messages then get sprayed out onto the mailing list, disrupting the list, the sender, the recipient. And at no point has any peon ever managed to justify such a choice.

Among the lies that have been offered are that such a setting " . . . is my email and that is how I will respond". Well, no, by definition, a mailing list is a community communication and that all are involved. Another lie told to me one time is that "That's just a matter of how the community functions, and that the broken mailing list is normal."---specifically that peon pointed me to an essay on online communities, an essay which was by itself interesting to read, and which has absolutely no relationship to mailing lists in any way, as that peon was and is quite aware---In his case, out of general cowardice, the last thing he wanted was to admit to the truth. Another peon tried to respond with a claim that the internet regulations " . . . can't be enforced!!!" Reality just is and doesn't need enforcing. Only a peon demands to hide from reality and that all must take part in such. Only the peon objects to the patrician being correct, when all that the patrician ever does is do what is right, or, in the case of the occasional error, the correction of that error.

The patrician just is, and is here, and is there, and does anything needed or wanted, at will. The patrician can't be touched, and isn't touched and a patrician has infinitely greater success at kicking a peon back into place than a peon does at complaining about these facts of reality.

Only if the patrician actually needs to be visible as a part of something that the patrician is doing does the patrician ever get generally seen or noticed. At all other times, the patrician simply, quietly, and correctly just disappears into the environment.

Just as with the peons who disrupt and wreck mailing lists for no reason than being underclass, two more examples that channel and correct peons and decide what to do involve joint police patrols that peons have inspired in Berkeley, California, and, an overview of the training of U.S. Marines.

From Chip Johnson, of the San Francisco Chronicle,

*Berkeley, Cal double up against excessive partying*

December 7, 2010

. . . "What has caused the most problems for residents is off-campus housing, and it's what brought town and gown together to establish a community standard," said Caleb Dardick, director of local government relations at UC Berkeley. "We can no longer just say these are kids being kids."

What began as an escalation in wild parties on Cal's Fraternity Row about 10 years ago became a problem that engulfed the surrounding community.

In May 2005, UC officials imposed a ban on alcohol at all fraternity-sponsored events.

Although the ban lasted less than a year, university and city officials saw a student migration to off-campus housing south of campus, where the partying continued.

"There was a lot more binge drinking and public drunkenness in places where it hadn't been seen before, and when the alcohol ban pushed parties into the community - and away from campus - that's when all hell broke loose," said Phil Bokovoy, a 26-year resident of the neighborhood.

Since then, the university has taken a different approach to the problem, said Karen Hughes, coordinator of Cal's Party Safe program in its health services department.

"The traditional alcohol education model wasn't working, and there was a shift in the focus from looking at it as an individual choice (to) making it a community problem and looking for communitywide strategies," she said.

Bokovoy believes stricter enforcement, a constant police presence and swift action and consequences from university officials have grabbed the attention of the 12 to 15 percent of the student body who qualify as hard partiers, according to university estimates.

That's because with increased enforcement comes greater risk for both civil penalties and university disciplinary action, he said.

"There's nothing quite like the cops showing up at a party with 50 people inside, another 50 people outside and broken beer bottles everywhere, to straighten things out," he said.

In this case, the peon causes problems, and then more problems, where the patricians in the area don't cause any such problems, being patricians. In turn, seeing as the peon insists on screwing up, these peons have been summarily and correctly knocked flat as a result of their own demonstrably inept and incompetent decisions.

Regarding this instance of the training of U.S. Marines, *The Few And The Proud* is a book by Larry Smith which interviews and tells of twentieth century USMC drill instructors. One interview that Smith did was with retired Colonel Robert Mastrion.

*Robert Mastrion enlisted in the Marines 1958 and made full colonel in 1983. While he never became a drill instructor, he did undergo recruit training at Parris Island and eventually became a mustang, meaning he rose through the ranks and attended OCS (Officer Candidates School). As an enlisted man, he was court-martialed twice, for fighting, and as an officer he was awarded two Silver Stars while leading his men in combat during one and a half tours in Vietnam. He also received two Purple Hearts. He does not remember what the first Silver Star was for. The citation for his second appears at the end of this chapter. He spoke to me over the phone from his home in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina.*

When I first spoke with Col. Mastrion in the spring of 2005, he immediately began discussing the best way to form a functioning Marine Corps and explained how the Corps encountered problems with personnel at the end of the Vietnam era. "There's a reason why we can consistently turn out good fighters in the Marine Corps and that's because we eliminate the problem children right off the bat," he said. "But you gotta understand human nature. For example, take a piece of paper and draw a line across the page midway down. Then draw a vertical line right down the middle. Mark 50 percent at the point where the two lines intersect. Then mark 60, 70, and so on in 10-percent increments up to the top. Mark 40, 30, 20, and 10 going down from the center point.

"Now, in any organization or group or kindergarten or college classroom or business, you've always got about 3 percent that are incorrigible son-of-a-bitches, that's from 0 to 3 percent. And there is nothing, absolutely nothing, that you can do with these people because they're just selfish, absolutely selfish. Think back to your days in high school. You always had people getting in trouble but it was usually a real small group of guys---or usually just one---that would always be doing things to get in trouble. You just have to leave these people alone. I ran a business here in Charleston after I retired, and I'm now retired from that, but the one thing I always looked for was the 3 percenters.

And from 3 to 10 you've got what I call the 7 percenters. They are essentially the same as the 3 percenters, except they are not as active. They're more like followers, but, given half a chance, they'll become 3 percenters. And from 10 to 20 percent, you've got people who tend toward being 7 or even 3 percenters, but they're mostly passive. And if the 3 percent get control enough to influence the 7 percent, then the 10 percent will move that way also. That's always with you, so you got to watch that.



At the other end of the group, at the top, you've got about 20 percent who will do no wrong. They'll do good no matter what.

As for the 60 percent in the middle, they'll go whichever way looks like will benefit them the most. So you're in a constant battle for that 60 percent.

Now, in the Marine Corps, the 3 percenters are usually weeded out by the recruiters, who also reject most of the 7 percenters. The recruiters watch this like hawks, because, if a recruit doesn't make it through boot camp, they get nailed, they get a black mark on their records. We say we are looking for the few good men, but what we're also doing is picking out the bad guys and eliminating them. So right off the bat we have an advantage that a draft-driven army never has, because we chop off those 3 and 7 percenters.

"We still have 8 or 9 percent attrition in boot camp. The turds are the guys from 10 to 20 percent and we weed them out in recruit training. Demands for a spirit of cooperation and unselfishness weed out the 10 to 20 percenters, for the most part. The goal is to eliminate that whole cadre, because that is what undermines an organization.

"The recruiters aim to wipe out the first 20 percent before they even get on the plane. Now, one may slip through every now and then, but, boy, they don't last long. It's not like when I first went in. Hell, you walked in and they were happy to get you. But then again boot camp was different, plus the individuals going in were different, because our society wasn't as self-centered as it is today.

"If the problem kids get through and get out in the Fleet Marine Force, you've got problems. Speak to anyone who was around in the 1970s after the draft ended in '75. I wasn't in recruiting and I wasn't at the Recruit Depot but I was in the FMF at that time when the draft went away and it got difficult to recruit because we still had large forces.

"I was down in the Second Marine Division and the barriers against the 3 and 7 percenters had been done away with because of all the people who were being brought in. They were just grabbing anybody they could, and the Fleet Marine Force unit I was in was paralyzed because we had so many of these bad guys running around. And you don't need many to paralyze a unit. If you hit 13 percent, the unit starts to come unraveled. If you got 15 percent of these guys, you're paralyzed. I don't care if every officer and every staff noncommissioned officer was a John Wayne," said Mastrion. "You still won't have a functioning unit.

"The Marines didn't have that many problems in Vietnam, not half as many as the Army had. But the barriers were still there. The draft was driving them toward us but we were still selecting who we wanted. The barriers went down when they did away with the draft. And, once those barriers were gone and we started to fill up with these guys, that's when we started to have problems. This was after the Vietnam war. The pressures to fill up, to meet quotas, was so great and the impetus wasn't driving recruits to any of the services so the pressure to fill up was so great that the 3 and 7 percent barriers went down. We were out I think 200,000. So the barriers went down and these guys started to come in. And again you don't need many because, remember, the 3 percenters will immediately ally with the 7 percenters."

Mastrion does not have kind things to say about the quality of recruits in the early 1970s. "I got to the Second Division in 1972 and was bad then, and it wasn't until the end of '74 or the beginning of '75 when General Wilson took over as Commandant that things began to change. The whole Marine Corps had been having problems with these turds, and it was just difficult to get rid of them because of the need for people. We were paralyzed. You couldn't train, you couldn't do hardly anything because you were taking care of these people at the low end of the bell curve. We had had discipline problem after discipline problem after discipline problem. I remember that one

week I -with the Third Battalion, Sixth Marines, in one week, the UA [unauthorized absence] rate broke [went under] 100, and we were happy. I mean we celebrated. It was a very bad time and the reason the UA rate was so high was that the good guys were saying the hell with this and going over the hill.

"We lost a good cadre of staff noncommissioned officers, which essentially is the backbone of the Marine Corps, and it just was just terrible. The daily rate was over 100 (out of about 900 on board), and we were happy that it went below 100. It was a very bad time. Many of the UA Marines were good men who were tired of the criminals who were making their lives miserable. Our joy in having "less than 100 UAs" was a bit tongue in cheek. Breaking 100 really meant nothing, as things did not get better for some time to come. Units were tied to garrison--meaning you couldn't go to the field-because they had so many disciplinary problems. It appeared that the powers that be in Washington D.C., were obsessed with keeping the Corps numbers up, it was very difficult to discharge troublemakers.

"Then in 1975 Lt. Gen. Lou Wilson was selected to be the new Commandant. Before he was installed, while still commanding Fleet Marine Force Pacific in Hawaii, he started sending messages to the Commandant, with information copies to every major command in the Corps, outlining how he was addressing the issue of getting rid of problem Marines and what the Commandant should do to speed this process. This was taken as a signal by everyone up and down all chains of command, to include Headquarters in Washington, that the time had come to purge the Corps of bad apples.

"I got home from the Mediterranean June of 1974 and we started to get rid of these incorrigibles through administrative discharges left and right. The number of administrative discharges handed down was staggering. Once that started, you could look out the window and see troops on the road going out to train. So you can see what happens you don't keep out the 3 and 7 percenters and don't weed out a good portion of the next 10 to 20. I saw this as validation of the theory."

But Mastrion thinks the problem runs much deeper than the Marine Corps. "Remember *Seinfeld*? That show was brilliant because: it showed normal people who were so self-centered they were obsessed. Remember the last show, when all those people came up and told them how their self-obsession caused all that pain for all the rest of the people? Remember that? That was a good measure of how society had changed. With *Seinfeld*, nobody really noticed how selfish those people were until that last episode. I know a lot of guys didn't like that last episode because it hit them right in the face."

*Seinfeld*, he believes, is symptomatic of society in general these days. "Remember how, when you were a kid, the worst thing anybody could say to you was, 'You are selfish'? Remember that? You'd go around doing good deeds for a week until somebody said you weren't selfish. To my way of thinking, our whole society grew self-indulgent The World War II era was a different world. People were different. I mean, Jesus, my dad was making thirty-eight bucks a week and you didn't have all this showering of pleasure on people.

"Kids today, recruits even, are more self-centered. You can see, like, even in the grandkids. I'm probably the cause of it because I spoil them, but, in any event, our whole society has changed to where this has to be coped with. In boot camp today, they have to concentrate v on getting the selfishness out of these kids.

"By emphasizing tradition, unit cohesiveness, harder discipline, being harder on them physically and psychologically, we're able to mold them quicker. The focus is on confronting lax and self-indulgent behavior in personnel.

"Back when, and up through the '70s, the material was there. All you to do was mold it. But, as our society got more self-centered, they even had to screw with the material to harden it up, and they did ether well, I think. The fact is, we put out a pretty good product consistently even though the base product has changed.

"The mistake that was made in our society was we started to concentrate not on changing the 3 and 7 percenters, but accommodating them. That why all these kids-we've got schools falling apart. But the genesis of that falling apart is actually the 3 percenters and the 7 percenters.

Mastrion's numbers get particularly interesting when one considers that what he immediately discards is the bottom three percent, and the following seven percent, and notes that the next ten percent tends to follow that bottom ten percent. His description of that bottom ten to twenty percent clearly mark them as all being peons. In turn, in a totally different area and circumstance from Marine boot camp, the Chronicle article states that the percentage of peons there is twelve to fifteen percent, very much in line with Mastrion.

At one point for a bit over a year I quietly lived in an apartment complex with some number of people who also quietly went about whatever they did, where the landlord commented that some of his tenants had been in place for years. On another hand the complete problem child was the peon who moved in just above me. On one occasion, he and his stereo woke me up at 4 AM. On another occasion, he and his stereo drowned out what I was playing in my apartment at a far less level of sound.

By the latter occurrence, both the landlord and the local police were quite uniform in their request that I go ahead and be the community tripwire, because both the landlord and the local police were quite tired of having to deal with the clueless peon, and the sooner that enough of a file could be put together, the sooner the idiot could get pried out of there and sent on his way.

Of that latter occurrence of the blasting stereo that was louder than mine, once he got started, I seem to recall giving the noise about fifteen minutes, just to see if he would notice his error, or if he really was that idiotic. After a bit I called in the cops, and as part of the details reported to the dispatcher, all I needed to do was simply hold the phone up towards the ceiling---the dispatcher quickly assured me that the standard patrician silence would soon be restored.

I don't remember if I'd heard footsteps on the stairs or the pounding on the upstairs door, but a relatively short time later the noise suddenly cut off. After that, the situation went from unquestionably idiotic to totally surreal. What I and everyone else in the area could hear at that point was the idiot proceeding to argue with the cop about the reality that being a total and complete peon was and is totally inexcusable. The peon knew he was wrong, the peon had backed himself into a corner, the peon proceeded to demonstrate to one and all why and how the peon places him or her self below the rest of us.

I never did learn if the peon finally moved out or actually got evicted. I needed to move closer to work and other associations, so I moved out as soon as my lease of a year ended. In the meantime, when I got disturbed by a peon lost in fantasies, in a very short time the landlord and the local police both very disgustedly reminded him that the peon does conform to reality, reality does not pay attention to the peon.

Of the idiot with the BMW, that peon presumably disturbed an entire fire crew, negatively affected the reason they were there, and rather probably also had the local police very involved in such things as large fines and other detailed conversations with the peon in question.

Unfortunately, as these things go, the ineptness of the peon can extend even further, causing even greater disturbances that themselves can cause shock waves even after the peon has been safely removed and isolated.

For the damage that a peon can do in the early twentieth century, do look up Edward VIII and see what had to be done to make up for him.

As got noted on the early twenty-first century world stage, a truly Nobel Prize winning peon is one who is such a total and absolute peon that the very first patrician to come along as a replacement is automatically and as immediately as possible awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

## **14: The Powerful, The Weak, And The Deluded.**

The following is a scattering of notes from reality and other observations that is somewhat inspired by, and definitely related to, William Bayer's "Juniors and Heavies". An early title for these notes was *The Normal, The Weak, And The Deluded*, until the realization that some of the weak and deluded would claim to be justified by "not being normal". A followup thought was *The Mensch And Ubermensch, The Weak, And The Deluded*, but the problem there is the particular definitions of mensch or ubermensch---The concept will always continue to be admired and sought out, but will also always feature the overwhelming problem of just getting the weak and the deluded to begin to comprehend. At least with the P, W, D, title, while both the weak and the deluded still won't actually understand, at least what they think powerful means can be a starting point to getting some use out of them. From there, even with a weak and deluded and imperfect understanding, the weak and deluded can choose to stay as they are, or they can choose to grasp, achieve, and stop being the weak and deluded, and become the powerful..

There is an occasionally repeated story about those who ignore reality and fixate instead on the framing mechanism that points to and at reality. One version is told by Bruce Lee in the movie Enter The Dragon; "It is like a finger pointing away to the moon. Don't concentrate on the finger or you will miss all that heavenly glory." Among the failures of the weak is that they demand that everyone stare at a finger just as they do---and sometimes that chosen finger isn't even pointing anywhere, has no meaning, and even the slightest bit of attention notes the lack of meaning. Among the failures of the deluded is that they demand to be admired for staring at the finger---and sometimes that chosen finger isn't even pointing anywhere, has no meaning, and even the slightest bit of attention notes the lack of meaning. The powerful doesn't demand anything and doesn't have to anyway. Whatever the circumstance, the powerful admires the moon, entirely at will, and just ignores the finger.





The Weak

The weak are the followers, those who don't just jump on the bandwagon but demand to do so. The weak are the ones who show up at a party and proclaim "Where are the cool people, so I can hang out with them." They never decide for themselves, they demand to know what everyone else is doing, so that they will be seen as always going along and never being capable of the slightest trace of actual thought, capability, taste, or style. The closest that the weak ever gets to seeking attention is with a demonstration of being identical to and interchangeable with any other of the weak.

A clear instance of such demanded impotence is the symbolic penis, or necktie. Only the weak has ever demanded that everyone must be seen displaying a fake penis. An actual male just has a real one, where only a eunuch requires the display of a fake one. Consider from history that a female "Pharaoh" would tend to be portrayed as having a fake beard, to thus demonstrate legitimacy. This is why in more modern times, any female with such a fake penis has always wound up looking totally surreal, ridiculous, and weak.

Another blatant and unmistakable sign of the weak is the display of the some particular feature or item, or a label or related fake placemaker. A normal person just wears clothing that is, simply, clothing. Only the weak must be seen displaying a costume where the primary focus is a particular item such as a particular hat. Only the weak must be seen displaying a costume where the primary focus is The Logo. Clothing often has a maker's mark of some sort that is, of course, on the inside of the clothing and out of sight. By contrast, only the costuming of the weak features a particular feature or item that is prominently displayed. As everyone knows, the only purpose of this display is the unmistakable following message: "The useless creature that is wearing this costume is miserable, unfortunate, and totally forgettable. This thing that has chosen to be in this costume has no value and is to be made use of by anyone for anything."

A friend of mine has pointed out another identifying characteristic of the weak, that of consistently and repeatedly shoving hands into pants pocket for the sole reason of appearing to masturbate in public. My friend is a retired acting teacher, and throughout his career he would rather memorably remind his students anytime they had their hands in their pockets; "I'd offer to shake hands, but I can see that you're busy." Of course if one of the weak is also wearing a symbolic penis when also standing around and appearing to masturbate, or when doing the masturbation walk, the immediate thought that everyone else has is, of course, "Are you really trying to find your penis, when your symbolic penis demonstrates to everyone that it isn't there anymore?"

There are two regularly occurring perfect examples of the weak as symbolizing the weak.

The first example is that of the standard image of the British schoolboy. This is someone stereotypically trapped, oppressed, victimized, beset upon, who is not only seen wearing the symbolic penis, but where the standard schoolboy jacket very prominently features the label of ownership. In the case of the weak, such wearing of the fake penis is just the beginning. The weak having no importance is further underlined by that choice of jacket with logo on the front, about where a shirt pocket would be---In the case of schoolboy, the logo will at least be that of the school, where for the mere weak, the logo is just a visual nothingness, reminding all that the wearer is also just an irrelevant piece of nothing.

The second example of the weak being unmistakably and undeniably weak is any and all costuming which attempts to resemble or be derived from the clothing of those in military service. Aside from the universal awareness that the weak remains unable to be in or support military service, only the costuming of the weak has symbolic or actual epaulettes and other items that only occur in a military setting. Clothing never has epaulettes, fake badges, fake symbols of military rank. A military uniform has epaulettes because they are used to display actual genuine military rank. In the case of the weak and being seen with useless and meaningless strips of cloth stuck on the shoulders of some costume, as everyone knows and always remembers, the weak have no rank or value.

### The Deluded

While the deluded share many of the characteristics of the weak, the deluded differentiate themselves from the weak in that they fantasize that they can plausibly claim that they should have the ability to impress others. Where the weak cluster in crowds and identical anonymity, the deluded fantasize that they are to be recognized as the unique and individual center of attention. In fact, the deluded even manage to fantasize that they are even capable of holding any attention at all. However, the closest the individual deluded ever gets to any form of recognition is in the utterly derisive and collective awareness that the deluded individual is merely yet another of many instances of

One Of That Kind: Such recognition never involves admiration. In the 1990s in the United States, a filmmaker named Christopher Guest began to regularly and undeniably accurately record what became known as the hipster, at a time when they were still called the yuppie, after they had earlier been called the preppy.

A hallmark of the deluded is a choice which the deluded insists is absolutely to be admired by everyone, is often to be practiced by everyone, is always blatantly complicated or contrived and completely a blatantly surreal affectation.

One such example among male deluded is the comb under, which is the direct and inevitable predecessor of the deluded male comb over. The comb over occurs when a deluded male can't decide whether the top of his head will have hair or have none, where he lacks the ability to make a viable decision because he's deluded. The result is where the deluded tries to do both by attempting to extend hair where it never goes or stays. Absolutely in kind, the comb under demonstrates the blatant inability to grow a beard or not grow a beard and choose one. While the deluded with a comb under then fantasizes that someday he will be mistaken for something to admire, the actual, immediate, and only result is to make the deluded look about age fifteen. Physical age is irrelevant, where the mere presence of the comb under at any number of years demonstrates that the deluded male is mentally at about thirty seconds just past adolescence. A friend's description of this affectation is "the bathub ring".

In time the physical age of the particular deluded will reach about thirty-five, at which point the deluded will then stack proof of irrelevance on top of proof of irrelevance by engaging in both the comb under as well as the comb over. In all such situations, the deluded male with a comb under is left with the very real likelihood of being told, directly, "You have the face of an immature fifteen year old boy, and as long as you have that comb under, you will always have the face of an immature fifteen year old boy." I suppose if one wants to be polite or otherwise duplicitously congratulatory, one can say to such an adolescently appearing deluded; "Nice comb under". Clearly one is never going to say "Nice beard" because the poor deluded can't figure out how to grow one.

Another such example of the complicated, contrived, and blatantly surreal, among both genders of deluded, is all instances of pulling up or winding up with the collar on end, of a shirt or jacket or whatever, to be a symbolic veterinarian or vet's collar. Or, with the same action, the deluded may intend to visually demonstrate to all observers that the particular deluded is actively seeking and expecting radio signals from the Mothership or the space aliens or The Secrit Govment Agency, or whatever stated reason the deluded gives for having a collar standing on end. With normal people when wearing a shirt, coat, whatever, with a collar, the collar is folded over because such a collar just is. By complete contrast, consider these following two possibilities of any deluded that has the collar pulled up on end, or worse yet, has contrived a shirt or coat where there is no way to have a normal collar.

For the deluded that wants everyone to think of a vet's collar, observe any dog that has just been castrated, is newly returned from the vet, and is wearing the exact same collar. Note the deluded with vet's collar that is standing on end, note the dog with vet's collar that is standing on end, note deluded and dog being totally and openly identical in appearance, note that such appearance openly signals to all the message of being castrated, docile, completely at the whim of the nearest owner. There really is nothing complimentary that will ever be said to any deluded wearing a vet's collar, the deluded will never understand it, and really is expecting or hoping to be told any variations on "Heel", "Roll over", "Play dead", and "Who's your owner?".

In turn, for the deluded that wants all observers to be impressed that the deluded is clearly trying to get guidance from the space aliens---or whomever---observe any radio antenna used for picking up radio signals from space. Note the deluded with a radio antenna collar that is standing on end, note the radio antenna with exact same shape, complete with feed antenna sticking out of the middle, note deluded and antenna being totally and openly identical in appearance, note that such appearance openly signals to all the message of the deluded eagerly seeking out radio transmissions from---whomever---so that the deluded then claims to have a sense of meaning and purpose. There really is nothing complimentary that will ever be said to any deluded that is costumed to look like a radio antenna, the deluded will never understand it, and really is expecting or hoping to be told some variation on "I notice you have your collar on end so that you can collect radio signals to have guidance. Do you think the Mothership will arrive soon?"

In like manner, a particular variety of the deluded is the fairy. The fairy is a male or female who goes about in a cloud of perfume that can be noticed three blocks away--if the fairy doesn't quite manage to cover three blocks, and only manages about ten to fifteen feet, it's not from lack of trying. The reason everyone calls this form of deluded a fairy is because the particular fairy is considered to be a big fairy in the middle of a cloud of metaphoric

but still extremely aggressive little fairies with little wings which fly everywhere in the area of the big fairy. And yes, according to the fairy, that area that the metaphoric fairies cover is usually or ideally---but only to the fairy---that three blocks in all directions. At all times, the fairy fantasizes that everyone admires the fairy for being smelled from three blocks away. The fairy is happiest when someone walks up to him or her and says "Obviously you're a fairy because I can smell your perfume from across the room.". In reality, real people bathe, and never need to or do wander about in a cloud of perfume.

### The Weak And The Deluded; Being Preppy, Then Yuppy, Then Hipster..

In turn, of the specific instance of the weak and deluded being more specifically known as the preppy, and then the yuppy, and then the hipster, this is a sequence which occurred in the United States---and occasionally elsewhere---in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century and early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Approaching the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, the United States was a participant in World War II. Those American involved in the war later generally became known as The Greatest Generation. During the nineteen fifties, as they settled in and helped expand the American economy, a number of the weak and deluded of that time took place in and supported the anti-communist witch hunts. By contrast, as usual, the powerful focused on actually doing actual and genuine national security and support, and on opposing the hysteria. In the 'sixties and 'seventies the children of the Greatest Generation grew up and encountered the Vietnam War, among other occurrences. The powerful took part in the war and also opposed it, expanded civil rights, and joined the Peace Corps. The weak and deluded also took part in and opposed the war, where generally the weak and deluded would have likely opposed the civil rights expansion, and probably would not have joined the Peace Corps.

And then along came the nineteen-empties. Unfortunately, the decade will never be remembered as the nineteen-eighties. Because of the weak and deluded, the 'empties wound up instead being the undoubted, bar nothing, butt-ugliest decade of the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century. Early on in the nineteen-empties, a very minor bit of social satire was published, called "The Preppy Handbook" The powerful uniformly noted the satire as being satire, where a redundant indicator is that it always and still is categorized as humor. On an other hand, the weak and deluded rather uniformly delineated themselves as the weak and deluded by totally missing the point, subsequently fantasizing that the book is an actual guide, and as the weak and deluded do, they also additionally fantasized that if they called themselves preppy, that any of the powerful might someday thus mistake them for any form of capable adults.

As it was, while the pretension of the weak and the deluded had already been documented and confirmed them as being ongoing complete failures; they weren't even able to be original failures. By that point and continuing on, the sapeurs of the Congo area of central Africa had already totally established themselves as the undeniable older cousins of all weak and deluded who claimed they must be called "preppy". Starting in the 'fifties or so, and definitely continuing on through the 'seventies and 'eighties and later, the sapeurs had already started to worship the idea of being mistaken for the middle classes. Like the other weak and deluded, the sapeurs had already fantasized that mere brand names instead of actual capability and intelligence could have any meaning or value. In addition, earlier even than the sapeurs, the cargo cultists of the South Pacific had already started insisting that if assorted gestures and appearances existed and were practiced---with no attention at all to where they came from or how reality actually functions---clearly such would make the cargo cultist admired and successful. And then, years and years later, the ongoing failure of the cargo cultist and the sapeur continued to be repeated daily by those later editions of the weak and the deluded who made any claim of or being impressed by being "preppy".

Immediately of course, back in the Unites States, the satire based delusion called "being preppy" hit its first hurdle. That satire has a very particularly declared focus on an extremely small cluster of people and situations where the most definitive parameter is that everything described occurs in a very small portion of New England, in the northeastern United States. Certainly, just from any first declaration, any weak and deluded claiming to be a preppy immediately and blatantly identify themselves as being particularly clueless, weak, and deluded. In addition though, any of these weak and deluded in Idaho, North Dakota, California, Tennessee, anywhere but the very limited area described by the satire, instantly manage to emphasize even further the declaration of failure and pointlessness.

In time, even the weak and deluded managed to finally begin to realize that instead of portraying utter

uselessness and failure, they were displaying ultimate uselessness and failure. Something had to be changed, and the weak and deluded then started being called the yuppy. While the change provided zero improvement whatsoever, at least there is no geographic limit to this variety of weak and deluded. The weak and deluded then continued on with their fantasies on the theme of demanding to have absolutely everything at all times, with no limits, while also being totally and absolutely admired and envied for . . . . Well, at no time do any of the weak and deluded ever manage to explain why anyone would want to admire or envy them, but the demand for that fantasy continued nonetheless.

Unfortunately, however, being easily identified as weak and deluded wasn't enough. The weak and deluded also began to insist that the economy also had to support their fantasies, and not just in the United States, but also everywhere else on the planet. Just one particular point alone is that under normal circumstances, savings money is savings money, and investment money is investment money. The two completely different areas of finance are very clearly and particularly administered and regulated. In the delusions of the weak and deluded, however, the two are to be considered the same, there are to be no limits and no restrictions, and everyone is to admire and support the weak and deluded and not notice the total and continuing cascading failures that inevitably result. The resulting collapse of the economies of Iceland and Ireland, with Greece following behind, are just one such example of economy as defined by the weak and deluded. Two books on the overall subject are *The Narcissism Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*, at <http://www.narcissismepidemic.com/> and *Age of Greed: The Triumph of Finance and the Decline of America, 1970 to the Present* at <http://www.amazon.com/Age-Greed-Triumph-Finance-Decline/dp/1400041716> but of course there are many, many other books and other discussions documenting this perpetual failure of the weak and deluded.

In the United States, just one result of the weak and deluded around the time they were being called the yuppy is the collapse of what is called the dot bomb economy. A result of the existence of the dot bomb economy was a massive housing bubble, and in time it collapsed too. Very quickly the weak and deluded called yuppy were left with no way to avoid the financial and situational limitations that they still managed to attempt to deny. In addition, as all this was going on, actual and genuine increased economic productivity delineated a further example of the worthlessness of the weak and deluded.

As noted, the all time fantasy of the weak is to disappear onto the bandwagon of looking just like everyone else, and being admired for such. In turn, the fantasy of the deluded is that everyone will single out and admire the deluded, usually for something which the deluded wants everyone else to think is unique and important. However, with successful economic production being available, very quickly everyone could get everything. The weak yuppy wound up having to face reality because anyone could be anything and the weak yuppy was left with no way to find the one, sole, social bandwagon that the weak fantasize they absolutely must climb upon. For the deluded yuppy, when everyone can have the same things, and thus everyone will, there is no reason that the deluded yuppy is going to be admired for having the metaphoric shiny thing, as if the yuppy would ever be admired. From the point of view of the powerful, of course, if everyone had a 30 inch computer monitor and a 150 mile per gallon car, the price would drop, and that would be wonderful.

Of course, at this same time, those collapsing economies caused the further ripples for weak, deluded, and powerful alike. Getting absolutely everything all the time requires lines of credit that can only be supported by ongoing fraud, and while the weak and the deluded remain totally happy to commit this fraud, someone else still has to support that fraud as well. When supporting banks that had been staffed by the equally weak and deluded started collapsing right and left, the yuppy ran out of equally weak and deluded suckers to scam.

Thus the yuppy then migrated over to being the hipster, where the hipster fantasy now involves cheap alcohol or something that looks like it, a cheap bar or event or something that looks like it, and bizarre costuming that is mass produced if new, or cheap and easy to get at if used. The weak hipster gets the identifiable blob to anonymously disappear into, and the deluded hipster gets the delusion of being admired that can be paid for with scrounged up pennies, or mommy and daddy's credit card, or something that looks like it.

Of course through all of this, in all times and places, the powerful, the weak, and the deluded just are. In both cases of weak and deluded, reality still continues, and with the yuppy further congealing into becoming the hipster, reality has become more and more present, and more undeniable. And, inevitably, this situation of being trumped by reality is a situation that the weak or deluded as hipster spends a lot of time in. At every instance of the many times of being so displaced by reality, the hipster's reaction to the circumstances or origin of the latest occurrence of reality is a stare that is sometimes enraged, sometimes bewildered. No amount of stunned bewilderment or enraged fuming from any hipster has ever resulted in reality having the slightest concern. In fact, very often the cause of the hipster

being reminded of and guided by reality doesn't ever notice that happening---after all, universal reality is just universal reality---, and certainly that source of reality is never going to have any reason to care what any hipster demands for an inevitably impossible fantasy.. In many instances, the continuance of reality is caused by the powerful, where the powerful correctly act with and react to reality and reality alone. And for those occasions of not being bewildered or enraged, the weak and deluded continue in their normal condition of being pointlessly vacuous.

As perfect examples of the hipster being displaced by reality, these two phase variations that the hipster regularly goes through both involve the numerous occurrences of those who are not the weak and deluded, usually when non-hipsters arrive in large numbers at some place that the hipsters have congealed.

The circumstance of the hipster becoming totally bewildered tends to be when the hipster has fantasized that reality has been obliterated. Not only does reality continue regardless of the fantasy of the hipster, but ignoring hipsters occurs with such emphasis that the hipster can not ignore that reality continues.. One can regularly read the face of the hipster as the regularly recurring thought very slowly travels through the hipster's very limited synapses; "I am a hipster, and thus being totally deluded, I have the fantasy that I am the totally admired center of all and everything, a situation which Just Is and everyone knows that, where at this moment I Have Arrived, and the admiration from all will now clearly continue, but wait, I am surrounded by reality. In reality, there is some activity that is going on here that is based in reality. I can tell it is based in reality because it is clearly occurring for its own sake and does not demand attention. First off I am incapable of understating the concept of not demanding to be admired, and secondly, worse yet, all these people are watching whatever the event is and not admiring me, and I also can not conceive of that, but, here is this occurrence, and, and, I Did Not Approve Of This!!!!!!"

The circumstance of the hipster becoming enraged---openly or otherwise---occurs when queuing up for a taxi, filing onto a train, arriving at an event with open seating, any such instance where everyone who is not weak/deluded/hipster shares and assists everyone else who is not weak/deluded/hipster, as hipsters leave themselves floundering about helplessly. With this second occurrence as well, one can regularly read the face of the hipster as the equally repetitious recurring thought very slowly travels through the hipster's very limited synapses; "I have arrived and because I am a hipster, I have the delusion that I obviously and automatically do have the universally recognized right to have the front of the line/best access/front row center seat to be seen watching whatever is going on, but wait, I am surrounded by reality. Here in reality, others have arrived before me, and because they arrived on time, they are ahead of me/have better access/have taken all the seating up front and along the center of the crowd. Because everyone ahead of me has arrived first, there isn't even any space that I can grab and force my way into to ignore everyone I displace, and I did **Not** expect this to occur, and I did **Not** approve of this occurring, **This Is Wrong!!!!!!**"

In addition to the two recurrences listed above, there is a slower and larger form of the second recurrence that has been occurring in the United States during the time that the weak and the deluded have been insisting on totally destroying all economies everywhere. Originally, when one would particularly study some subject, in time one would be able to demonstrate in all applicable circumstances that one knew the studied material. In time, a variety of shortcut was developed, where the study and certain knowledge was---and actually is still---required, but as a result one could get a college degree, a masters degree, a PhD, and the degree would serve that shortcut demonstration of capability. However, actual study is not what the weak or deluded are capable of. Actually working towards and earning an actual college degree, an actual masters degree, an actual PhD is not what the weak or deluded are capable of. Instead, what the weak and deluded have been demanding is that the piece of paper be separated from the original meaning of actually having skill and knowledge. At the same time, while the weak and deluded have been able to wave about more and more amounts of fake money---that fraudulent credit---more and more of the same sort of weak and deluded have started diploma mills that they call colleges and universities. The only purpose of any such diploma mill is to print a cheap piece of paper for a massively large amount of money, so that the weak and deluded will then claim to have such a college degree, or masters degree, or PhD. Totally unsurprising, the next occurrence after the creation of the wallpaper bubble is when it pops. All fake academic wallpaper printed after a particular date or from a particular source entirely is quite correctly be declared worthless. There is much enraged screaming and fuming from all the weak and deluded, but such histrionics are no replacement for someone who matter of factly demonstrates the genuine and actual knowledge of the actual subject.

All in all, at all times, the only success that is ever achieved by the weak and the deluded is to be extremely arrogantly proud of having a definite je ne sai pas, all while vehemently insisting that everyone recognize this at all times. And yes, such recognition is particularly demanded of those with even only the slightest understanding of

colloquial French.

Basically, the all time fantasy of what the hipster would like to be able to be imagined as mistaken for is a grand and uniform combination of the likes of Richard Feynman, George Patton, Rudolf Nureyev, Peter Cook, Dwight Eisenhower, Norman Rockwell, Al Grey, Richard Burton, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Albert Einstein, Dudley Moor, Salvador Dali, Omar Bradley, and Peter O'Toole---or the female equivalent---, whereas the reality of the hipster since before being called the preppy, through the yuppie, on to the hipster, and whatever may follow, is, has been, and always will be, a sort of piss-poor, watered down blend of Edward VIII and Douglas MacArthur.

### The Powerful

The powerful don't care. Such is certainly a gross oversimplification in general, but equally certainly, when the powerful are compared to the frantic clustering of the weak and the deluded fantasy of being admired, the summary is apt. A Venn diagram is one of those charts where there are a set of partially overlapping circles where one sees what is only in one circle alone, and then in the overlapping portion, what is in two or more circles. In the case of the powerful, and the weak and the deluded, such a display would be more of a pie chart. For the weak, there is totally blending in with everyone else, looking the same way, thinking the same way, acting the same way, and totally despising anyone who does not exactly match them. For the deluded, there is fantasizing that everyone is to always admire them, look up to them, consider them the center of the universe, while despising and being enraged by the rest of us who have a life and aren't the least bit impressed. In turn, the extremely separate and distinct pie slices will remain, but a Venn diagram comes to mind because the powerful may do something that a lot of other people do, weak and deluded included, because the shared occurrence works. At the same time, the powerful may go and do something that no one else does, because they feel like it. In all such instances, some random opinion from the weak or the deluded, or anyone else, remains irrelevant. Only an actually relevant observation may get noticed, usually because it is actual and genuine feedback that can or will then become a feature or factor of what the powerful is doing.

This last bit does note that the powerful do remain aware of the weak and deluded, if only to remember that they are indeed the weak, deluded, and useless. There are two axioms that have turned up over time about the weak and deluded:

There is a hipster born every minute.

For you will always have the hipster among you.

Of course for each of these axioms, hipster is merely the term of the moment, the way the term was yuppie before that and preppy before that. In all cases, whatever the term of the moment, the weak and deluded will remain beneath the rest of us and will continue to be shunted out of the way at will. Therefore, on a number of occasions, the powerful will indeed structure some occurrence to take into account the unfortunate presence of the weak and deluded.---At some performance, a backstage area will be created and those not involved will be excluded, with enthusiastic enforcement, so that performers and crew can focus on the performance. The weak and deluded will be fenced out by the powerful, simply because only the weak and deluded think that a good idea is to stand around being seen backstage, so that they can disrupt the performance.

The powerful do whatever they want whenever they want. Now, the weak and the deluded think that obviously this means a practice which not only must be demonstrated all the time, but must also cause the greatest amount of disruption to everyone in the vicinity. Only the weak and deluded think that "whatever and whenever" means to totally screw up everything, intrude at will, impose on everyone, and all the other trite little fantasies common among the limited, the naive, and the sheltered. In reality, what the powerful always know and very openly acknowledge is that when the weak or the deluded---and also the powerful---break things, upset things, disrupt things, there will be always be some sort of response to consider. Furthermore, very regularly, the one who will be returning things to normal---or as this paper has noticed, the one who will be returning things to being powerful---is usually never going to be some weak or deluded who screwed things up. Very often the only person doing the work---and sometimes getting blamed for being correct---is the powerful. In times when a change is made and left in place, in that case there was a need for the change---and after some discussion, that change might get reversed or altered, or might not, but never at the whim of some weak or deluded and the inevitable fantasies of control. The

actual practice of the powerful is to do what is needed when it is needed, and to absolutely not do anything whatsoever at all when that complete lack of action is what is needed.

The fact that the powerful do not do what the weak and deluded expect or would do themselves is one of the reasons that the weak and deluded tend to dislike the powerful---at least on those occasions that the weak and the deluded even manage to realize the presence of the powerful at all. For the weak, the powerful keeps doing what the weak see as being weak, something that the weak would never openly choose to do, because doing so will draw attention, and the weak absolutely demand that everyone be identical, and interchangeable, and weak. For the deluded, the powerful effortlessly achieves the admiration that the deluded thinks is paramount, but unlike the deluded, the powerful does so by actually doing something of merit without concern for the reactions of others.

A regularly occurring example of the powerful resembling the weak and thus being despised by the weak is military in the field. All the flashy and very prominent additions and labels and forms of identification are for the garrison or when out among the civilian public. When in the field, the point is to be totally anonymous, unobtrusive, and thus utterly effective, capable, and lethal, thus being the total antithesis of the weak.

A regularly occurring example of the powerful resembling the deluded and thus being despised by the deluded is military after any combat or lack of combat has occurred. Flashy medals and mentions in reports only occur after the fact of some military occurrence. The reality of combat, and the reality of particularly stationed lack of combat, is that as either are occurring, there is no general practice of the deluded fantasy of "Look at me!!!! Look at me!!!!". In combat, demanding attention from others is always an invitation to get shot, and when opponents are being particularly aware, not only may they shoot anyway, but they will always become more alert for the previously unexpected actual attack from a different direction. In reality, in military service or not, while there may be awareness that the powerful is present, the point is to not be looked at and not to be noticed, and thus to be effective and successful. Whether in military service or not, the powerful is extremely quietly acknowledged only by the equally powerful, not by some random other.

There are four varieties of behavior that have turned up over time, and for this telling, this borrows from English sociologist Kate Fox and her book *Watching The English*.

Person number one has a garden. In this garden weeds are pulled, plants are planted, decisions are made to arrange this area and that. The entire point of the garden is the general amusement of person number one. The garden is not particularly spoken of, or not spoken of, the knowledge or reactions of others is recognized as being totally irrelevant.

Person number two has a garden. Very particularly in this garden is A Garden Gnome---and for actual practice, instead of a gnome, there could be a gazebo, a fountain, or a scale model of the Taj Mahal. In all cases, what person number two absolutely demands is the absolute admiration by everyone because the garden gnome is there in the garden. In all instances person number two insists that the garden gnome demonstrates total and absolute taste and success which everyone is to admire. In making this demand, the ongoing fantasy of person number two manages to simultaneously require both the repeated and ongoing reminder to everyone of such fantasized success along with the repeated and ongoing awareness by everyone of the same fantasy without there needing to be any such reminder.

Person number three has a garden. Very particularly in this garden is A Garden Gnome--- and for actual practice, instead of a gnome, there could be a gazebo, a fountain, or a scale model of the Taj Mahal. In all cases, what person number three absolutely demands is the absolute admiration by everyone because the garden gnome is there in the garden as an example of ironic wit and sophistication. In all instances person number three insists that the garden gnome demonstrates total and absolute ironic taste and success which everyone is to admire. In making this demand, the ongoing fantasy of person number three manages to simultaneously require both the repeated and ongoing reminder to everyone of such fantasized success along with the repeated and ongoing awareness by everyone of the same fantasy without there needing to be any such reminder. As Fox points out in her book;

I once expressed mild surprise at the presence of a garden gnome in an upper-middle-class garden (I said something intelligent like 'Oh, a gnome'). The owner of the garden explained that the gnome was 'ironic'. I asked him, with apologies for my ignorance, how one could tell that his garden gnome was supposed to be an ironic statement, as opposed to, you know, just a gnome. He rather sniffily replied that I only had to look at the rest of the garden for it to be obvious that the gnome was a tongue-in-cheek joke. But surely, I persisted,



garden gnomes are always something of a joke, in any garden – I mean, no-one actually takes them seriously or regards them as works of art. His response was rather rambling and confused (not to mention somewhat huffy), but the gist seemed to be that while the lower classes saw gnomes as intrinsically amusing, his gnome was amusing only because of its incongruous appearance in a ‘smart’ garden. In other words, council-house gnomes were a joke, but his gnome was a joke about council-house tastes, effectively a joke about class. A subtle but clearly very important distinction. Needless to say, I was not invited back.

This man’s reaction to my questions clearly defined him as upper-middle, rather than upper class. In fact, his pointing out that the gnome I had noticed was ‘ironic’ had already demoted him by half a class from my original assessment.

Now, getting back to the four varieties, person number four has a garden. In this garden weeds are pulled, plants are planted, decisions are made to arrange this area and that. Tucked somewhere in the garden, or blatantly out in the open, is a garden gnome. Or two, three, a dozen garden gnomes. The entire point of the garden and accompanying gnome(s) is the general amusement of person number four. The garden---and its gnome(s)---is not particularly spoken of, or not spoken of, the knowledge or reactions of others is recognized as being totally irrelevant.

As Fox continues;

A genuine member of the upper classes would either have boldly admitted to a passion for garden gnomes (and eagerly pointed out other examples of the genre dotted about his otherwise effortlessly elegant garden) or said something like ‘Ah yes, my gnome. I’m very fond of my gnome.’ and left me to draw my own conclusions. The upper classes do not care what a nosey anthropologist (or indeed anyone else) thinks of them, and in any case do not need ironic gnomes to emphasise their status.

Persons number one and four are very clearly the powerful. Number two is weak, and number three is deluded.

As a final general thought, anytime the weak or deluded do not yet do what the powerful do, it doesn't really matter. There are three possible reasons for this.

A) They haven't yet started to become the powerful, but they will start soon. In doing so, the soon to be former weak and deluded will begin to do what is needed by circumstance or personal whim, will themselves become powerful, and thus will become despised by their former associates. In doing so, they will cease to care about those concerns of the weak and the deluded.

B) Anytime the weak and deluded both become noticeable and remain weak and deluded, they remain irrelevant and are always casually discarded at whim. Regarding this, the weak and deluded repeatedly deny, and just deny, and merely deny, all with total and unchangeable futility.

C) In time, as the weak and deluded do not remake themselves into the powerful, they are abandoned and left behind.

## 15. Solitude and Leadership, By William Deresiewicz

From *The American Scholar*: <http://www.theamericanscholar.org/solitude-and-leadership/>

---If you want others to follow, learn to be alone with your thoughts

The lecture below was delivered to the plebe class at the United States Military Academy at West Point in October of 2009.

My title must seem like a contradiction. What can solitude have to do with leadership? Solitude means being alone, and leadership necessitates the presence of others—the people you’re leading. When we think about leadership in American history we are likely to think of Washington, at the head of an army, or Lincoln, at the head of a nation, or King, at the head of a movement—people with multitudes behind them, looking to them for direction. And when we think of solitude, we are apt to think of Thoreau, a man alone in the woods, keeping a journal and communing with nature in silence.

Leadership is what you are here to learn—the qualities of character and mind that will make you fit to command a platoon, and beyond that, perhaps, a company, a battalion, or, if you leave the military, a corporation, a foundation, a department of government. Solitude is what you have the least of here, especially as plebes. You don’t even have privacy, the opportunity simply to be physically alone, never mind solitude, the ability to be alone with your thoughts. And yet I submit to you that solitude is one of the most important necessities of true leadership. This lecture will be an attempt to explain why.

We need to begin by talking about what leadership really means. I just spent 10 years teaching at another institution that, like West Point, liked to talk a lot about leadership, Yale University. A school that some of you might have gone to had you not come here, that some of your friends might be going to. And if not Yale, then Harvard, Stanford, MIT, and so forth. These institutions, like West Point, also see their role as the training of leaders, constantly encourage their students, like West Point, to regard themselves as leaders among their peers and future leaders of society. Indeed, when we look around at the American elite, the people in charge of government, business, academia, and all our other major institutions—senators, judges, CEOs, college presidents, and so forth—we find that they come overwhelmingly either from the Ivy League and its peer institutions or from the service academies, especially West Point.

So I began to wonder, as I taught at Yale, what leadership really consists of. My students, like you, were energetic, accomplished, smart, and often ferociously ambitious, but was that enough to make them leaders? Most of them, as much as I liked and even admired them, certainly didn’t seem to me like leaders. Does being a leader, I wondered, just mean being accomplished, being successful? Does getting straight As make you a leader? I didn’t think so. Great heart surgeons or great novelists or great shortstops may be terrific at what they do, but that doesn’t mean they’re leaders. Leadership and aptitude, leadership and achievement, leadership and even excellence have to be different things, otherwise the concept of leadership has no meaning. And it seemed to me that that had to be especially true of the kind of excellence I saw in the students around me.

See, things have changed since I went to college in the ’80s. Everything has gotten much more intense. You have to do much more now to get into a top school like Yale or West Point, and you have to start a lot earlier. We didn’t begin thinking about college until we were juniors, and maybe we each did a couple of extracurriculars. But I know what it’s like for you guys now. It’s an endless series of hoops that you have to jump through, starting from way back, maybe as early as junior high school. Classes, standardized tests, extracurriculars in school, extracurriculars outside of school. Test prep courses, admissions coaches, private tutors. I sat on the Yale College admissions committee a couple of years ago. The first thing the admissions officer would do when presenting a case to the rest of the committee was read what they call the “brag” in admissions

lingo, the list of the student's extracurriculars. Well, it turned out that a student who had six or seven extracurriculars was already in trouble. Because the students who got in—in addition to perfect grades and top scores—usually had 10 or 12.

So what I saw around me were great kids who had been trained to be world-class hoop jumpers. Any goal you set them, they could achieve. Any test you gave them, they could pass with flying colors. They were, as one of them put it herself, “excellent sheep.” I had no doubt that they would continue to jump through hoops and ace tests and go on to Harvard Business School, or Michigan Law School, or Johns Hopkins Medical School, or Goldman Sachs, or McKinsey consulting, or whatever. And this approach would indeed take them far in life. They would come back for their 25th reunion as a partner at White & Case, or an attending physician at Mass General, or an assistant secretary in the Department of State.

That is exactly what places like Yale mean when they talk about training leaders. Educating people who make a big name for themselves in the world, people with impressive titles, people the university can brag about. People who make it to the top. People who can climb the greasy pole of whatever hierarchy they decide to attach themselves to.

But I think there's something desperately wrong, and even dangerous, about that idea. To explain why, I want to spend a few minutes talking about a novel that many of you may have read, *Heart of Darkness*. If you haven't read it, you've probably seen *Apocalypse Now*, which is based on it. Marlow in the novel becomes Captain Willard, played by Martin Sheen. Kurtz in the novel becomes Colonel Kurtz, played by Marlon Brando. But the novel isn't about Vietnam; it's about colonialism in the Belgian Congo three generations before Vietnam. Marlow, not a military officer but a merchant marine, a civilian ship's captain, is sent by the company that's running the country under charter from the Belgian crown to sail deep upriver, up the Congo River, to retrieve a manager who's ensconced himself in the jungle and gone rogue, just like Colonel Kurtz does in the movie.

Now everyone knows that the novel is about imperialism and colonialism and race relations and the darkness that lies in the human heart, but it became clear to me at a certain point, as I taught the novel, that it is also about bureaucracy—what I called, a minute ago, hierarchy. The Company, after all, is just that: a company, with rules and procedures and ranks and people in power and people scrambling for power, just like any other bureaucracy. Just like a big law firm or a governmental department or, for that matter, a university. Just like—and here's why I'm telling you all this—just like the bureaucracy you are about to join. The word bureaucracy tends to have negative connotations, but I say this in no way as a criticism, merely a description, that the U.S. Army is a bureaucracy and one of the largest and most famously bureaucratic bureaucracies in the world. After all, it was the Army that gave us, among other things, the indispensable bureaucratic acronym “snafu”: “situation normal: all fucked up”—or “all fouled up” in the cleaned-up version. That comes from the U.S. Army in World War II.

You need to know that when you get your commission, you'll be joining a bureaucracy, and however long you stay in the Army, you'll be operating within a bureaucracy. As different as the armed forces are in so many ways from every other institution in society, in that respect they are the same. And so you need to know how bureaucracies operate, what kind of behavior—what kind of character—they reward, and what kind they punish.

So, back to the novel. Marlow proceeds upriver by stages, just like Captain Willard does in the movie. First he gets to the Outer Station. Kurtz is at the Inner Station. In between is the Central Station, where Marlow spends the most time, and where we get our best look at bureaucracy in action and the kind of people who succeed in it. This is Marlow's description of the manager of the Central Station, the big boss:

He was commonplace in complexion, in features, in manners, and in voice. He was of middle size and of ordinary build. His eyes, of the usual blue, were perhaps remarkably cold. . . . Otherwise there was only an indefinable, faint

expression of his lips, something stealthy—a smile—not a smile—I remember it, but I can't explain. . . . He was a common trader, from his youth up employed in these parts—nothing more. He was obeyed, yet he inspired neither love nor fear, nor even respect. He inspired uneasiness. That was it! Uneasiness. Not a definite mistrust—just uneasiness—nothing more. You have no idea how effective such a . . . a . . . faculty can be. He had no genius for organizing, for initiative, or for order even. . . . He had no learning, and no intelligence. His position had come to him—why? . . . He originated nothing, he could keep the routine going—that's all. But he was great. He was great by this little thing that it was impossible to tell what could control such a man. He never gave that secret away. Perhaps there was nothing within him. Such a suspicion made one pause.

Note the adjectives: commonplace, ordinary, usual, common. There is nothing distinguished about this person. About the 10th time I read that passage, I realized it was a perfect description of the kind of person who tends to prosper in the bureaucratic environment. And the only reason I did is because it suddenly struck me that it was a perfect description of the head of the bureaucracy that I was part of, the chairman of my academic department—who had that exact same smile, like a shark, and that exact same ability to make you uneasy, like you were doing something wrong, only she wasn't ever going to tell you what. Like the manager—and I'm sorry to say this, but like so many people you will meet as you negotiate the bureaucracy of the Army or for that matter of whatever institution you end up giving your talents to after the Army, whether it's Microsoft or the World Bank or whatever—the head of my department had no genius for organizing or initiative or even order, no particular learning or intelligence, no distinguishing characteristics at all. Just the ability to keep the routine going, and beyond that, as Marlow says, her position had come to her—why?

That's really the great mystery about bureaucracies. Why is it so often that the best people are stuck in the middle and the people who are running things—the leaders—are the mediocrities? Because excellence isn't usually what gets you up the greasy pole. What gets you up is a talent for maneuvering. Kissing up to the people above you, kicking down to the people below you. Pleasing your teachers, pleasing your superiors, picking a powerful mentor and riding his coattails until it's time to stab him in the back. Jumping through hoops. Getting along by going along. Being whatever other people want you to be, so that it finally comes to seem that, like the manager of the Central Station, you have nothing inside you at all. Not taking stupid risks like trying to change how things are done or question why they're done. Just keeping the routine going.

I tell you this to forewarn you, because I promise you that you will meet these people and you will find yourself in environments where what is rewarded above all is conformity. I tell you so you can decide to be a different kind of leader. And I tell you for one other reason. As I thought about these things and put all these pieces together—the kind of students I had, the kind of leadership they were being trained for, the kind of leaders I saw in my own institution—I realized that this is a national problem. We have a crisis of leadership in this country, in every institution. Not just in government. Look at what happened to American corporations in recent decades, as all the old dinosaurs like General Motors or TWA or U.S. Steel fell apart. Look at what happened to Wall Street in just the last couple of years.

Finally—and I know I'm on sensitive ground here—look at what happened during the first four years of the Iraq War. We were stuck. It wasn't the fault of the enlisted ranks or the noncoms or the junior officers. It was the fault of the senior leadership, whether military or civilian or both. We weren't just not winning, we weren't even changing direction.

We have a crisis of leadership in America because our overwhelming power and wealth, earned under earlier generations of leaders, made us complacent, and for too long we have been training leaders who only know how to keep the routine going. Who can answer questions, but don't know how to ask them. Who can fulfill goals, but don't know how to set them. Who think

about how to get things done, but not whether they're worth doing in the first place. What we have now are the greatest technocrats the world has ever seen, people who have been trained to be incredibly good at one specific thing, but who have no interest in anything beyond their area of expertise. What we don't have are leaders.

What we don't have, in other words, are thinkers. People who can think for themselves. People who can formulate a new direction: for the country, for a corporation or a college, for the Army—a new way of doing things, a new way of looking at things. People, in other words, with vision.

Now some people would say, great. Tell this to the kids at Yale, but why bother telling it to the ones at West Point? Most people, when they think of this institution, assume that it's the last place anyone would want to talk about thinking creatively or cultivating independence of mind. It's the Army, after all. It's no accident that the word regiment is the root of the word regimentation. Surely you who have come here must be the ultimate conformists. Must be people who have bought in to the way things are and have no interest in changing it. Are not the kind of young people who think about the world, who ponder the big issues, who question authority. If you were, you would have gone to Amherst or Pomona. You're at West Point to be told what to do and how to think.

But you know that's not true. I know it, too; otherwise I would never have been invited to talk to you, and I'm even more convinced of it now that I've spent a few days on campus. To quote Colonel Scott Krawczyk, your course director, in a lecture he gave last year to English 102:

From the very earliest days of this country, the model for our officers, which was built on the model of the citizenry and reflective of democratic ideals, was to be different. They were to be possessed of a democratic spirit marked by independent judgment, the freedom to measure action and to express disagreement, and the crucial responsibility never to tolerate tyranny.

All the more so now. Anyone who's been paying attention for the last few years understands that the changing nature of warfare means that officers, including junior officers, are required more than ever to be able to think independently, creatively, flexibly. To deploy a whole range of skills in a fluid and complex situation. Lieutenant colonels who are essentially functioning as provincial governors in Iraq, or captains who find themselves in charge of a remote town somewhere in Afghanistan. People who know how to do more than follow orders and execute routines.

Look at the most successful, most acclaimed, and perhaps the finest soldier of his generation, General David Petraeus. He's one of those rare people who rises through a bureaucracy for the right reasons. He is a thinker. He is an intellectual. In fact, Prospect magazine named him Public Intellectual of the Year in 2008—that's in the world. He has a Ph.D. from Princeton, but what makes him a thinker is not that he has a Ph.D. or that he went to Princeton or even that he taught at West Point. I can assure you from personal experience that there are a lot of highly educated people who don't know how to think at all.

No, what makes him a thinker—and a leader—is precisely that he is able to think things through for himself. And because he can, he has the confidence, the courage, to argue for his ideas even when they aren't popular. Even when they don't please his superiors. Courage: there is physical courage, which you all possess in abundance, and then there is another kind of courage, moral courage, the courage to stand up for what you believe.

It wasn't always easy for him. His path to where he is now was not a straight one. When he was running Mosul in 2003 as commander of the 101st Airborne and developing the strategy he would later formulate in the Counterinsurgency Field Manual and then ultimately apply throughout Iraq, he pissed a lot of people off. He was way ahead of the leadership in Baghdad and Washington, and bureaucracies don't like that sort of thing. Here he was, just another two-star, and

he was saying, implicitly but loudly, that the leadership was wrong about the way it was running the war. Indeed, he was not rewarded at first. He was put in charge of training the Iraqi army, which was considered a blow to his career, a dead-end job. But he stuck to his guns, and ultimately he was vindicated. Ironically, one of the central elements of his counterinsurgency strategy is precisely the idea that officers need to think flexibly, creatively, and independently.

That's the first half of the lecture: the idea that true leadership means being able to think for yourself and act on your convictions. But how do you learn to do that? How do you learn to think? Let's start with how you don't learn to think. A study by a team of researchers at Stanford came out a couple of months ago. The investigators wanted to figure out how today's college students were able to multitask so much more effectively than adults. How do they manage to do it, the researchers asked? The answer, they discovered—and this is by no means what they expected—is that they don't. The enhanced cognitive abilities the investigators expected to find, the mental faculties that enable people to multitask effectively, were simply not there. In other words, people do not multitask effectively. And here's the really surprising finding: the more people multitask, the worse they are, not just at other mental abilities, but at multitasking itself.

One thing that made the study different from others is that the researchers didn't test people's cognitive functions while they were multitasking. They separated the subject group into high multitaskers and low multitaskers and used a different set of tests to measure the kinds of cognitive abilities involved in multitasking. They found that in every case the high multitaskers scored worse. They were worse at distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information and ignoring the latter. In other words, they were more distractible. They were worse at what you might call "mental filing": keeping information in the right conceptual boxes and being able to retrieve it quickly. In other words, their minds were more disorganized. And they were even worse at the very thing that defines multitasking itself: switching between tasks.

Multitasking, in short, is not only not thinking, it impairs your ability to think. Thinking means concentrating on one thing long enough to develop an idea about it. Not learning other people's ideas, or memorizing a body of information, however much those may sometimes be useful. Developing your own ideas. In short, thinking for yourself. You simply cannot do that in bursts of 20 seconds at a time, constantly interrupted by Facebook messages or Twitter tweets, or fiddling with your iPod, or watching something on YouTube.

I find for myself that my first thought is never my best thought. My first thought is always someone else's; it's always what I've already heard about the subject, always the conventional wisdom. It's only by concentrating, sticking to the question, being patient, letting all the parts of my mind come into play, that I arrive at an original idea. By giving my brain a chance to make associations, draw connections, take me by surprise. And often even that idea doesn't turn out to be very good. I need time to think about it, too, to make mistakes and recognize them, to make false starts and correct them, to outlast my impulses, to defeat my desire to declare the job done and move on to the next thing.

I used to have students who bragged to me about how fast they wrote their papers. I would tell them that the great German novelist Thomas Mann said that a writer is someone for whom writing is more difficult than it is for other people. The best writers write much more slowly than everyone else, and the better they are, the slower they write. James Joyce wrote *Ulysses*, the greatest novel of the 20th century, at the rate of about a hundred words a day—half the length of the selection I read you earlier from *Heart of Darkness*—for seven years. T. S. Eliot, one of the greatest poets our country has ever produced, wrote about 150 pages of poetry over the course of his entire 25-year career. That's half a page a month. So it is with any other form of thought. You do your best thinking by slowing down and concentrating.

Now that's the third time I've used that word, concentrating. Concentrating, focusing. You can just as easily consider this lecture to be about concentration as about solitude. Think about what the word means. It means gathering yourself together into a single point rather than letting

yourself be dispersed everywhere into a cloud of electronic and social input. It seems to me that Facebook and Twitter and YouTube—and just so you don't think this is a generational thing, TV and radio and magazines and even newspapers, too—are all ultimately just an elaborate excuse to run away from yourself. To avoid the difficult and troubling questions that being human throws in your way. Am I doing the right thing with my life? Do I believe the things I was taught as a child? What do the words I live by—words like duty, honor, and country—really mean? Am I happy?

You and the members of the other service academies are in a unique position among college students, especially today. Not only do you know that you're going to have a job when you graduate, you even know who your employer is going to be. But what happens after you fulfill your commitment to the Army? Unless you know who you are, how will you figure out what you want to do with the rest of your life? Unless you're able to listen to yourself, to that quiet voice inside that tells you what you really care about, what you really believe in—indeed, how those things might be evolving under the pressure of your experiences. Students everywhere else agonize over these questions, and while you may not be doing so now, you are only postponing them for a few years.

Maybe some of you are agonizing over them now. Not everyone who starts here decides to finish here. It's no wonder and no cause for shame. You are being put through the most demanding training anyone can ask of people your age, and you are committing yourself to work of awesome responsibility and mortal danger. The very rigor and regimentation to which you are quite properly subject here naturally has a tendency to make you lose touch with the passion that brought you here in the first place. I saw exactly the same kind of thing at Yale. It's not that my students were robots. Quite the reverse. They were intensely idealistic, but the overwhelming weight of their practical responsibilities, all of those hoops they had to jump through, often made them lose sight of what those ideals were. Why they were doing it all in the first place.

So it's perfectly natural to have doubts, or questions, or even just difficulties. The question is, what do you do with them? Do you suppress them, do you distract yourself from them, do you pretend they don't exist? Or do you confront them directly, honestly, courageously? If you decide to do so, you will find that the answers to these dilemmas are not to be found on Twitter or Comedy Central or even in *The New York Times*. They can only be found within—without distractions, without peer pressure, in solitude.

But let me be clear that solitude doesn't always have to mean introspection. Let's go back to *Heart of Darkness*. It's the solitude of concentration that saves Marlow amidst the madness of the Central Station. When he gets there he finds out that the steamboat he's supposed to sail upriver has a giant hole in it, and no one is going to help him fix it. "I let him run on," he says, "this papier-mâché Mephistopheles"—he's talking not about the manager but his assistant, who's even worse, since he's still trying to kiss his way up the hierarchy, and who's been raving away at him. You can think of him as the Internet, the ever-present social buzz, chattering away at you 24/7:

I let him run on, this papier-mâché Mephistopheles and it seemed to me that if I tried I could poke my forefinger through him, and would find nothing inside but a little loose dirt. . . .

It was a great comfort to turn from that chap to . . . the battered, twisted, ruined, tin-pot steamboat. . . . I had expended enough hard work on her to make me love her. No influential friend would have served me better. She had given me a chance to come out a bit—to find out what I could do. No, I don't like work. I had rather laze about and think of all the fine things that can be done. I don't like work—no man does—but I like what is in the work,—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know.

"The chance to find yourself." Now that phrase, "finding yourself," has acquired a bad reputation. It suggests an aimless liberal-arts college graduate—an English major, no doubt,

someone who went to a place like Amherst or Pomona—who's too spoiled to get a job and spends his time staring off into space. But here's Marlow, a mariner, a ship's captain. A more practical, hardheaded person you could not find. And I should say that Marlow's creator, Conrad, spent 19 years as a merchant marine, eight of them as a ship's captain, before he became a writer, so this wasn't just some artist's idea of a sailor. Marlow believes in the need to find yourself just as much as anyone does, and the way to do it, he says, is work, solitary work. Concentration. Climbing on that steamboat and spending a few uninterrupted hours hammering it into shape. Or building a house, or cooking a meal, or even writing a college paper, if you really put yourself into it.

“Your own reality—for yourself, not for others.” Thinking for yourself means finding yourself, finding your own reality. Here's the other problem with Facebook and Twitter and even The New York Times. When you expose yourself to those things, especially in the constant way that people do now—older people as well as younger people—you are continuously bombarding yourself with a stream of other people's thoughts. You are marinating yourself in the conventional wisdom. In other people's reality: for others, not for yourself. You are creating a cacophony in which it is impossible to hear your own voice, whether it's yourself you're thinking about or anything else. That's what Emerson meant when he said that “he who should inspire and lead his race must be defended from travelling with the souls of other men, from living, breathing, reading, and writing in the daily, time-worn yoke of their opinions.” Notice that he uses the word lead. Leadership means finding a new direction, not simply putting yourself at the front of the herd that's heading toward the cliff.

So why is reading books any better than reading tweets or wall posts? Well, sometimes it isn't. Sometimes, you need to put down your book, if only to think about what you're reading, what you think about what you're reading. But a book has two advantages over a tweet. First, the person who wrote it thought about it a lot more carefully. The book is the result of his solitude, his attempt to think for himself.

Second, most books are old. This is not a disadvantage: this is precisely what makes them valuable. They stand against the conventional wisdom of today simply because they're not from today. Even if they merely reflect the conventional wisdom of their own day, they say something different from what you hear all the time. But the great books, the ones you find on a syllabus, the ones people have continued to read, don't reflect the conventional wisdom of their day. They say things that have the permanent power to disrupt our habits of thought. They were revolutionary in their own time, and they are still revolutionary today. And when I say “revolutionary,” I am deliberately evoking the American Revolution, because it was a result of precisely this kind of independent thinking. Without solitude—the solitude of Adams and Jefferson and Hamilton and Madison and Thomas Paine—there would be no America.

So solitude can mean introspection, it can mean the concentration of focused work, and it can mean sustained reading. All of these help you to know yourself better. But there's one more thing I'm going to include as a form of solitude, and it will seem counterintuitive: friendship. Of course friendship is the opposite of solitude; it means being with other people. But I'm talking about one kind of friendship in particular, the deep friendship of intimate conversation. Long, uninterrupted talk with one other person. Not Skyping with three people and texting with two others at the same time while you hang out in a friend's room listening to music and studying. That's what Emerson meant when he said that “the soul environs itself with friends, that it may enter into a grander self-acquaintance or solitude.”

Introspection means talking to yourself, and one of the best ways of talking to yourself is by talking to another person. One other person you can trust, one other person to whom you can unfold your soul. One other person you feel safe enough with to allow you to acknowledge things—to acknowledge things to yourself—that you otherwise can't. Doubts you aren't supposed to have, questions you aren't supposed to ask. Feelings or opinions that would get you laughed at by the group or reprimanded by the authorities.



This is what we call thinking out loud, discovering what you believe in the course of articulating it. But it takes just as much time and just as much patience as solitude in the strict sense. And our new electronic world has disrupted it just as violently. Instead of having one or two true friends that we can sit and talk to for three hours at a time, we have 968 “friends” that we never actually talk to; instead we just bounce one-line messages off them a hundred times a day. This is not friendship, this is distraction.

I know that none of this is easy for you. Even if you threw away your cell phones and unplugged your computers, the rigors of your training here keep you too busy to make solitude, in any of these forms, anything less than very difficult to find. But the highest reason you need to try is precisely because of what the job you are training for will demand of you.

You’ve probably heard about the hazing scandal at the U.S. naval base in Bahrain that was all over the news recently. Terrible, abusive stuff that involved an entire unit and was orchestrated, allegedly, by the head of the unit, a senior noncommissioned officer. What are you going to do if you’re confronted with a situation like that going on in your unit? Will you have the courage to do what’s right? Will you even know what the right thing is? It’s easy to read a code of conduct, not so easy to put it into practice, especially if you risk losing the loyalty of the people serving under you, or the trust of your peer officers, or the approval of your superiors. What if you’re not the commanding officer, but you see your superiors condoning something you think is wrong?

How will you find the strength and wisdom to challenge an unwise order or question a wrongheaded policy? What will you do the first time you have to write a letter to the mother of a slain soldier? How will you find words of comfort that are more than just empty formulas?

These are truly formidable dilemmas, more so than most other people will ever have to face in their lives, let alone when they’re 23. The time to start preparing yourself for them is now. And the way to do it is by thinking through these issues for yourself—morality, mortality, honor—so you will have the strength to deal with them when they arise. Waiting until you have to confront them in practice would be like waiting for your first firefight to learn how to shoot your weapon. Once the situation is upon you, it’s too late. You have to be prepared in advance. You need to know, already, who you are and what you believe: not what the Army believes, not what your peers believe (that may be exactly the problem), but what you believe.

How can you know that unless you’ve taken counsel with yourself in solitude? I started by noting that solitude and leadership would seem to be contradictory things. But it seems to me that solitude is the very essence of leadership. The position of the leader is ultimately an intensely solitary, even intensely lonely one. However many people you may consult, you are the one who has to make the hard decisions. And at such moments, all you really have is yourself.

**16. Four examples of the same failure:**

**16A: Socialist Realism,**

**16B: Cargo Cults,**

**16C: Inept Sympathetic Magic,**

**16D: Regarding the Sapeur: The Blatantly Fictional Historic And Heroic Inevitability Of “Banana Navy” and “Amberguzzle And Ralph”, stop giggling. Everyone knows this is serious we tell you, serious, and, like, absolutely envied. Totally. 'Cause, like, just everybody deeply respects this.**

**16E: Four of a kind**

"You've got me wrong," she said, "all wrong. I don't believe in God."

"Then what do you believe in?"

"History."

He looked at her in astonishment for a moment, then laughed.

"Oh Liz . . . oh \_no!\_ You'tre not a bloody Communist?"

---John LeCarre, *The Spy Who Cam In From The Cold*

A distinct problem that the peon faces in being and acting as the peon is the ongoing, basic, utter, underlying, and permanent lack of any shred of reality in anything that is chosen or demanded by the peon. The patrician does not have this problem and has never had this problem, because the patrician remains in and relies on fact. When the facts change, the patrician changes his mind.

What also does not help the peon is the peon's lack of any originality in lack of a clue, style, or originality, because it's all been done before. Four such examples of what a peon does, and all taken from the twentieth century alone, are Socialist Realism, Cargo Cults, Inept Sympathetic Magic, and the African cargo cult of the Sapeur.

**16A: Socialist Realism,**

The October 9th, 2003, issue of *The Economist* did a review of a show at the Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt; *Fields of dreams: Soviet Realism, it ain't all bad*

“IN THE 1930s there was a picture-generating machine producing a standardised kind of art called Soviet Realism. The machine's job was to tell the masses about the future. Things are getting better and better went the message. If you show a little patience, they'll get better still. Were the truculent masses to disagree with that message, they were changed—the masses, that is, not the pictures. Josef Stalin operated the machine. When he shook his head disapprovingly, as he often did, the picture disappeared—along with the painter.

Though crude, that summary is largely true. . . . The show's most affecting room is the first. A sweep of best, Kremlin-weave red carpet leads you up to a daunting display of some of the great (meaning large) icons of those years. Take Vasily Yefanov's “An Unforgettable Encounter” (1936-37), for example, on loan from the Tretyakov gallery in Moscow. Here Stalin leans over to clasp the hand of the wife of an engineer. The room is thronged with people—wives, engineers and members of the government. Even Lenin's widow is present. The mood is one of ecstatic optimism. Everyone is clapping. Everyone is smiling. There are flowers everywhere. Yes, the future is already in bloom—here, at least.

Elsewhere in this room Uncle Joe variously meets Chairman Mao, pays homage at the coffin of Andrei Zhdanov and harangues the party faithful. Each image is an exercise in Baroque

extravagance mingled with 19th-century Russian academicism. It is a 20th-century form of Baroque that deals with the ecstatic moment; the sacred encounter involves not Jesus Christ but Uncle Joe.

As Mr Groys puts it: “Soviet mass culture was not interested in the taste of the masses. It was only interested in the future masses.” If the public didn't like it—and they generally didn't—then tough.

A dig through Google for some combination of either Soviet Realism or Socialist Realism turns up the most interesting collection of imagery and titles. In one painting entitled “Anthem of People's Love”, the setting is the very large stage of a very large theatre. The entire hall and five stories of balconies are filled with people on their feet and applauding. An entire lecture hall worth of seating, and a huge table draped in red, has been set up on the stage itself, where enough people to fill all these seats are also standing and applauding, as Josef Stalin walks towards the center of the stage.

Another example is an almost collage style poster of a massive military parade with rows of tanks followed by blocks of massed marchers, with a tank superimposed in the foreground, itself almost overlapped by a typical near bas-relief heroic space filling row of several marchers, each with his own red flag. Towering over all of this, as miniature planes fly overhead and past them, are Stalin and someone apparently named Voroshilov.

From other examples one finds such stirring and inspiring wonders as:

*35th Anniversary of S.T.Stekhov - Komissar of the Special Partisan Group -- The Victors* which shows a fellow with a bunch of medals.

*Collective Farm Motor Transport Corps*

*Portrait of Hero of Socialist Labour and State Prize Laureate A. Koverin*, which is a fellow shown without any medals.

*The Youth of Chernobayevshchiny*---Try saying that name three times fast. No, repeating “that name”, while witty, isn't the same thing.

*Let's send millions of qualified worker cadres to the 518 new factories and production units*---Oh yes, let's.

*For the Motherland!*

*For the Motherland!*---Don't worry, even though the same title, it's a different picture and artist.

*Gagarin Received by the Komsomol*

*The USSR is the crack brigade of the world proletariat*---Crack? As in the drug? That does explain a good deal of USSR history, now doesn't it . . .

*We do like Stachanov!*---Oh, good, apparently one was worried.

*Help build the gigantic factories*

And of course those absolute must-haves,

*Lenin Addressing the Komsomol*

*Lenin among the Workers"*

*Lenin's Speech to the Party Congress*

*Lenin on the Platform.*

Oh, and one must also not forget; *Field with Tractors*, which features a field, with tractors. Combine harvesters, even, judging by appearance.

The Chinese communists also went in for the great collections of tasteless kitsch, very often featuring several people or The Great Masses, with most or all in three-quarter view, staring and often gesturing upwards and outwards at clearly evident glories of the inevitably impending heroic future, and stuff like that. Very often, anyone not lined up facing the same way can be found lined up facing the other way, and applauding.

A sampling of these titles includes;

*Elect good people to do good things*

*Study the advanced production experience of the Soviet Union, struggle for the industrialization of our country*

*Advance bravely along the road of socialism with Chinese characteristics*

*Produce more iron and steel to send to the front lines of national construction*

*Carry forward the revolutionary cause and forge ahead into the future*

*Take steel as the key link, for a leap forward in all fields*

*Discussing great plans together*

*Enthusiastically welcome the victorious opening of the Fourth National People's Congress, carry forward the struggle for Chairman Mao's revolutionary line*---Reads like yet another season of vacuous parading along the catwalk, doesn't it. I guess the Fourth National People's Congress closing was not so victorious and must have had a few problems. Too much rubber Peking duck at the banquet no doubt.

*We sell dry, clean, neat and selected cotton to the state*---Reminds one of aphorisms about always wearing clean underwear in case of an accident.

*The vegetables are green, the cucumbers plumb, the yield is abundant*

*Ride the wind and cleave the waves to realise a leap forward in all fields*

And finally, one poster even invokes that utter joy of one and all, karaoke, as it prominently features someone with a microphone and has the title; *Party, oh Party, beloved Party*

Clearly none of these are ever going to have the longevity of "A stitch in time saves nine." and other more genuine aphorisms.

Socialist Realism practices the concept that if one is just sincere enough and declares The Message loudly enough and enough times, then hopefully one and all will go along with the idea and not actually look at the facts. In turn, of course, the practitioner insists that the idea is perfect and will always work. As always, one is told, there

is nothing that can be questioned because the idea always works if the practitioner will just put in enough effort, enough time, enough money. In addition, the fact that this practice is not solely that of the twentieth century politically left wing is easy to note as one sees that right wing American politics in the twentieth and early twenty-first Century is the exact same practice.

## 16B: Cargo Cults

Another example turns up a few years later in the South Pacific. This time, instead of cranking out a bunch of posters and paintings, entire groups of people would repeatedly and ritually and obsessively act out entire sequences of events. The fact that nothing ever came of all the ritual acting out never stopped any of these practitioners. Just like the communists and their opposing extremists, the insistence is that everything practiced like this absolutely guarantees success, and everyone does this and everyone is like this and no one ever questions why it is that, well, the whole thing is a complete failure. The instance in the South Pacific became the first of what are collectively called the Cargo Cults.

Quoting from Wikipedia---and by all means, pick your own alternate source if inclined---

An isolated society's first contact with the outside world can be a shock—often the natives first will assume that the newcomers are spiritual beings of some kind who possess divine powers. Attempts may be made to fit the contact into the existing beliefs of the culture. Sharing of wealth by leaders is often part of the beliefs and social traditions in the Micronesian native cultures. With time, however, it will inevitably become apparent that the outsiders are mortal, that their power comes from their equipment (or cargo), and that they are not sharing the materials with the natives. Reliance upon cultural traditions may suggest that proper rituals are not being followed, especially in a culture that has been altered by colonists and missionaries, but that devising new rituals may result in the fulfillment of their expectations.

Cargo cults tend to appear among people who covet this desired equipment but are unable to obtain it easily through trade or established traditions. Given their relative isolation, the cult participants generally have little knowledge of modern manufacturing and are liable to be skeptical about modern explanations. Instead, some symbols associated with Christianity and modern Western society often tend to be incorporated into their rituals as magical artifacts. Across cultural differences and large geographic areas, there have been instances of the movements organizing independently.

Notable examples of cargo cult activity include the setting up of mock airstrips, airports, offices, and dining rooms, as well as the fetishization and attempted construction of Western goods, such as radios made of coconuts and straw. Believers may stage "drills" and "marches" with sticks for rifles and use military-style insignia and national insignia painted on their bodies to make them look like soldiers, thereby treating the activities of Western military personnel as rituals to be performed for the purpose of attracting the cargo. The cult members built these items and "facilities" in the belief that the structures would attract cargo intended to be sent to them.

And a little bit further on;

The most widely known period of cargo cult activity, however, was in the years during and after World War II. First, the Japanese arrived with a great deal of unknown equipment, and later, Allied forces also used the islands in the same way. The vast amounts of war materiel that were airdropped (or airlifted to airstrips) onto these islands during the Pacific campaign between the Allies and the Empire of Japan necessarily meant drastic changes to the lifestyle of the islanders, many of whom had never seen Westerners or Easterners before. Manufactured clothing, medicine, canned food, tents, weapons, and other useful goods arrived in vast quantities to equip soldiers. Some of it was shared with the islanders who were their guides and hosts. With the end of the war,

the airbases were abandoned, and cargo was no longer dropped.

In attempts to get cargo to fall by parachute or land in planes or ships again, islanders imitated the same practices they had seen the soldiers, sailors, and airmen use. They carved headphones from wood and wore them while sitting in fabricated control towers. They waved the landing signals while standing on the runways. They lit signal fires and torches to light up runways and lighthouses. The cult members thought that the foreigners had some special connection to the deities and ancestors of the natives, who were the only beings powerful enough to produce such riches.

In a form of sympathetic magic, many built life-size replicas of airplanes out of straw and created new military-style landing strips, hoping to attract more airplanes.

And, as we've seen with the assorted forms of communists, this is not a unique behavior. Wikipedia again;

From time to time, the term "cargo cult" is invoked as an English language idiom to mean any group of people who imitate the superficial exterior of a process or system without having any understanding of the underlying substance. The error of logic made by the islanders consisted of mistaking a necessary condition (i.e., building airstrips, control towers, etc.) for cargo to come flying in, for a sufficient condition for cargo to come flying in, thereby reversing the causation. On a lower level, they repeated the same error by e.g. mistaking the necessary condition (i.e. build something that looks like a control tower) for building a control tower, for a sufficient condition for building a control tower.

The inception of cargo cults often is defined as being based on a flawed model of causation, being the confusion between the logical concepts of necessary condition and sufficient condition when aiming to obtain a certain result. Based on this definition, the term "cargo cult" also is used in business and science to refer to a particular type of fallacy whereby ill-considered effort and ceremony take place but go unrewarded due to flawed models of causation as described above.

Now just think of all the effort put into the claim that one must be seen wearing a tie. One must be seen driving an SUV. One must be seen with one's collar standing on end. One must . . . .

### **16C: Inept Sympathetic Magic**

The overall issue is a matter of logic, or the lack thereof, as well as a sometimes astounding degree of total and complete ineptness. A couple of citations back the concept got brought up of sympathetic magic. Going back to Wikipedia because it's there, and yes, feel free to substitute;

“The principle of similarity, also known as the “association of ideas,” which falls under the category of “sympathetic magic,” is the thought that if a certain result follows a certain action, then that action must be responsible for the result. Therefore, if one is to perform this action again, the same result can again be expected. One classic example of this mode of thought is that of the rooster and the sunrise. When a rooster crows, it is a response to the rising of the sun. Based on sympathetic magic, one might interpret these series of events differently. The law of similarity would suggest that since the sunrise follows the crowing of the rooster, the rooster must have caused the sun to rise. Causality is inferred where it should not have been. Therefore, a practitioner might believe that if he is able to cause the rooster to crow, he will be able to control the timing of the sunrise.”

One important note to make regards whether or not sympathetic magic actually and genuinely can work, and this book does not cover that question. A careful read of the paragraph just cited shows that it too does not even address the question. The specific definition is cited, that action A causes result B. The example is given that Rooster A crows, causing sunrise B, therefore if one changes the time of crowing one changes the rising of the sun, except for such issues such as the immense number of roosters, and who is to say that one rooster in particular causes the sunrise, where sunrise actually is a matter of perception and placement anyway. What the above paragraph does indeed cite, and this book does discuss, is that every time that the peon wears The Brand Name, or wears A Tie, or claims that a middle class neighborhood or house must be seen as upper class, what the peon thinks is going on is sympathetic magic. In reality, however, what is actually going on is inept and self defeating symbolism, which is the actual and ongoing practice of the peon anyway.

Let's go back to that first sentence, the part that emphasizes the matter of action and intent. A better example of sympathetic magic is that if I point at someone with my finger, my wand, my magical handkerchief, and my very particular intent, and then that person falls over dead, then the sympathetic magic is that the action of pointing with intent caused the result of fall over go dead.

Now let's go one step further, and let us postulate that I put on a police uniform, a badge, and a pistol. At this point, I am merely wearing the appearance of the police, where if I then issue a traffic ticket while wearing the uniform, and if as a result the errant motorist pays the fine, I have successfully practiced sympathetic magic. I have performed an action which has resulted in a result which would not normally occur. I have also probably broken quite a few laws in the process of the act, giving actual police the perfect capability to themselves demonstrate actual police procedures, but that too is a different subject.

The important point is the focus upon actual practice and action. Going back to that traffic ticket, if I am not wearing a police uniform, and I issue a traffic ticket, and the motorist pays the ticket, then I have abandoned all the apparent visual forms, and still succeeded in the sympathetic magic by the action and result of I Have Written The Ticket And The Fine Has Been Paid . . . and again been just as illegal, which is still a different issue. Where the peon or any other cargo cultist fails in both sympathetic magic as well as the apparition of reality is in creating a plane that does not fly and a runway that is not used, having a box for a radio which is not even a real radio, having a control tower that sees no planes.

The point that the peon and every other cargo cultist emphatically fantasizes will go away, and just never does, is that even with the appearance of what is claimed to be correct, that appearance does not bring the claimed result. In the case of the South Pacific cargo cultist, if a ship docked at a nearby harbor and delivered clothing and cars and radios, then there would be the arrival of cargo, but there would have been no airplanes, no military, no runways. In the case of the peon, a cargo cult from later in the twentieth century makes even clearer that pulling a collar up on end, that having ill fitting and tacky clothing, reciting empty phrases, waving a credit card about, having any other empty forms and gestures, does not make such a poser anything more than a posturing puppet.

#### **16D: Regarding The Sapeur: The Historic And Heroic Inevitability Of "Banana Navy" and "Amberguzzle (the)'N Ralph"---Stop giggling.**

This later cargo cult is collectively known as the sapeur, and occurs in the middle of Africa, with the particularly predominant cited locations being the paired cites of Brazzaville, in The Republic Of The Congo, and Kinshasa, in The Democratic Republic Of The Congo, formerly known as Zaire, immediately just over the national border and across the Congo river. For any form of peon, and insistence on The Brand Name, and Look At Me, whatever the location and the reported documentation, the same behavior and practices keep turning up.

In 2006, Edmund Sanders wrote an article on the Sapeurs for the Los Angeles Times:

*In Congo, designer cheek*

By Edmund Sanders, Los Angeles Times Staff Writer, November 28, 2006

Kinshasa, Congo — He struts down the muddy, trash-strewn alley like a model on a catwalk, relishing the stares and double-takes from passersby.

In a country where many survive on 30 cents a day, Papy Mosengo is flashing \$1,000 worth of designer clothing on his back, from the Dolce & Gabbana cap and Versace stretch shirt to his spotless white Gucci loafers.

"It makes me feel so good to dress this way," the 30-year-old said when asked about such conspicuous consumption in a city beset by unemployment, crime and homelessness. "It makes me feel special."

But Mosengo can scarcely afford this passion for fashion. He worked eight months at his part-time job at a money-exchange shop to earn enough for the single outfit, one of 30 he owns, so he'll never have to wear the same one twice in a month.

He doesn't own a car. He lets an ex-girlfriend support their 5-year-old son and still lives with his parents, sleeping in a dingy, blue-walled bedroom that is more aptly described as a closet with a mattress.

Friends, family and his new girlfriend implore Mosengo to stop pouring all his money into clothes and liquidate the closet.

"Man, we could buy a house with the money," said Dirango Mubiala, his clothing dealer, estimating that Mosengo spends \$400 a month.

Mosengo won't budge. "This is just what I am," he said from behind a pair of oversized white Gucci sunglasses. "I'm a Sape."

Mosengo is part of a fashion cult born decades ago in this Central African nation, its name drawn from French slang for clothes.

Before bling and ghetto fabulous, before the dawn of the metrosexual, Congolese men have been pushing the limits of outlandish fashion and heterosexual male vanity, roaming the streets like walking advertisements for the world's top labels. These fashionistas were donning fur coats and gaudy jewels as early as the 1970s, when American hip-hop star Sean Combs was still accessorizing with a grade-school lunchbox.

"The white man may have invented clothes, but we turned it into an art," said Congolese musician King Kester Emeneya, who helped popularize the Sape movement with the legendary Papa Wemba, who is often called the pope of the Sapes. Emulated and admired by a generation of African musicians, Wemba once called fashion his religion, advising devotees that what they wore was more important than school.

Some saw the movement, which dubbed itself the Society for Leisure Lovers and Elegant Persons, as a rebellion against former dictator Mobutu Sese Seko, whose patriotic programs included renaming the former Belgian colony Zaire and replacing European fashion imports, such as suits and ties, with traditional African garb.

Wemba laughed off any political motivations.



"It was never about that," he said recently. "It was just about looking good."

There appear to be a number of different origins and threads involved in the history of what has congealed into being the Congolese sapeurs, but at no point is there any doubt of being a cargo cult.

One text that notes the sapeurs is the book *Congo-Paris: Transnational Traders on the Margins of the Law*, by Janet MacGaffey and Rémy Bazenguissa-Ganga.

La Sape stands for the Societe des Ambianceurs et Personnes Elegantes (The Society of Ambiance Creators and Elegant People). Se saper means to dress elegantly in French. The form of la Sape has changed in every decade since it began. The cult of elegance originated in the 1950s, when a number of youth clubs appeared in Brazzaville, primarily in the Bacongo quarter, which was dominated by the Kongo people. The identity of these young people was tied to Western films and the images of Paris life diffused through the media and cafe life. These groups came to be known as existentialistes or existos because of their identification with the dominant lifestyle, mood and clothes fashions of postwar Paris. The clubs competed for status through their clothing, but they declined in the 1960s. In 1968, the Kongo were displaced when the Mbochi seized power in a military coup (Gandoulou, 1984: 32-9; Friedman, 1990: 113-15).

In the late 1960s and early 1970s, another wave of fashionable dressing occurred among groups from Bacongo, which became la Sape. This movement emerged among unemployed young people who had been displaced politically and ideologically, and who formed themselves into clubs (Gandoulou, 1984: 39-52). They contrasted with the existos, who had been employed, married men. These young people competed through the wearing of French designer brand-name clothing to achieve the position of a Grand or Great Man. This practice led them to migrate to France in order to acquire these clothes, which they then paraded ostentatiously in Paris and Brazzaville.

Few of the youth in Brazzaville who began this popular movement had enough money to support its lifestyle, so at first they mostly borrowed the clothes from those wealthy enough to own them, rather than purchasing them themselves. They called this practice la lutte (the struggle). Struggling (hitter) described the social energy expended in all that one had to do to borrow a luxury clothing item. This activity was called la mine or miner (to mine), meaning to search for a precious good. Here again we find the concepts of the gold and diamond diggers, for whom migration is the equivalent of casser la pierre (breaking rocks) in order to find gold or diamonds. Unlike purchases, la mine requires the actors to activate a network of acquaintances, in which social relationships are reinforced by these continual loans. La mine was thus the most common means of temporarily changing one's appearance by wearing designer clothing in the home country. The lutteurs were only interested in clothes imported from Europe, and especially from France. They were bought in the shops of downtown Brazzaville, particularly at Tissu KM, where only the `grands messieurs' (`great men' who are high-ranking civil servants or executives of private enterprises) shopped for clothes.

The first lutteurs to migrate to Paris to acquire these designer-name clothes themselves did so in the mid-1960s. To emphasize the significance of their journey, these young people called it partir a l'aventure. They got together in Paris at the Maison des Etudiants Congolais (the Congolese Students House), known as MEC. The homonym with the sacred city of Islam (Mecca is Mecque in French) is significant because, for the lutteurs, this journey to Paris is like a sacred pilgrimage. They consider Paris to be the centre of the world, because it is the fashion capital. This cult of appearance is so emotionally charged that it is analogous to a religious practice (Gondola, 1993: 156, n. 5), and was actually called the `religion of kitendi' (a scrap or end of cloth) by Zaireans when they adopted the practice of la Sape.

Once in Paris, these young people took up trade, which they financed in various ways. They borrowed the residence papers of a friend and found work in a variety of unskilled jobs, or they engaged in activities outside the law: theft, forging papers to sell to other Africans, or selling drugs, which they bought from dealers and sold retail (Gandoulou, 1984: 91-134). When they had accumulated enough money, they would go to Italy and buy the clothes they wanted more cheaply than they could in France, then sell them in Paris or send them with someone to sell for them in Brazzaville.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the movement took the name of la Sape. The sapeurs created a new physical appearance known as 'the Look'. It consisted, on the one hand, of acquiring a wardrobe of designer clothes called la gamme, i.e. the scale of great names in clothing (copies rated low on the scale), and, on the other, of a transformation of the body. They achieved this transformation by means of a special diet, which gave them large stomachs and buttocks and chubby cheeks, by lightening their skin colour in order to have what was called the 'papaya yellow't tint, and by simulating the early stages of baldness with a particular hairstyle. They called this 'the look of a well-to-do man' (Gandoulou, 1984: 145-8; Friedman, 1990: 116-19).

In this context, luxury clothes are transformed; the clothes themselves become secondary because it is the designer label that counts. The young people's emphasis on the labels shows that they do not respect the Parisian or international rules which usually govern the wearing of designer clothes. The sapeurs display these clothes at particular sites in Paris, which change regularly. They include the fifteen metres of pavement marked off by chains linking the twelve posts in front of the Tati store in the 11th arrondissement, the space in front of certain cafes in the 18th arrondissement; and the concourse of the Gare du Nord. These are all areas where there is constant movement, which is symbolic; of the flux characterizing this world.

Thus, despite living in France clandestinely without residence permits the sapeurs do not hide. Rather, they flaunt themselves through ostentatious practices, which are necessary to confirm the new status that they will claim and make use of in their home country. This status is constructed by means of success in their trading activities and is manifested in the possession of luxury clothing. It is the monetary value of the clothes that confers social value on the individual, not the clothes themselves. The success achieved in commerce must be confirmed in stages of self-transformation in different arenas: in nganda, in sports stadiums, in the streets and in cafes in the 18th arrondissement. Each time, self-esteem is increased by parading a spectacular new appearance that visibly transforms the self.

The display of these clothes conforms to specific practices, including the 'dance of designer labels' and the issuing of 'challenges'. The first entails showing off the labels of the clothes one is wearing by means of gestures. The second occurs when an argument arises between two sapeurs and their friends put an end to it by proposing that the two protagonists present themselves the next day at an appointed place, superbly dressed. These friends (also very well dressed) make up the jury, which passes judgment on which of the two is better turned out, pronouncing on according the merit of his clothes, according to price, quality, etc. and deciding whose are file best: affaire za tiur. yandi za ka zebi' ('you're out, he's, in') (Gandoulou. 1984: 126i). The challenge is thus taken up in a symbolic conflict in which the weapons are clothes. It functions as a means of controlling any tendency to violence in the milieu. It was explained to Justin-Daniel Gandoulou (author of the most detailed accounts of la Sapeur until the 1980s that there was no fighting in La Sape, because of the criticism it would attract from all the other Parisiens.

Challenges used to take place regularly. Nowadays they are rarer but we have witnessed several instances (at nganda, parties, sports stadiums, etc, when the disapproval of a spectator has provoked a violent reaction from the person judged.

As a note in their book, MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga also include an overview and explanation of

“Nganda”.

Nganda are unlicensed bars, which serve African food as well as drinks. They exist in Paris as well as in Brazzaville and Kinshasa, and are run and generally owned by women. Men make up the majority of the clientele will tend be of the same nationality as the owner. In Paris, nganda are mostly found towards the outskirts of the city limits, but a few are either close to the centre or far out in the suburbs. According to the estimate of one owner there are at least sixty of them in Paris: fifty owners are from Congo Kinshasa, ten from Congo-Brazzaville. Some traders sell their goods in these bars and make contacts for their trade there, and some wealthy women traders own nganda back home as well as in Paris. Since they are unlicensed and cannot advertise as bars, customers come by invitation of the owner, her friends or friends of friends; strangers are unaware of their existence.

And, continuing with the their overview of sapeurs;

In one example, an argument broke out in an nganda: it turned out to be because someone had taken the girlfriend of another and they had been in a state of hostility for a long time. Friends intervened to put an end to it, but the two have not spoken to each other since. Every time they meet, however, they each criticize the way the other is dressed. One will say that the other does not own the clothes he is wearing. The latter responds angrily: 'Why pick on me? I am quite able to buy my clothes', and asks for confirmation from those around him that his clothes are his own. They agree and the argument ends.

In another instance at a Papa Wemba concert, traders from a nganda vied with each other in giving money to the musician, whom they adored. This is often the way they 'prove who they are,' especially when they are in competition over a lover. The amounts given are announced by someone at the microphone. Everyone is very well dressed on these occasions. Friends know why these women are bidding against each other. On another occasion, one of the competing traders saw a girl who was going out with her boyfriend about to give a 500 FF note. A few minutes later, the trader came up and handed over a blank check. This was to show that she, was 'more capable' than her rival. Challenges are currently not so formal as they used to be. Everyone knows with whom they have a problem and when they must settle it.

These situations now often provoke violence, which, at parties, brings the event to an end. But, even if the evaluations are not presented as challenges every time, such encounters continue to be like tournaments, where each person demonstrates their prowess by means of their clothes and their wealth. We shall take up this analogy in more detail later in this chapter.

Since 1985, another kind of presentation has been initiated in Brazzaville: la reveillon, all-night parties in a rented bar, to which people come to see and be seen in their fine clothes. Two kinds of activities take place. One is called la Boude (from the French boudier, to sulk). It consists of verbal contests directed at an adversary and calculated to humiliate him but not to the point of provoking a violent reaction. He will not be addressed directly but those present will have their attention called to him with such comments as; 'Who does he take himself for? What does this with idiot want? He doesn't know what he's up against . . .' The other practice, known as Theorie (theory) involves an expert speaker with a microphone who rouses his audience with a discourse on la Sape drawing on many sources for inspiration: politics, sayings or proverbs, the dictionary, etc.

These aventuriers return to Brazzaville for vacations in possession of many clothes with designer labels. They are acclaimed; their visit is called 'la descente' (the descent): and they receive the status of 'Parisian.' After each descente, these young people return to France. After a certain number of successful trips, they are able to stop and are accorded the status of yaya or 'Grand' (Great Man).

Life in Paris, where the sapeurs most often live clandestinely, stirs up the imaginary world of la Sape, which has become the sign of success in France. People from other quarters of Brazzaville and from other African cities, particularly Kinshasa, have joined this movement. In the mid 1980s, the phenomenon became visible to the French and to Parisians, especially since famous musicians from Congo-Kinshasa, such as Papa Wemba, declared themselves 'les rois de la Sape' ('the kings of la Sape') It is here that the symbolic world of the Zairean digger meets that l'aventure.

Another article quickly also picks up on the supposedly genuine motivations of the sapeur, but then also provides the information that the posing is indeed just pose.

*In Congo, Fashion From a Suitcase*

By JAMES BROOKE, The New York Times

Published: Thursday, March 17, 1988

To be cool in Congo is to be a 'sapeur.'

By the Congo River on Sunday afternoons, Africa's rebels without a cause roar up to the Rapids Cafe, astride their mopeds and dressed in \$1,000 suits.

In Congolese slang, 'la sape' (pronounced sap) is La Societe des Ambianceurs et Personnes Elegantes, or the society of atmosphere setters and elegant people.

In this country in west-central Africa, these young dandies - also known as 'les Parisiens' - are a cultural affront to people of the older generation, who speak of 'authenticity,' anti-colonialism and Marxism.

Later on in the same article, Brooke goes back into a look at "Authenticity";

Across the Congo River, in Zaire, la sape still irritates the older generation. More than a decade ago, Zaire's President, Mobutu Sese Seko, banned Zairians from wearing Western suits. In the name of African authenticity, he ordered men to wear a new confection: a Nehru-type jacket with a silk foulard. The jacket, which is stifling in the equatorial heat, is called 'abacost,' short for 'a bas le costume,' or 'down with the suit.'

Let's have a look at this "Abacost", where that comment about a Nehru type jacket shows that it actually isn't authentic, it actually is of Western cultural origin. Grabbing from Wikipedia:

Abacost

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The abacost, abbreviation for the French "à bas le costume" (literally "down with the suit"), was the distinctive wear for men that was promoted by Mobutu Sese Seko as part of his Zairianisation programme in the Democratic Republic of Congo, between 1972 and 1990. Zairians were banned from wearing suits with shirt and tie to symbolise the break with their colonial past. The abacost was a lightweight short-sleeved suit, worn without a tie, though sometimes with a cravat.

The abacost was seen as the uniform of Mobutu's supporters, especially those who had benefited from his kleptocratic regime. When Mobutu announced a transition to multiparty democracy in 1990, he said that the Western suit and tie would be allowed, but that he continued to favor the abacost and it would still be considered the national dress. Subsequently, when the transitional government was sworn in, all its members were wearing the abacost.

The abacost fell out of favour after Mobutu's departure.

Also grabbing from Wikipedia:

Authenticité (Zaire)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Authenticité was an official state ideology of the Mobutu regime that originated in the late 1960's and early 1970's in what was first the Democratic Republic of the Congo, later renamed Zaire. The authenticity campaign was an effort to rid the country of the lingering vestiges of colonialism and the continuing influence of Western culture and to create a more centralized and singular national identity. The policy, as implemented, included numerous changes to the state and to private life, including the renaming of the Congo and its cities, as well as an eventual mandate that Zairians were to abandon their Christian names for more 'authentic' ones. In addition, Western style attire was banned and replaced with the Mao-style tunic labeled the 'abacost' and its female equivalent. The policy began to wane in the late 1970's and had mostly been abandoned by 1990.

So with Papa Wemba weighing in as the opposition, but where that purported opposition looks just as fake, lets have another look at what Wemba and his contemporaries actually did.

From [http://www.aozj17.dsl.pipex.com/enter\\_the\\_sape.html](http://www.aozj17.dsl.pipex.com/enter_the_sape.html) . . . .

With Independence in 1960, and in the turbulent political climate of Zaire during the 1960s and early 1970s, all this changed. By 1974, Authenticity had lead to the banning of all European and western styles of imported clothing in favour of a return to the authentic Zaire.

So Wemba introduced the Sapeur cult as a challenge to the dress code strictures imposed under Authenticity. He had visited Europe and he knew how Europeans lived. Papa Wemba wanted to reintroduce the condition that, to paraphrase, made it a pleasure rather than a crime to wear something from Paris.

Interviewed live on Zairian TV in 1981, Wemba was questioned about his latest outfit. He chatted with the interviewer, laughing off the interviewer's sarcasm. When questioned about his shoes, Wemba replied "Jimmy Weston™"; his trousers, "Tokio Kumagai™"; his jacket, "Armani™". Wemba shrugged off all criticism, remaining unflustered and stately to the last, much to the pleasure of the packed teenage studio audience.

The Sapeur cult practically hoisted European haute couture designer fashions to the status of mock religion. The cult existed in absolute seriousness, held its own dances, and proclaimed its own manifestos and codes (such as defining ten ways of walking in order to show off one's couture clothes to their best degree).

At times Viva's animateurs, Bipoli and Djanana, took showmanship to the limit of absurdity, stopping in the middle of a song to remove their shoes, placing a shoe on their heads and then resuming dancing where they had left off (supposedly so that the designer shoe could be admired without the distraction of movement).

Viva's fans hung onto Papa Wemba's every word and certain among them held key positions such as 'high priest of kitende' (cloth), 'chancellor de la griffe' (griffe - designer label) and even 'le pape de kitende', because of their personal flamboyance and sizeable expensive wardrobes containing still officially banned non-Zairian suits and garments.

Through both Viva La Musica's songs and dances, Papa Wemba ensured that references to expensive designer labels and styles proliferated at every opportunity, as he sought to drive trend-conscious Zairian teenagers away from other orchestras to become fans of Viva La Musica.

Meanwhile the Mobutuist press kicked and screamed, declaring Wemba and his Sapeur cult 'bourgeois snobs', but this only served to popularise the cult further in the eyes of the younger generations of Zairian teenagers.

At the same time as Wemba was challenging the confines of social Authenticity, he remained nonetheless absolutely true to Authenticity in a musical sense, doing much to promote Zaire's rich, tribal and folklore musical heritage. He spoke often about his own people's traditional musics and, since the beginning of Viva, he had always sung some of his hits in his tribal dialect (KiTetela), rather than in the national language of Lingala. During 'le règne de la SAPE' Wemba would also sometimes appear for Viva shows dressed in tribal costume, as a way of paying respect to his ancestors, before reverting to a designer suit for the following night's performance.

As can be imagined, Papa Wemba attained huge success during this period, and a great many of his band's hits ('mukaji Wanji', 'Ufukutanu' etc) increasingly drew from traditional folklore rhythms and melodies. Perhaps the most famous Wemba song of this period was the 1980 composition 'Ana Lengo', sung in the KiTetela dialect, which sold half a million copies Africa-wide. Following 'Ana Lengo', Viva La Musica held concerts playing to more than 50,000 people in both Kinshasa and Congo Brazzaville.

Another Authenticity coup d'état Papa Wemba performed was recording with one of Zaire's earliest modern music stars, Antoine Wendo Kolosoi. Wendo had made a succession of hit 78s during the late 1940s and early 1950s and, until his rediscovery by Wemba, remained a forgotten favourite from the first generation of modern Congolese rumba music stars. In 1982 Wendo Kolosoi, Papa Wemba and Viva re-recorded the classic Wendo hits 'Efeka Mandundu' and 'Bato Ya Masuwa', one a lilting rumba and the other also a rumba until it eventually breaks into classic Viva mayhem during a scorching seben section.

That same year, Wemba was also rewarded by his own tribe (Tetela) for his promotion of traditional music and culture. At a Viva concert shown live on national TV, he entered the arena carried on in a chair amidst a procession full of folklore bravado, spectacle and dance, fully dressed in warrior chieftain costume. A consecration ceremony followed and, in front of the TV viewing nation, it culminated with Wemba receiving the accolade of full Tetela warrior chieftain status from the clan's elders.

We do see that Wemba did actually have a political and cultural point, regardless, and he does thus show that the Mobutuist's kept turning out to be a collection of peons. Yes, this lot were running about in the government of a nation, but remember the note in the Upper Class section of the table, that running a government does not necessarily mean holding office. Of course, at the same time, what if no one even bothers to hold office?

In 2004, Cosima Spender and *George Amponsah* released a documentary on Wemba and his followers, called *The Importance Of being Elegant*. James Fox wrote an article on the documentary that covers the start, and also points out that the reality of "The Descent" is from style and actual elegance into being a peon.

*Pop star, people smuggler, jailbird, demagogue – and all in a coat that cost £15,000*

James Fox , [www.telegraph.co.uk](http://www.telegraph.co.uk)

### **James Fox looks at the bizarre life of world music star Papa Wemba**

It sounds like a fiction calculated to mock liberal anthropologists and political correctness. Forty years after the Congo's independence, the main expression of popular culture in the desolate ghetto of Kinshasa, and more so in the Congolese banlieu of Paris, is the worship of high-fashion designer labels.

La Sape, the name of their cult – which stands for La Société des Ambianceurs et des Personnes Élégantes – has been elevated to a religion by its followers. "Kitendi" is its other name, the religion of the cloth. You see Sapeurs on the streets of Paris around Château Rouge or the Gare du Nord, or in Brussels in the district of Ixelles – young Congolese males dressed extravagantly in Cavalli, Comme des Garçons, Issey Miyake. In the boîtes, they flash their labels in ritual dances and mount challenges, label versus label.

The goal is to be deemed a "Parisien", the equivalent of a grand – a great man. Paris or Brussels are the sacred places of pilgrimage. If you return to Kinshasa, your only lasting proofs of status are your title and suitcase of designer clothes. "Lola", their name for Brussels, means "paradise".

Sapeurs are followers, indeed almost subjects, of Papa Wemba, the most globally successful Congolese musician and one of Africa's biggest stars. He nurtured La Sape in Kinshasa in the days of President Mobutu in the 1970s, as a form of rebellion against Mobutu's uniform dress code, but mainly as a "trick", as he once admitted, to draw support from other bands. But it flowered unimaginably among the illegal immigrant communities in Paris and Brussels. Wemba enticed his followers to "realise themselves in Europe". Instead of slogans, his "ideology" chanted fashion labels.

One of Wemba's hits of the 1980s has a Sapeur telephoning Kinshasa from the top of the Eiffel Tower, telling his girlfriend to wait for him. "On our wedding day," he sings, "the label will be Torrente/The label will be Giorgio Armani/The label will be Daniel Hechter/The label for the shoes will be JM Weston." One of his albums is called simply Place Vendôme – the most expensive shopping square in Paris.

Yet it's exclusively an African affair, nothing to do with emulating Europeans. Despite the ostentation, it is a clandestine world mostly of illegal immigrants and scams. If only for crimes committed to raise money for clothes, most Sapeurs do stints in prison. They speak a slang incomprehensible to other Congolese and eavesdropping officials. To have penetrated their defences is the remarkable feat of two documentary makers, George Amponsah and Cosima Spender. The result, *The Importance of being Elegant*, which took two years to make, is fascinating, unsettling and at times hilarious. It is broadcast tonight on BBC2 as part of the Storyville strand.

Amponsah, who had the idea, is a British-Ghanaian specialising in the African diaspora, "of such people trying to carve out an identity for themselves – the central question of my life". Cosima Spender, granddaughter of the poet Stephen Spender and the abstract expressionist painter Arshile Gorky, studied art and music in West African societies at SOAS.

Getting the trust of the participants and delays with the French funding ate up many months. But when Papa Wemba went to jail in Paris, accused of importing 350 illegal immigrants (at €3,000 each) posing as members of his band, it was a godsend to a potentially plotless documentary. The

film opens with his release from prison, carried shoulder-high by his fans, the streets packed. Musicians have always been powerful in Africa and there were riots in Kinshasa when Wemba was jailed, and intercessions from presidents of both the Congos and of Angola. His own government (Democratic Republic of the Congo) paid the bail. "He is president of an invisible nation," said one of his followers.

Wemba is an extraordinary figure. He has taken his style of demagogue-speak directly from Mobutu – the hectoring, the platitudes, the empty moralising. His system is essentially a pyramid-sell to his impoverished followers. Despite having recorded with Peter Gabriel, bootlegging means that he depends for income on "dedicaces" – whereby, in the tradition of praise singing, he charges in excess of £1,000 for a personal mention in his recordings. At the microphone he shuffles the names thrust into his hands by lobbyists. "If you're in Kinshasa and hear your son's name sung in a Papa Wemba song, you feel proud because your son has made it in Europe and has become a Parisien," says Spender. He bestows status on his ministers, sings their names, so they can strut in the nightclubs.

In exchange, says Spender "they give him lots of money and lots of clothes. It's very clever. He has created a mini society and solid structure in which he can survive elegantly." A concert is coming up – but what to wear? A fawning salesman shows him a floor-length Cavalli fur coat for £15,000. He tries it on. "See how noble it is," he says, "it weighs more than 15 kilos. It's very imperial." When one of his ministers tries on a similar coat, the fur this time reversible, he reflects that it would buy half a house in Kinshasa. But it is tempting to forgive Wemba almost anything for his music, which pulses through the film – his magical falsetto voice, the lovely guitar figures and vocal harmonies. At its best, like this, Congolese music has a power and sexiness which has made it the unrivalled dance music across Africa.

Wemba's "ministers" willingly buy into the illusion. "Oh la vie... Ah la Belgique," one of them sighs on a motorway near Brussels. Sapeur dressing is highly charged, the clothes barcodes of information instantly scannable: how much, which label, how exclusive in the collection. That is the aesthetic. In the lowest echelons, labels are stitched into high-street clothes and flashed all the same. In one scene we see two Sapeurs comparing the waistbands of their underpants. "I can win many battles in this," says another as he pulls on a Dolce e Gabbana jacket. "It's not an embracing of colonial domination," says Amponsah. "It's all about grandiosity."

A show beamed live by satellite to Kinshasa from Paris and Brussels each Saturday, a kind of Sapeur catwalk, attempts to maintain the illusion. But it's a huge struggle to keep up the pretence. There are overwhelming demands from Kinshasa for money, the myth of Eldorado taken for fact, yet many in Paris struggle to feed themselves. "No one wanted to show us their tiny bedsit where they lived with five people," says Spender. And that's the bad part says Amponsah, "people perpetuating a lie, deferring responsibility. Europe is not what they thought it was but they have to assure folks at home that the dream is real. How are they going to afford the Cavalli jacket? They're going to have to turn to crime. It's a vicious circle."

Only an archbishop breaks rank. He sees through it but can't renounce the Sapeur lifestyle. "It takes many years to get recognition as a top Sapeur," he says. "You can only get a name through Papa Wemba. He's brainwashed everyone. This is not paradise, it's hell. How can a musician have more power than a president? Papa Wemba is a big manipulator."

It may soon be over. There are still charges against Wemba and he may be exiled from Europe, in which case his return to Kinshasa will be less than glorious. If this happens, he may even be relieved. He tried to disengage at one stage, thinking the beast he had created had spun out of control.

That the Sapeurs have swapped one hell for another is the palimpsest of the film. Their origin is



the true heart of darkness. The endemic corruption and violence in the Congo stretches in a line from King Leopold of Belgium through Mobutu, under whose rule the infrastructure collapsed and the state ceased to exist, returning the country to something nearer the 15th than the 19th century, while he pocketed \$45 billion. In the past five years, between three and four million have died. A "second economy" developed in the 1970s, encouraged by Mobutu. Based on networks of kinship and loyalty, it simply bypassed the state, the global economy and all institutions that had excluded and impoverished its citizens. It required the kind of courage and initiative at which the Congolese excelled.

Music was the only surviving heartbeat and it has always been attached to clothes. (In the 1940s there were even "Les Existos" who looked to Paris existentialism.) La Sape – fashionable dressing – began before Wemba, among the disenfranchised and unemployed, resistance groups whose flamboyance was evidence of success against competition and overwhelming odds.

"The difficulty with this film is that it never goes to Kinshasa," says Amponsah. "Once you understand truly the context of where people are coming from, the phenomenon isn't as absurd as it seems at first glance. There's a kind of logic to it. Where there is criminality, it has to be seen in a wider context of that state-sponsored system of corruption. These guys have grown up knowing that and nothing else. Then they come to Europe and find themselves marginalised in society, victims of racism and hostility towards immigrants, and find they have to apply the same sort of survival techniques. What we've done is to get into this world and get up close."

Sanders again notes the sapeur being lead examples of the peon and the ongoing peon fantasy.

Japanese designers are the hottest right now, they said. Yamamoto and Miyake. They poo-hooped American rappers and hip-hop stars for copying their style.

"They don't really know how to dress," said Dede Forme, 27, wearing red Dolce & Gabbana pants and a matching sailor shirt. "We're the one setting the tone."

As the various texts note, the sapeurs do make their claims, but the bottom line remains, as ever, does the peon have any weight whatsoever under any circumstances, and not merely what the peon claims?

MacGaffey and Bazenguissa-Ganga:

In Paris, goods acquire additional value when they are obtained in the course of pulling off a coup outside the law. Theft is a diversion of commodities from their usual circuits. Among these traders, stolen goods that are subsequently sold are not sold for less than they are in the stores: they have acquired greater value because they have been stolen and there has been triumph over risk. They are also assumed to be of good quality and costly because the assumption is that the thief would not have thought it worth his while to risk jail for something of little value. However, it is possible to pull off a double coup by manipulating these assumptions. In one instance, a stolen pair of men's trousers was sold to a buyer for 500 FF he thought they must be of expensive quality but subsequently discovered that they cost only 250 FF in the shops!

Sanders again:

AS the Sape movement has endured among a tightknit group of musicians and well-off businessmen, it also has inspired, for better or worse, a new generation coming of age amid violence, poverty and uncertainty.

On a recent Saturday night along the main drag of Kinshasa's Bandal district, a small gang of young men sipped warm beer, watching the crowd watch them.

Most are twentysomething and unemployed, their only money coming from dealing cocaine, opium and marijuana.

There's little question where the money goes. They ticked off their designers like actors on the red carpet. Yves Saint Laurent. Jean Paul Gauthier. Thierry Mugler.

One wore his leather Versace coat inside out to show off the label.

It made little difference to them that they sat at a grubby plastic table near an open sewer line. A blackout had cut electricity in the neighborhood, leaving them and their clothes visible only by the headlights of passing cars. Reared in an era that has offered them little hope or opportunity, they said they draw their identities and self-worth from what they wear.

"When I dress this way, and sit here with a beer, no one can touch me," said Patou Coucha, 29, in a tomato-red Paul Smith suit with thigh-length coat. It took him a month of selling cocaine to raise \$1,500 for the outfit, which was bought secondhand by a friend in Europe. "I don't hear anybody else. I do what I want."

Brooke:

'It's a plague,' admitted Edmund Capionne, another 'Parisien' dressed in a modishly baggy linen shirt and oversize blue jeans with red suspenders. 'People want to dress so well that they will steal from their parents.'

Indeed, the means of sapeurs -who are largely men - rarely match their dreams. Most, like Mr. Ngakouba, do not have steady jobs but earn money from a variety of sources, like odd jobs or low-level civil-service posts.

With outfits easily costing three times the average monthly salary here of \$300, sapeurs resort to renting, or 'mining,' out their clothes to friends for a night. A 24-hour rental for a designer suit is about \$25.

At sapeur gathering spots here, one commonly sees at least one young man walking in a studied strut: body tilted back, left hand thrust in a suit pocket and a bored look in the eye. After harvesting the maximum amount of admiring glances, the poseur in the \$1,000 suit will sit down with friends and nurse a \$1 bottle of beer for the rest of the evening.

Sapeurs also face a locomotion problem. Brazzaville is on the edge of a tropical rain forest, and mud often clogs the streets - a challenge for a man in \$200 shoes. In the earlier days of sape at the beginning of the 1980's, sapeurs occasionally hired pushcart men to ferry them across streets. But Congo's Socialist Government frowned on this practice, and today most sapeurs get around town on mopeds, after carefully rolling up their trouser cuffs.

So, observers note that the sapeurs are a social and cultural dead end, the sapeurs themselves note the same themselves, and what of Wemba and other instigators of fatuity over style and substance?

Back to Sanders;

At his mansion in Kinshasa, where he was auditioning singers for his band in the garden,

Papa Wemba said it pained him to see impoverished young men overextend themselves in an effort to live up to the movement he helped create.

"That's not what I wanted," Wemba said. "They're not being responsible."

Recently Wemba softened his devotion to fashion, particularly after he was imprisoned for illegally smuggling Africans into France by claiming they were part of his band's entourage. He came out of jail professing a renewed commitment to Christianity.

"Now we just want to dress to cover the body," Wemba said, even though he was wearing pastel plaid Romeo Gigli pants and a printed shirt by a new designer called Kassamoto, whom he is helping to promote in Congo.

Fellow Sape movement founder Emeneya was even blunter.

"I really regret it," he said. "We set a bad example. If I had invested my money instead, I would own several houses. It was like a drug."

Across town, taking a break from his job at the money-exchange shop, Mosengo considered the words of his mentors. He reflected a moment and then nodded.

"You know, they're right," he said. "They're damn right."

An epiphany? was he ready to quit the clothes?

"Those guys did spend a lot," he said from behind the Gucci sunglasses. "But that's not me."

## **16E: Four of a kind**

On an individual basis, the fatuous stupidity of the peon is bad enough, but when the vacuous reinforce each other, the cascading fiasco can even disrupt and interfere with patricians. The current definitive example of this is the all time butt ugliest and least stylish decade of the twentieth century, the Nineteen Empties. In fact, the ongoing hatred of style and taste that the peon practices wound up achieving such momentum that anything remotely resembling style and taste did not return in large amounts until the mid 2000s, an entire 15 years after 1990. As it was, when one traces across the decades of clothing---and then costuming---one sees the unmistakable progression of the 50s, the 60s, the 70s, with greater and greater expansion and exploration and delight in style and taste. By '82, '83, '84 one sees taste and style vehemently, unmistakably, and totally overturned with an absolute "WE HATES FASHION AND STYLE WE DOES, IT BURNS US IT DOES!!!!". And, in turn, the 1990s themselves were lost as a decade just from the sheer basic shock of Where and How did that sheer Hell come from?!?!?!!!!!

An additional practice that appears to be one of those remnants of the 'empties, as I've run across no justification for it and the appearance is just as surreally ridiculous, is going about with hands shoved in the pockets, as if one might be afraid they might drop off the wrist otherwise. A general dig the through the internet keeps turning up the same overall reaction and explanation;

**Gesture:** Walking with hands in pockets, shoulders hunched

**Meaning:** Dejection

Another source:

## Reading the "Hands in Pocket" Body Language

### Don't Put Your Hands Where They Don't Belong

A person putting his hands in his pocket may exhibit any of the following body language signals:

- 1) He may be nervous, anxious or uncomfortable with the situation.
- 2) He may be hiding something from you.
- 3) He may be restraining himself from doing a specific action or movement.
- 4) He may be bored, inattentive, or uninterested.

Putting your hands in the pocket may give the impression that you're not confident.

My advice: Remove your hands from your pocket. Use self-assured and steady hand gestures to better express your feelings, as well as convey an assertive and confident personality.

And yet another:

#### Hiding

Hands are often used in communication and hiding the hands may indicate a desire not to communicate or not to collaborate, saying 'I don't want to talk with you' or 'I do not agree with you'.

This may be done in a deliberate gesture of defiance, such as stuffing hands in pockets. Liars may hide their hands in fear that they will give themselves away.

And another;

#### The Hand Thing

Hands pose a dilemma for many public speakers. What do you do with those hanging appendages? Flail them wildly, use grandiose gestures?

Well, save those grandiose gestures for an opera stage. Less is more when it comes to using hands for effective public speaking. In fact, too much use of hand gestures can create distraction for your audience.

Gestures that portray nervousness or insecurity:

Women –brushing hair out of their face

Men – hands in pockets

A college theatre professor friend of mine has had the ongoing battle of drilling and drilling his acting students to never stand around with their hands in their pockets. His ongoing reminder is the matter of fact “I'd offer to shake hands, but I can see that you're busy.”

Variations on that for the peon that still doesn't get the idea of keeping hands out of pockets can be “pocket pool” and “the masturbation walk.”

Of military references, even that comes up as an item that has been regulated. Unofficially, from a discussion forum:

No hands in the pocket. Hands can only be in the pocket in the field at best. The top reason I

received was and I quote, "Marine's don't do that, it's what separates us from the Army."

And from actual Marine regulations, found at <http://www.marcorsyscom.usmc.mil/SITES/MCUB/>

**HANDS IN YOUR POCKETS.** Effective immediately, in a garrison environment you may not put your hands in your pockets other than to retrieve something from said pockets, at anytime. However, good judgment will govern the application of this policy in the field environment.

Further down the website page I find Last Updated 29 Oct 2009, so the regulation is indeed current.

If nothing else, for the poor, unsophisticated, and not very bright peon, apparently style, taste, and reason are clearly just too much to tolerate.

Extending forward, the tenets of Socialist Realism still get practiced by the peon who insists on being considered more than the peon can ever be. The economic practitioners of Socialist Realism provide billboards, magazine advertisements, chunks of time on television. The political practitioners of socialist realism wave teabags and break the windows of otherwise uninvolved retail stores. These societal droppings feature what the peon would claim to be considered heroic and to be admired by others as well as the extremely gullible peon, with the ever larger faked up figure staring intently into the blatantly fictional and clearly irrelevant fantasy that gets claimed as viable---only this time the peon has no Uncle Joe on hand to make inconvenient but undeniably inevitable reality go away.

One of the massively propagated modern cargo cults that started in, and became a major feature of the nineteen empties, that noted and documented decade against style, is the preppy/yuppy. The original form of the preppy/yuppy is of a very intellectually and otherwise limited individual who remains forever trapped in high school, or as the British would put it, either public or comprehensive school---and while there is a difference between the British comprehensive school and the public school, such a difference and level of detail is a matter of reality, and the peon doesn't do reality.

The peon fantasy is that the preppy/yuppy must get claimed to be upper class and not limited at all, but then the peon insistence on set forms against the ever changing sea of reality immediately proved the preppy/yuppy to be a blatant display of self inflicted and enforced failure. In fact, along with the everyday and ongoing demonstration of the failure of anything preppy/yuppy, the additional major recognition of such failure came from the preppy/yuppies themselves.

The original form of the preppy/yuppy was outlined in an openly satiric book, which was indeed written and sold only as satire, called "The Official Preppy Handbook" The first part of this extended preppy/yuppy failure is that along with their total lack of style, taste, and sense, the peon can not comprehend satire. Upon publication, this short term collection of jokes was received by the peon as being an actual guide which all must follow so that they may be mistaken as upper class.

The second part of the failure is that the book describes only a particularly limiting high school age society that also is stated to only occur in the North East United States. That the book itself does seem to try to extend to adulthood is indeed noted, where the particular notice is that such attempt merely shows infantilism being pushed to an advanced number of years without any interest in any sort of advanced, or even attempted, maturity. A case in point of the certain infantilism of the original form of the preppy/yuppy get noted by Fussel, when commenting that a very major emphasis is stated to be the concept of "Summering". A fixation on summer comes from a society that is otherwise spending time in school, and the more adolescent the preppy/yuppy variety of peon the greater the fixation.

Patricians, whether of adult age or younger, carry on all year 'round. Even the high school age patrician notes that summer remains merely the time when one does more of the non-school events that one does anyway. Come college and the opportunity to do research projects, one's schedule finally goes to the full twelve months.

In the meantime, while there are also many of the peon who is of high school age, there are a greater number of the peon who is older than high school age in years, and who are somewhere other than the North East US. This embarrassing fact thus caused the extension of the preppy/yuppy model under the fantasy of being adult and “professional”, where the latter was also intended to mean intelligent and competent, instead of merely being an unthinking recipient of some unearned paycheck. Of such lack of earning and instead just getting paid, in fact, the blind hope for some gratuitous paycheck came from the fantasy that just by existing as a preppy/yuppy the peon would get declared to be some great leader, and thus successful. When reality occurred and reminded the peon that actual success involves actually doing something and being successful and persistent and not failing, reality got declared to be unfair, or, better yet, how things are no longer done in the must be inevitable glorious new age of the peon that isn't called a peon.

At any rate, while waiting uselessly for such a blind fantasy to come to be, the extension of the preppy/yuppy into its second part did at least allow the peon everywhere and with any birthdate to loudly proclaim that any such should also be recognized by all patricians as being as the inept, the tasteless, the devoid of style, the clueless, the forever immature and fantasizing of remaining in High School and having the ready money from mommy and daddy, the peon.

As they did so, and will continue to do so, in the early twenty-first century the peon continues to follow the sapeur cargo cult of being seen wearing the tie, particularly being seen having the declared labels and other object(s) that the peon must be seen having, perpetually pulling the collar up on end. In complete and ever successful contrast remains the patrician style and elegance that preceded the peon costuming, and then inevitably succeeded it, during the depths of the nineteen -empties, this even extended to dragging down and totally distorting beyond any sanity all seams or dividing lines of any sort.

A look at the costuming fiascos of the time show necklines that are not as much cut low by several inches as instead displaced downwards as if distorted by gravity. The football pads which inept non-designers added to everything left every peon appearing to have cancerous lumps at the shoulders. All shoulder seams and sometimes additionally the costume itself also sagged towards the elbows to leave the peon looking even more deformed. After awhile, even the bottom of the sleeve as well got dragged down towards the waistline, leaving the peon to look rather like some sort of horribly deformed and diseased penguin, consisting of a body to which was attached immense flippers that themselves extruded human hands.

That this cargo cult and others remains a failure of inept sympathetic magic is never accepted by the peon, the peon just keeps insisting that having The Particular Car Or Truck Or Both Must Mean Success, and keeps hoping that if enough effort goes into denying that what one does remains paramount, just maybe everyone else who has remained outside in reality may possibly start playing along.

Another congealing of the peon that arose along with the preppy/yuppy as its own term is the creation of MakeUpAName Grandiose University, particularly when the many and varied forms of MGU started to offer not just an MBA, but the Really Neat MBA, the Executive MBA, The Truly Sparkly and Splediferous MBA, and the Extreme Uber Really Buzzword Laden MBA.

In the musical 1776, John Addams and Thomas Jefferson also bicker over who had the better education; Addams and his degree from Harvard University, or Jefferson and his degree from William And Mary. Let's look at both of those schools, by comparison.

According to Wikipedia, Harvard University was founded in 1636 and started as The President and Fellows of Harvard College, with a statement that “The earliest known official reference to Harvard as a "university" occurs in the new Massachusetts Constitution of 1780.” In turn, The College Of William And Mary was founded in 1693 and is also counted as on of the original colonial colleges.

In turn, there is The University of California, also called UC, with its flagship of The University Of California At Berkeley, or UCB. UCB was the first UC campus, founded in 1868, where with California state support of the educational system up through the passing of "Prop 13", and with the scale of quality in research and instruction as shown by the number of Nobel prizes awarded to UCB faculty, these occurrences and similar others very quickly allowed Harvard and its like to become known as the UCBs of the East.

And then there are the various forms of MGU.

Fussell comments on the American college system, but the same issues probably turn up elsewhere;

Attempts to discriminate vigorously among the colleges are met with a special kind of horror and outrage. Pointing to the class system in institutions is for many as offensive as pointing to it in "real life."

Instructive is one response to Edward B. Fiske's The New York Times Selective Guide to American Colleges, 1982-83 (1982). Noting that the United States has almost two thousand institutions calling themselves four-year colleges and awarding bachelor's degrees, Fiske assumed, as any intelligent person would, that few of that swollen and pretentious number could be much good. In a world where institute has lost its meaning, it's logical to suspect that college has lost its meaning too. Fiske thus set to work to identify the "best and most interesting" of American colleges, and came up with only 265. To rank academic quality, social activity, and "quality of life" at these institutions, he employed a system of five down to one stars for each criterion.

. . . As he canvassed the whole college scene comparatively-and fearlessly -Fiske couldn't help noticing certain institutions which in academic quality seemed to earn fewer than three stars. Like an honest critic of anything else, books, say, or plays, or even restaurants, he designated these.

And to some colleges Fiske found he could award only one star for academic quality, . . .

. . . Even these, however, were to a degree singled out for praise, as you realize when you discover that Fiske was unable to find a single institution of mentionable intellectual quality in the whole states of Nevada, North and South Dakota (which together have twenty "colleges"), Wyoming, and West Virginia (with seventeen candidates).

. . . Sometimes the middle class and the proles catch on to the college swindle (forgive the expression), but too late. I know a woman who graduated with a well-above average record from an intellectually undemanding university only to be brutally taxed with "ignorance" by her colleagues when she began working in a vigorously competitive context in New York. She had the temerity-and bully for her, I say-to write the university president complaining bitterly, and quite effectively, about the way she'd been had.

. . . intelligence and learning and curiosity are, regrettably, rarer than some imagine, and you don't bring people into contact with them simply by announcing that you're doing it. "Educational opportunity" was opened up by the process of verbal inflation, by promoting, that is, numerous normal schools, teachers colleges, provincial "theological seminaries," trade schools, business schools, and secretarial institutes to the name and status of "universities," thus conferring on them an identity they were by no means equipped to bear, or even understand. The process was analogous to the way high school students are finally extruded to enter "college," and for both processes one description can serve: unearned promotion. What was happening in the 1960s was simply an acceleration of a process normal in this country-inflation, hyperbole, bragging. As one citizen exulted in the 1970s: "There are two universities in England, four in France, ten in Prussia,

and thirty seven in Ohio." Here it's as natural for every college to want to be a university as for every employee to want to be an "executive," and every executive a vice president.

The result? State colleges and teachers colleges all over the country were suddenly denominated universities, and they set to work, with the best motives in the world, ripping off the proles.

. . . Only nine years were needed for a Seattle business school to achieve university status. Founded in 1973, "City College," this institution proclaims in 1982, "has grown to be a university," suggesting that size is the determinant. The sad thing is that there are innocent people around who will believe it's what it calls itself.

. . . And the rich are just as gullible as the poor. Witness one intellectually unheard-of university in the Northeast whose annual tuition (\$7,100 in 1980) puts it among the ten most costly in the United States, right tip there with Yale, M.I.T., Stanford, Princeton, and Harvard.

The peon fantasizes that with the ongoing practice of what it fondly hopes might be sympathetic magic, by being seen wearing particular costumes with particular brand names, then maybe, perhaps, someday, the peon will get mistaken for someone of quality. When the inept sympathetic magic again fails to work, and the peon is left being a brand labeled peon at the bottom of everyone's heap, the best that the peon ever comes up with is yet another round of the same old failure, where the basis of the fantasy remains that if every other peon tells the lie about being admired and being upper class and successful, then certainly the individual peon will succeed . . . . or as always, out here in reality, not succeed.

And finally, the peon keeps being certain to be seen with this brand name and that label and the other store, and all the other blatantly tacky and pretentious momentary fads, just like all the other cargo cult members that have gone before. In the meantime, the patrician, the one above, the one who daily practices the reality that the peon fantasizes of, regularly, consistently, permanently, leaves the peon behind.

In the end, but also for any and all time, just as with anything else promoted by the peon, a totally false appearance and practice is declared, and as with the standard reactions of patricians to the peon, actual reality keeps intruding and ultimately and unsurprisingly returns. While the genuine article and practice is always to be chosen over the artifice, and will always outdo and outlast the artifice, attempting to impress from above also always fails.

Actual authenticity, as always, is practiced by individuals alone, even when in unison, regardless of what the next person is doing. Such is why patricians are known for their grasp of and practice of reality, and the peon keeps frantically and vehemently seeking and promoting some total and complete failure and fantasy that always loses out and demonstrates the peon's inability, instability, incompetence, and inferiority.



## 17. The Peon, as contrasted with aspects of the reign of the Plantagenet King Henry II

Let us have a look at a historically documented patrician, England's King Henry II.

*The Lion In Winter* is a play by James Goldman about Henry and his family and sometime enemies and allies. The play takes place during a fictional Christmas gathering and provides a general overview of Western European nobility, tactical issues, and interfamilial national infighting and maneuvering.

Henry is King of England, and controls England, Ireland, Wales, a chunk of Scotland, and a very large chunk of France. His wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, has been plotting against him, so he keeps her locked up. She herself controls another large amount of France. Their sons, Richard, Geoffery, and John, plot with and against each other and Eleanor against Henry, but Henry needs them functioning as heirs, so he can't lock them up. Henry II and Eleanor's eldest son Henry had been crowned as Henry II's successor, and is thus remembered in history as Henry the Young King, but he had died just a few months earlier. Phillip II, King of France, is visiting. His sister Alys is supposed to be married off to Richard, with her dowry being the Vexin, another chunk of France. Instead, Alys is Henry's mistress, and Henry's troops have the Vexin pinned down and out of Phillip's reach. The English barons and the Scots had been a threat, and while Henry had fought them to a standstill, he did still need his sons available to maneuver with, another reason the sons weren't locked up and were still alive. The French barons kept being a threat that was dealt with by having Richard slaughter them. Richard has been leading armies here and there since his teens and thus is a very major military force who had also allied with Phillip against Henry. Got all that?

At least two films have been made, the first with Peter O'Toole as Henry and Katherine Hepburn as Eleanor of Aquitaine.

The play and movie are fictional, but all the balancing and maneuvers and tactics did happen at the time. By the time of the play, 1183, Henry's Angevin Empire stretches from Ireland and Scotland to most of the way to the Mediterranean. Henry is 50, an age when most people are dead, and he's still going, and doing quite well. Where someone else might have spent their time rampaging about being The King, Henry, instead, had been focusing on ruling, making laws, trading alliances for taxes.

Of Henry himself, in both play and movie, there is no doubt that Henry is The King. Everyone knows it, and he knows that everyone knows it. In the movie, therefore, Henry spends almost the entire movie in the Hollywood version of medieval t-shirt and blue jeans. Only when Phillip arrives does Henry very quickly grab and toss on a crown and an embroidered or so robe, and as soon as Phillip had been greeted, off come the crown and robe and they are never seen again.

Of the many instances that Henry being King are brought up, they are all the tactical facts of the inheritances, the maneuvering, and the question of who will ultimately succeed him.

By contrast, absolutely never is there anything even resembling a proclamation of See this crown, see these shiny toys, see my big castle, see these people bowing, because I am the King. Henry being patrician, being elegant, sticks to the moment, and doesn't waste his time with shiny toys and pointless and empty posturing.

At the same time, while this shows the behavior of Henry, King Of England, the issue is that Henry is Henry, more than he is King. The maneuvering in the movie is among two Kings and one Queen, and Henry is still Henry and the 800 pound gorilla in the castle.

Wikipedia, and as always feel free to find different sources, concurs with the image of Henry that the movie presents.

Like his grandfather, Henry I of England, Henry II had an outstanding knowledge of the law. A talented linguist and excellent Latin speaker, he would sit on councils in person whenever

possible. His interest in the economy was reflected in his own frugal lifestyle. He dressed casually except when tradition dictated otherwise and ate a sparing diet.

He was modest and mixed with all classes easily. "He does not take upon himself to think high thoughts, his tongue never swells with elated language; he does not magnify himself as more than man". His generosity was well-known and he employed a Templar to distribute one tenth of all the food bought to the royal court amongst his poorest subjects.

Henry also had a good sense of humour and was never upset at being the butt of the joke. Once while he sat sulking and occupying himself with needlework, a courtier suggested that such behavior was to be expected from a descendant of the bastard son of a tanner's daughter (referring to his great-grandfather William the Conqueror being the son of Herleva, daughter of Fulbert a tanner from the Norman town of Falaise). The king rocked with laughter and even explained the joke to those who did not immediately grasp it.

While *The Lion In Winter* and *A Man For All Seasons* do rather easily lend themselves to discussions of patricians and how does one deal with and correct the errors of the peon, there is an additional movie that is good for a quick note, where it pretty much exclusively deals with working and middle class, with very unmistakable patricians mixed in with rather equally unmistakable examples of the peon, regardless of how much any peon would claim otherwise. This particular movie is James Cameron's *Titanic*. Not only is that alleged fiancé very easily confirmed as being a total and complete lowest middle class peon, that mother, from her very first appearance on screen to her last, is totally, absolutely, undeniably, blatantly, clearly, also a peon of the utter and complete lowest middle class.

Knowing and being secure particularly comes to the fore when considering any importance placed to some particular name or source for a distinct item. The patrician acquires or does something for whatever the reason, and moves on to the next concern. The peon acquires or does something, and then stages *The Great Show of Look At MEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEEE!!*

Unsurprisingly, the visual aspects of public life aren't the only ways that the patrician remains quietly unnoticed. Fox also comments on situations where food also is an area where the patrician matter of factly gets what is needed, and the peon makes certain to be known for making a blatantly insecurely and underclass mess of things. As usual, the peon wastes time and energy in being seen as upscale, where the patrician remains elegant and stylish.

### **Napkin Rings and Other Horrors**

Napkins are useful and versatile objects – as class indicators, that is. We have already seen that to call them ‘serviettes’ is a grave social solecism – one of the ‘seven deadly sins’ unmistakably signalling lower-class origins. But there are many other ways in which napkins can set off English class-radar bleepers, including, in chronological order from the beginning to the end of a meal:

setting the table with napkins folded into over-elaborate, origami-like shapes (‘smart’ people just fold them simply);

standing folded napkins upright in glasses (they should be placed either on or next to the plates);

tucking one’s napkin into waistband or collar (it should be left loose on the lap);

using one’s napkin to scrub or wipe vigorously at one’s mouth (gentle dabbing is correct);

folding one’s napkin up carefully at the end of the meal (it should be left carelessly crumpled on the table);

or, even worse, putting rolled-up napkins into napkin rings (only people who say 'serviette' use napkin rings).

The first two of these napkin-sins are based on the principle that over-fussy, 'genteel' daintiness is a lower- middle-class trait. Inelegant use of the napkin – tucking and scrubbing – is working class. The last two napkin- sins are abhorrent because they indicate that the napkins will be used again without being washed. Smart people would rather be given a paper napkin than a used cotton or linen one. The upper-middle classes joke about 'the sort of people who use napkin rings' – meaning lower/middle-middles who think they are being elegant and dainty, but are in fact being rather grubby.

The essence of elegance is the greatest result with the absolute least effort. The greatest occurrence of elegance occurs in mathematics, where  $2*2=4$  easily contrasts with  $(3-6+7)/2+(1/3)*21*1-5=-4+32*(4^{1/2})/8$ . In the same manner, the patrician just is. If the patrician wants to change something, the something is changed, and all move on, or not, from there. When a patrician needs to add or subtract something, again the basic change occurs with the least amount of required effort, and again all move on, or not.

Continuing with more from Fox;

### **The Health-correctness Indicator**

Since about the mid-1980s, health-correctness has become the main gastronomic class-divider. As a general rule, the middle social ranks are highly susceptible to the latest healthy-eating fads and fashions, while the highest and underclasses are more robust in their views and secure in their food preferences, and apparently largely immune to the blandishments and exhortations of the middle-class health police.

Food, we are told, is the new sex. It is certainly true that food has taken over from sex as the principal concern of what I call the 'interfering classes' – the nannyish, middle-class busybodies who have appointed themselves guardians of the nation's culinary morals, and who are currently obsessed with making the working class eat up its vegetables. We no longer have the prudish Mary Whitehouse complaining about sex and 'bad language' on television; instead, we have armies of middle-class amateur nutritionists and dieticians complaining about all the seductive advertisements for junk food, which are supposedly corrupting the nation's youth. By which they mean working-class youth: everyone knows that it's the Kevins and Traceys who are stuffing their faces with fatty and sugary snack foods, not the Jamies and Saskias.

Particularly not the upper-middle Saskias, many of whom are anaemic born-again vegetarians, or borderline anorexic or bulimic, or suffer from imaginary gluten and lactose 'intolerances'. None of this seems to worry the health-correctness evangelists, who are only interested in force-feeding Kevin and Tracey their five daily portions of fruit and vegetables, and confiscating their crisps.

The upper-middle chattering classes are the most receptive and suggestible adherents of the health- correctness cults. Among the females of this class in particular, food taboos have become the primary means of defining one's social identity. You are what you do not eat. No chattering-class dinner party can take place without a careful advance survey of all the guests' fashionable food allergies, intolerances and ideological positions. 'I've stopped giving dinner parties,' one upper-middle-class journalist told me. 'It's become simply impossible. Catering for the odd vegetarian was OK, but now everyone's got a wheat allergy or a dairy intolerance or they're vegan or macrobiotic or Atkins or they can't eat eggs or they've got 'issues' about salt or they're paranoid about e-numbers or they'll only eat organic or they're de-toxing . . .'

While I have every sympathy for anyone with a genuine food allergy, the fact is that only a very small percentage of the population actually have such identifiable medical conditions – far fewer than the number who believe they are afflicted. These English chattering-class females seem to hope that, like the Princess and the Pea, their extreme sensitivities about food will somehow demonstrate that they are exquisitely sensitive, highly tuned, finely bred people, not like the vulgar hoi-polloi who can eat anything. In these rarefied circles, you are looked down upon if you have no difficulty digesting proletarian substances such as bread and milk.

If you really cannot manage to have any modish food problems yourself, then make sure that your children have some, or at least fret noisily about the possibility that they might be allergic to something: ‘Ooh, no! Don’t give Tamara an apricot! She hasn’t been tested for apricots yet. She had a bit of a reaction to strawberries, so we can’t be too careful.’ ‘Katie can’t have bottled baby food – too much sodium, so I buy organic vegetables and puree them myself . . .’ Even if your children are unfashionably robust, you must take the trouble to keep up with the latest food-fear trends: you should know that carbohydrates are the new fat (like brown is the new black) and homocysteine is the new cholesterol; the F-Plan diet is out, Atkins is in; and on the genetic-modification debate, the official chattering-class party line is ‘two genes good, four genes bad’. As a rule of thumb, assume that there is no such thing as a ‘safe’ food, except possibly an organic carrot personally hand-reared by Prince Charles.

The lower- and middle-middles, taking their cue from the upper-middles (and from the Daily Mail, with its regulation five health-scares per day), are rapidly succumbing to the full range of ‘posh’ food-fears. There tends to be a bit of a satellite-delay effect, a pause in transmission of a beat or two, before the latest upper-middle food fads and taboos are taken up by the inhabitants of mock-Tudor and neo-Georgian estates, and then another delay before they reach the 1930s semidetacheds. Some semi-detached suburbanites have only just realised that fat-phobia and fibre-worship are passé, long since superseded by carbo-phobia and protein-mania. Once all the current carcinogens-du-jour and other food-fear fashions have been adopted by the lower-middles, the upper-middles will of course have to think of some new ones. There is no point in having a wheat intolerance if all those common people who say ‘pardon’ and ‘serviette’ have one too.

The working classes generally have no truck with this sort of nonsense. They have real problems, and do not need to invent fancy food allergies to make their lives more interesting. At the opposite end of the social scale, the upper classes are equally down-to-earth and sceptical about such matters. Although they may have the time and money to devote to whimsical food taboos, they do not suffer from the same insecurities about their identity as the fretful middle classes, and so do not need to define themselves through conspicuous non-consumption of bread and butter. There are a few exceptions, such as the late Princess of Wales, but they tend to prove the rule by being noticeably more insecure and self-conscious than the average aristocrat.

Cooper has amusing examples of the overwhelmed peon trying to model something based on what the peon thinks must be important, instead of noting that reality just is. This behavior can even happen in situations that the peon has no direct involvement with, where the peon merely knows someone, and only because of that totally separate someone does the peon have even the slightest connection.

Piers Paul Reid, upper-middle-class and second generation intellectual, arrived . . . at Cambridge when the egalitarian movement had reached its height and the middle classes actually sought out working-class company. One of his friends recounted with a frisson of delight that there was actually a miner’s son with rooms in the same building. . . .

. . . Finally he went to a May Ball at St. Johns, ‘where there were girls in long dresses and men in hired white tie and tails, not Etonians, instead bright guys from the grammar schools, and minor public schools, intoxicated by the mirage of success’---Jen Teales, in fact, trying to maintain some standard of gracious living in the face of rampant egalitarianism.

. . . 'At teacher training college,' said a working-class boy, 'we found our own level and stuck together. Particularly in evidence was a stuck-up group we called "the semis" (lower middle, Jen Teale again) who got engaged the first year. All they talked about was houses and cars. The only aggro I got was at Christmas dinner when the principal told me to leave the table for not wearing a tie."

. . . Jison Nouveau-Richards, who calls himself Jason now, has given his college scarf and blazer with a badge to a jumble sale, after one acid comment from Georgie, and now . . . looks more straight than Georgie . . .

When Samantha and Gideon take their daughter Thalia back to Sussex, Samantha in her ethnic and Gideon in his jeans, it looks as though Birnham Wood has arrived at Dunsinane, the car is so thick with potted plants for her room. Samantha was so certain she would be the youngest and trendiest mother, and was disappointed to find the entire campus swarming with identical middle-aged Bolivian peasant ladies.

The peon fantasizes that adding more and more and useless layers constitute quality, a process which in the last few years has become known as "upscale". The fantasy claims that if there are enough shiny things, enough particular objects, and, equally importantly, that enough people are noticing the number of shiny objects or things, then the peon will be mistaken for patrician. All that the peon achieves with any of this is to scream to everyone around; "I am less than you, I am insecure, I don't know what I'm doing!"

One of the rather telling methods that the peon uses to advertise its lack of class and style is the carrying about of some random retail store shopping bag, under circumstances where the peon clearly has not just been to that store. When the patrician has just been to that store, the bag is clearly probably holding something from that store, the patrician is very clearly probably on the way home or some equal destination, and only at that moment is the carrying of such a bag likely. After all, when the patrician has just been to that store to get something, the store provided the bag for the carrying of what was bought, and yes, the patrician is probably going home with it.

Only the peon will rather obviously carry about The Retail Store Shopping Bag at any other time, very obviously using the bag to declare the peon fantasy that the viewer should think that the peon regularly goes to that store. However, since the timing and location show instead that any such trip was not just in the recent very short time and soon the bag will be done with, at that point one is clearly observing a peon being a low class and quite tasteless peon.

There is another telling instance of patrician elegance vs the peon fantasy of adding the useless, unwanted, and in this instance the gaggingly intrusive. One of the truly blatant signifiers of the peon is one that can be detected without even hearing or seeing. In short, patricians bathe, peons bathe in perfume.

Comments Cooper;

. . . Harry . . . thinks aftershave and deodorant are vulgar . . .

The historic occurrence of slapping on perfume to cover up the lack of bathing dates back to the lack of bathing--the arrival of plumbing ended all need or interest in dousing oneself with a chemical concoction that often is alcohol based and thus leaves the wearer smelling like a brewery placed in a chemical plant.

Following the arrival of plumbing only the peon---both male as well as female---inflicts perfume on everyone. Only the peon will attempt to argue that perfume is not cologne is not aftershave is not mousse is not whatever the peon has smeared here and there in such amounts as to gag a vulture. Such abhorrence is the patrician reaction in any case, and in the worst cases, all patricians wind up skittering about in search of the handiest breeze with which to remain upwind.

Cooper, continuing:

The working classes are the most reactionary of all the classes. (You only have to look at those Brylcreemed short back and sides . . . .

When Dive Definitely-Disgusting . . . He'll reek of Brut and overscented deodorant. . . .

Cooper has a related note on details of mixed wedding attendance;

The reception at an upper class wedding is a very cheerful occasion . . . Really grand weddings include busloads of tenants from both families. Usually they sit around with red faces, shiny blue suits, and tumbbrilcreemed hair.

She also reports of the attendees at a business conference.

. . . the spiralist . . .

. . . sometimes working-class, sometimes lower-middle in origin . .

. . . The smell of Brut fought frantically with that of deodorant.

And, of course, anyone who can get located by smell from quite a distance away is not someone who leads, hunts, or quietly disappears.

Exactly as with any peon rules mandating that there must be ties around necks, the overall situation gets even worse when institutionalized, at which point one gets the situation of an entire company and its environs demonstrating unquestionably the complete lack of any comprehension of taste, style, or class.

In San Francisco, on Market Street there is a multi story mall called the SF Centre. Built in two sections, it is basically two different malls placed side by side and linked by several floors of additional stores. The basement section of each of the two parts both lead out to the nearest subway station, where these two entrances have wound up having a very distinct difference.

One of the subway entrances leads into a large food court, with escalators that lead up to the rest of the building above. The far end of the food court leads to the retail anchor of that section of the mall in the back of the building, with that store's street level main entrance from Mission street, the next street over from Market. The other entrance leads to a mix of food court and stores, and escalators that also lead up to the rest of the building, where the retail anchor of that section starts at the third or fourth level and then fills the entire top section of that part of the building.

The absolute and unmistakable difference in the two entrances is that in the first entrance, one leaves the subway station and walks in towards the food court, where one can ride the escalator up, or continue on forward. Absolutely by contrast is that second entrance, where less than ten feet from the subway, one is absolutely battered with a noxious cloud of perfume that some peon oriented store in the area is apparently pumping out as a matter of course.

At some point, one such store triggered even triggered a protest regarding such effluvia, where even the protest alone featured probably unintended humor and completely missed the real reason for such an objection. As any easy search online shows---try "perfume store protest" for search terms---one such store received objections because the chemical concoction turned out to be harmful to health. Of course, as any patrician will note instantly, the problem is not the chemical composition, but that the peon chooses to inflict at all.

On one hand while P.T. Barnum didn't actually state that there is a preppy/yuppy born every minute, or any other form of the equally obvious sucker, one does always greatly look forward to the long anticipated bankruptcy or other removal of such a totally undeniable demonstration of the underclass.

For another area of the blatant differences to be found, multiple sources all echo each other regarding patrician houses vs peon, or as the peons comment, "homes" Particular details will shift in time, as always, but the casual certainty of the patrician is always a contrast with the underclass, upscale peon.

Commenting . . . a lot . . . from Cooper:

It is not possible to determine what class a person is solely from the house he lives in. Some of the upper classes have execrable taste and don't give a fig about their surroundings, while some working-class people--probably homosexual--may have an instinctive sense of what is beautiful. . . . Or take someone who's just moved into a new house. The haste with which they explain away the ox-blood fleur-de-lys wallpaper in the drawing-room as the taste of a previous owner might be more an indication of social insecurity than the wallpaper itself.

Electric logs have long been considered a Jen Teale indicator. My husband once worked for a man, whose son (an Old Etonian whom I will call Ambrose) asked us to dinner. The other guests were a very smart couple, whom Ambrose was determined to impress. We arrived first to find him switching off some electric logs in the drawing-room. He was worried the smart couple might think them common.

`My mother, being Spanish, has terrible lapses of taste,' he said apologetically.

So the three of us sat frozen to death until the smart couple arrived an hour later. Instantly some devil overtook my husband. He crossed the room and switched on the logs.

`Have you seen Ambrose's mother's splendid fire?' he asked the smart couple.

There was a ghastly pause. Ambrose's face whitened like that of someone close to death. The merry flickering of the electric logs was nothing to the blaze of rage in his eyes. The evening was a disaster and my husband was fired within three months.

The patrician reaction would have been to note the temperature and the attraction of staying warm and never mind what some peon's reaction might be to a perfectly usable source of heat. Poor Ambrose clearly has chosen to be a peon, and we have seen the results. As Cooper notes as well;

And yet I know two peers of the most ancient lineage who have electric log fires. One even has bright blue water in his lavatory--the upper classes do what they want.

. . . .In *Voices from the Middle Classes* by Jane Deverson and Katherine Lindsay, a journalist is quoted as saying:

`A house is a complex thing; it represents a social position. We found living where we were (a smartish London suburb) without meaning till we had acquired several friends who see themselves as the same sort of people as we were because they live in the same sort of house. Painting and decorating is a middle-class thing,' he went on. `You say you've been decorating and you get an immediate response.'

Harry Stow-Crat wouldn't dream of painting his own house or putting up shelves and would regard any such activity as distinctly working-class. Equally, Mr Definitely-Disgusting wouldn't

bother to do up his house either because he considers it the council's responsibility. The moment he buys his own house, however, he crosses one of the great class divides from Council Tenant to Owner Occupier and starts to become bourgeois. He'll immediately drop the word 'mortgage' in the public bar, and begin building a new porch or slapping paint on the front of the house to distinguish it from the houses on either side and to show he's not Council anymore.

The expression 'they live in a bought house' would be a term of admiration among the working classes, but of contempt from the upper classes who have usually lived in their own house for generations, inheriting it as they inherit their furniture and silver. (One of the upper-class definitions of the middle classes is the sort of people who buy their own silver-particularly when they call it 'cutlery'.)

. . . .Harry Stow-Crat does not refer to his house as a stately home but as an "istoric hice". Perhaps he pronounces 'house' as 'hice', because he usually has more than one, like mouse and mice. The word 'home' except for putting 'At Home' on an invitation or saying 'I'm going home' is very common. It has been taken up by the media, so now you have the awful 'stately home', 'family home', or, even worse, 'they live in a lovely home'. Other horrors include 'homebuying' instead of 'buying a house' or 'home improvements' instead of 'painting ones house'.

Vita Sackville-West once said that the best historic houses grew in a leisurely way over generations, sprouting a wing here a tower there, like the oaks and elms that surrounded them. They grew inside, she says, in the same way as outside. 'There is no question of the period room, so beloved by professional decorators. Everything is muddled up: Jacobean paintings, Chippendale tables, chinoiserie wallpaper, Carolean love seats, Genoese velvets, Georgian brocades, Burgundian tapestries, Queen Anne embroideries, William and Mary tallboys and Victorian sideboards, all in a mixture to make the purist shudder.' But it is this feeling that each succeeding owners acquired beautiful furniture and pictures as the fashion of his generation dictated that makes up the glorious historical hotchpotch of the great house.

. . . .Most upper-class houses, therefore, have a certain shabbiness about them. (There ought to be a shop called 'Shabby-tat' where Mrs Nouveau-Richards could buy aged-up furniture and materials.) The festoons and rosettes on the ceiling show the traces of the years, the pink and white striped silk cushions are falling to pieces; the faded red damask sofa is covered in dog hairs. On the walls, like the circle on the spiralist's lapel, are squares of much lighter paper, where a Lawrence or a Romney has been flogged to pay taxes. When you go to bed you draw the pale blue, watered-silk curtains with care. The aristocracy believe in buying the best-silks especially woven in the colour they want-and then making it last. They'll probably only redecorate their rooms every fifty years. Upper-class colours therefore tend to be faded into softness by antiquity---like a Beatrix Potter picture. The faded rosereds and golds of the Tailor of Gloucester's coat are particularly popular, and ice blue is very in at the moment. Green is never popular because there's so much of it outside in the park. In upper-class London houses (perhaps because they miss the green of the country) you get a chilly Eaton Square eau-de-nihilism.

The floors are polished, and three-quarters covered with very good, very old, patterned carpet. Caroline Stow-Crat wouldn't dream of buying a modern patterned carpet, but Casa Pupo rugs are somehow considered all right. Until recently she's resisted plain fitted carpets as being an example of the middle classes boasting that they've got enough carpet to cover the entire floor. But convenience is a great leveller and, if you haven't got a servant to polish the floor, you may sink to a fitted carpet. In the same way duvets are being surreptitiously smuggled into four-posters, particularly for the children, and the silver centrepiece in the dining-room, which is made up of forty individual bits and used to take two men three days to clean, has now been lacquered over.

Caroline also resists any man-made fibres, and certainly anything plastic, which Harry and his mother still call 'plarstic'. The upper classes wear leather on their feet and on the elbows of



their coats, but not on their sofas or their backs. Their rooms tend to be very leggy, like the bottom half of the paddock, because all the furniture has long, spindly legs. Huge libraries of memoirs and sermons are kept behind grilles. . . . On the whole the upper classes prefer things to be beautiful or functional. They wouldn't hide the television in a repro cabinet, although they hide plant pots in bowls called cache-pots.

The rooms are lit by crystal chandeliers or candelabra, or by lamps with no tassels. Tassels on anything---umbrellas, lights or chairs-are very vulgar.

. . . . Because they have had their houses for hundreds of years, the aristocracy take the beautiful things in them for granted, and tend not to comment on them in other people's houses.

'Fellow noticed my chairs,' said a surprised Earl of Derby after a visit from the Duke of Devonshire. Equally it is not done to show someone over your new house unless they ask specifically or they pay at the gate.

There was an embarrassing moment when an actress we know, who was justifiably proud of her very expensively decorated house, asked an upper-class friend if he'd like to see over it.

'Whatever for?' came the curt reply.

And Fussell has either the same story, or a parallel one, also with commentary;

. . . It is among members of the upper class that you have to refrain uttering compliments, which are taken to be rude, possessions there being of course beautiful, expensive, and impressive, without question. The paying of compliments is a middle-class convention, for this class needs the assurance compliments provide. In the upper class there's never any doubt of one's value, and it all goes without saying. A British peer of a very old family was once visited by an artistic young man who, when entering the dining room, declared that he'd never seen such a finer set of Hepplewhite chairs. His host had him ejected instantly, explaining, "Fellow praised my chairs! Damned cheek!" . . .

Getting back to Cooper . . . .

. . . . The upper-middle classes, not subscribing to the law of primogeniture and tending to move where their jobs take them, seldom live in the same house for generations. They start off in a flat in London or in some other big town when they get married, then move to a terraced three-bedroom house with the first child, then to a five-bedroom house when the second child arrives, because they need room for an *au pair*, or possibly for a lodger to help with the mortgage. Samantha Upward prefers a student, so she can combine altruism, free baby-sitting and help with Zacharias' maths prep, which will soon--despite workshops-be quite beyond her. To live in a house with more rooms than you have family is regarded by the working classes as a middleclass characteristic.

. . . . On Saturday mornings throughout outer central London-Fulham Clapham, Islington, parts of Hackney-the streets are alive with the sounds of 'gentrification', as coats of paint are slapped on the front of terraced houses, rooms are knocked through and the net curtains of previous occupants are shoved in the rag bag. The upper-middle classes would far rather spend a bit of money knocking a Victorian workman's cottage into shape than move into a modern house where everything worked, so they quite happily rip plywood off doors to reveal the original mouldings, strip banisters and replace aluminium windows with wooden frames as close to the original as possible. Soon follow the French number plate, the brass letter box, the trellis for the honeysuckle from the garden centre and the bay tree which soon gets nicked. Blue tubs, bought

cheap from the brewery round the corner, are soon filled up with bulbs or pink geraniums (Samantha thinks red ones are rather common). Vivaldi pours out of the stereo into the street, and balding architects can be seen drawing lines at their desks and drinking coffee out of Sainsbury's mugs.

. . . Another trick of the middle classes is to buy old houses, then form a pressure group to have their street declared a Conservation Area in order to stop the compulsory purchasers touching it or building flats nearby. They then get absolutely livid when the Council rather understandably drags its heels over planning permission for an extra music room or a new bathroom.

. . . *.DON'T SAY 'PARDON', SAY SURREY'*.

*'Merridale is one of those corners of Surrey where the inhabitants rage a relentless battle against the stigma of suburbia. Trees, cajoled and fertilized into being in every front garden, half obscure the poky 'character dwellings' which crouch behind them. The rusticity of the environment is enhanced by the wooden owls that keep guard over the names of the houses, and by crumbling dwarfs indefatigably poised over goldfish ponds. The inhabitants of Merridale Land do not paint their dwarfs, suspecting it to be a suburban vice, nor for the same reason, do they varnish the owls, but wait patiently for the years to endow these treasures with an appearance of weathered antiquity, until one day even the beams in the garage may boast of beetle and woodworm.'*

John le Carre, *Call for the Dead*.

`Oh look,' said a friend as we drove through a rich part of Surrey, `all those houses have been Weybridged.' This is a practice of the socially aspiring who've made a bit of money and want to shake off the stigma of suburbia by living in Sunningdale, Virginia Water, or any rich dormitory town.

First you buy a modern house, which you refer to as a `lovely property', then you age it up to look like a Great West Road pub. Rustic brick with half-timbering and leaded windows are very popular, with a lantern or carriage lamp outside the front door and a name like `Kenilworth' or `Decameron' carved on a rustic board. A burglar alarm is discreetly covered by creepers.

Keep those dwarves in that le Carre quote in mind, as Fox has noticed them too . . . . Continuing with Cooper .

. . . A few years ago a Weybridged house would have had a chiming doorbell, but, suspecting this to be a bit suburban, the owner has responded to an ad in *Homes and Gardens*:

`No more electric bionic ping pongs ... every lover of style can now capture the elegance and tranquillity of less hurried days with a real brass doorbell, complete with mechanism and most attractive pull arm to enhance your doorway.'

The hall, as Anthony Powell once said, looks like the inside of a cigar box, with a parquet floor, panelled walls and a very thin strip of carpet running up the polished stairs. At the top is a round window with a stained glass inset. The Weybridged house smells of self-congratulation and Pears soap.

. . . . Repro furniture is inevitable to give a nice `Ollde Worlde' look: `period doors', a Queen Anne `bureau' and Regency Chippendale cabinets to hide the TV, (the upper-middles call it `the box', the upper class `the television') and the `stereo'.

Every piece of furniture has mahogany or teak veneer. The Weybridged house suffers from venereal disease. A Magi-Log fire flames in the repro Adam fireplace 'the ultimate in realism' - with incombustible oak logs knobbly with knotholes and twigs. The alternative might be a 'feature fireplace' in stone. The *Radio Times* is wrapped in a sacking cover with a thatched cottage embroidered on the front. If you came for drinks, you would be offered goblets.

In the dining-room lacquered silver candlesticks sit on the Elizabethan repro table even at lunchtime, and an Ecko hostess trolley keeps the rack of lamb, creamed potatoes and garden peas piping hot. There will be an overhead light, or more bracket lights with fancy lots, and six chairs with oxblood and silver regency stripes.

. . . The Weybridged house is very 'olde' and tasteful, as opposed to the Nouveau-Richards' mansion which is very plush, ostentatious, and modern - another great monument to showing off.

Reacting against the working-class over-the-wall familiarity, Mr Nouveau-Richards has high walls built round his house and the whole place is burglar-alarmed to the teeth. Ten-foot-high electric gates protect him from the road. As he arrives in the Rolls he presses a button and the gates open. The drive is lined with toadstools which light up at night. The garage for five cars opens by remote control and, so you don't get wet, a lift takes you up to the hall.

Every room in Mrs Nouveau-Richards' house has a rake for the shag pile. The daily woman's visit is a sort of rake's progress, nor does she much like having to climb into the onyx and sepia marble double bath to clean it, and having to polish up the 22-carat gold mixer taps with headworks of solid onyx. She nearly got her hand chopped off when she was shaking her duster out of one of the electric windows the other day. When she answers the telephone she has to say, 'Mrs NouveauRichards' residence'.

In the lounge acrylic pile tiger skins with diamante collars lie on the ebony shag pile. Mrs Nouveau-Richards reclines on the leather chesterfield in front of the heated coffee table, while Mr N-R revolves in his captain's club chair in deep-buttoned hide. The walls are covered with black and silver flocked wallpaper. When the maid in uniform hacks her way through the 'house plants' to bring in 'afternoon tea' she is sent back because the sugar bowl doesn't match the tea cups. A ship's bell summons people to dinner, and the nautical motif is maintained by a bar in the corner with a straw ceiling covered in lobsters. After a few drinks they crawl by themselves. In the bar every drink known to man hangs upside down with right-way-up labels. Mr Nouveau-Richards doesn't drink very much because it makes his face red and his accent slip. Off the lounge are the solarium, the gym and the swimming pool, kept at a constant temperature of eighty degrees by the pool attendant. The stables are built under the lawn, so the horses can look out of their boxes into the pool like Neptune's mares. In Mr N-R's library, all the books in which were bought by the yard, he has eighteenth-century repro library steps. When he presses a button the entire works of Sir Walter Scott slide back to reveal yet another bar. Even the goldfish tank is doubleglazed.

. . . Jen Teale, liking to have everything dainty, wages a constant battle against dust and untidiness. Bryan sits in the lounge with his feet permanently eighteen inches off the ground in case Jen wants to 'vacuum' underneath. In a bedroom, a Dralon button-back headboard joins two single divans with drawers underneath for extra storage, into which Jen might one day tidy Bryan away for ever. Gradually all their furniture - wardrobes, sideboards, cupboards - is replaced by fitted 'units' which slot snugly between ceiling and floor, rather like Lego, and leaves no inch for dust to settle.

. . . The mauve front door has a rising sun in the bottom left-hand corner of the glass. The doorbell chimes. The house smells of lavender Pledge and Freshaire. In the lounge the fire has a huge gnome's canopy to concentrate the heat and keep smuts at bay. Beside it stands the inevitable Statue-of-Liberty combination of poker, brush and shovel in a thistle motif. On the walls Bryan

and his Black-and-Decker have put up storage grids, like vast cat's climbing frames with compartments for the hi-fi, records, scrabble, the odd spotlit bit of Wedgewood or `vawse' of plastic flowers. (`Fresh' flowers, as Jen would call them, drop petals and paper ones gather dust.) A few years ago the Teales wouldn't have had any books-too much dusting-but as culture seeps downwards, there might be a few book club choices tastefully arranged at an angle to fill up a compartment.

The lounge suite has easy-fit nylon William Morris stretch covers which have interchangeable arms that can be switched from unit to unit or rotate on the same chair to give that straight-from-the-showroom look which is the antitheses of the shabby splendour---'majestic though in ruin'---of the upper classes. Jen also rather likes the continental habit of offering lounge furniture as a group, comprising three-seater settee, two-seater settee and one armchair, called `Caliph'. (Down-market furniture invariably has up-market names like `Eton' and `Cavendish'.) There is also a Parker Knoll recliner in case an `elderly relative comes to visit'.

. . . There was an advertisement recently in a magazine called *Home Buying* offering `Modern houses in Wood Green, the ideal site for those who want a convenient rung on the home-ownership ladder'. Among the other attractions was `garage with space for work bench'.

This was aimed at the spiralist who is continually buying houses, doing them up, selling them at a profit and moving on to a better part, which means a safer suburb, with a nicer class of child, more amusing parents at the P.T.A. and no danger of coloureds (although a black diplomat is O.K.) Usually the process is to start with a flat, then move to a terraced house, then to a large `period semi', where you let off the top flat to pay the mortgage. Then, as soon as the house is done up, you buy a cheap flat for the sitting tenant, put it on the market and look for an even bigger house. The process is basically the same as that of the upper-middle-class couple, except that the spiralist moves as soon as he's got the house together, while the upper-middles wait until they've run out of room.

Spiralists like anonymous furniture-chrome, glass, and unit sofas and chairs-because they can be shifted around to fit into any size of house. Just as they often adopt a phoney American accent to hide the Cockney or the Yorkshire, they also embrace American terminology: `trash cans', `garbage', `closets' and `car ports'. Even in the short time they stay in a place the spiralists are deeply competitive.

The spiralists are likely to buy a three-piece suite in a sale, then put it in a Harrods depository so it can be delivered three weeks later in a Harrods van.

. . . When Mr Definitely-Disgusting thinks of buying a house other than his own council house, he fills in a coupon and goes off and sees a show house on an estate called some grandiose name like `Northumbria' and puts his name down for it if he likes it. Attractions include `teak laminated kitchenette, stainless steel sink, coloured bathroom suite with matching vein tiles, veneered doors in the living room, kitchen dinette and shower room'.

. . . The Definitely-Disgustings hurry now and buy everything from Williams's sale, even the once-famous actor with tired eyes doing the telly commercial. Up to their necks in H.P., they get carried away by the ads and buy three-piece suites in deep-pile uncut moquette and wildly expensive domestic appliances, which go back when they can't keep up the payments. The house-to-house upstaging is as subtle as the spiralists.

. . . Mrs Definitely-Disgusting, on the other hand, buys a fridge for the first time and stands at the front door saying, `I'm worried the kiddies will catch their fingers in the door,' just to show she's got one.

(My favourite advertisement of all time appeared in an Indian magazine and showed a woman and child gazing admiringly up at a huge fridge with the caption: 'Just right for our living room'.)

Mrs Definitely-Disgusting's front room, if she's feeling flush, will be dominated by a black cocktail cabinet with interior lighting, containing every drink known to man, just like the Nouveau-Richards, . . .

. . . . The colours are garish, with everything--wallpaper, sofas and chairs-in different patterns. The carpet, a symphony of yellow, nigger brown and orange exploding in circles, doesn't cover the linoleum. On the huge colour television there might be a clock with the works well exposed under a pyrex dome. Mrs D-D's plastic flowers differ from Jen Teale's in that they make no attempt to copy the originals: mauve snapdragons and blue roses, pink primroses and da-glo tulips mass gaudily together in a sharply cut glass vase (to rhyme with praise).

The less respectable element of the working classes would have no ornaments or pictures, having smashed the lot during drunken brawls. The room would be furnished by a huge colour television and biked bean tins.

Noting from Fox:

The English obsession with home-improvements is not just about territorial marking, of course. It is also about self-expression in a wider sense: your home is not just your territory, it is your primary expression of your identity. Or at least that is how we like to think of it. Almost all of our DIY-temple sample saw themselves as exercising their creative talents, and other interviews with nestbuilders in furniture shops, department stores and homes confirm that although DIYing may be, for some, merely an economic necessity, we all see the arrangement, furnishing and decorating of our homes as an expression of our unique personal taste and artistic flair.

And it is, but only up to a point. The more closely I researched this question, the more it became clear that the way in which we arrange, furnish and decorate our homes is largely determined by social class. This has little or nothing to do with wealth. Upper-class and upper-middle-class homes tend to be shabby, frayed and unkempt in a way no middle-middle or lower-middle would tolerate, and the homes of the wealthiest working-class nouveaux-riches are full of extremely expensive items that the uppers and upper-middles regard as the height of vulgarity. The brand-new leather sofas and reproduction-antique dining chairs favoured by the middle-middles may cost ten times as much as the equivalent items in the houses of upper-middles, who despise leather and 'repro'.

In the homes of the middle-middles and below, the 'lounge' (as they call it) is likely to have a fitted carpet (among the older working classes, this may be a patterned carpet; among nouveaux-riches, deep-pile). The higher castes prefer bare floorboards, often part-covered with old Persian carpets or rugs. The middle-middle 'lounge' might have a cocktail cabinet, and their dining room a hostess trolley. The contents of lower-middle and some upper-working 'front rooms' will often be obscured by net curtains (useful as a class-indicator, but otherwise something of an annoying obstacle to peeping-tom researchers) but they are likely to be dominated by large television sets and, among the older generations, may boast embroidered or lacy covers on the arms of chairs and carefully displayed 'collections' of small objects (spoons, glass animals, Spanish dolls, figurines) from package holidays or mail-order catalogues.

Younger lower-middles and upper-workings may have less fussy tastes – their 'living rooms' are often uncluttered to the point of dentist's-waiting-room bleakness (perhaps aspiring to, but never approaching, stylish minimalism). They will compensate for this lack of visual interest with an even bigger wide-screen television, which they call the TV or telly and which is always the fo-

cal point of the room (and, incidentally, currently shows at least six programmes every week about homes and home-improvement) and a high-tech 'music centre' with big speakers. Many upper-middle homes also have big televisions and stereos, but they are usually hidden in another sitting room, sometimes called the 'back room' or 'family room' (not 'music room': when upper-middles say 'music room', they mean the one with the piano in it, not the stereo).

Coasters (little mats for putting drinks on to stop them damaging the tables) are another useful class-indicator: you are unlikely to find these in upper-middle or upper-class houses, nor will you often see them in lower-working-class homes. Coasters are the preserve of the middle-middle, lower-middle and upper-working classes – or rather, more specifically, those among the upper-workings who aspire to middle-class status.

### **Matching and Newness Rules**

The lower-middle and working-class lavatories, which they call toilets, may have matching coloured loos and basins, which they call bathroom suites, and even matching coloured loo paper. Those of the upper-middles and above will almost always be plain white, although you will sometimes see a wooden loo seat.

At the highest and lowest ends of the scale (upper-middle and above, lower-working and below) you will find old, threadbare and mismatched furniture, while the classes in between favour brand-new 'suites' of matching 'settees' and armchairs, 'sets' of matching dining tables and chairs, and yet more 'suites' of bedroom furniture with matching bedspreads, cushions and curtains. (These carefully co-ordinated furnishings may involve cottagey-chintzy flowers, Conran-Ikea 'simplicity', or television-inspired 'themes' but the principle is the same.) The upper echelons, proud of their eclectic antiques, sneer at matching 'suites'; the lower echelons, ashamed of their ill-assorted cast-offs, aspire to them.

In fact, an English person's social class can be gauged immediately from his or her attitude to expensive brand-new furniture: if you think it is 'posh', you are no higher than middle-middle at best; if you think it is 'naff', you are upper-middle or above. An upper-class Tory MP once sneered at fellow Tory Michael Heseltine by remarking that Heseltine had 'had to buy all his own furniture' – the put-down implication being that only nouveaux have to buy their furniture: genuinely upper-class furniture is inherited.

That issue of the dwarf in the garden that has to look properly aged is another note. A pair of probable peon responses would be that either the dwarf adds culture---says who?, thus again pointing to the peon reliance on the opinions of others---or that there must be no dwarf, as it's common, and again, says who? Fox has some particular commentary on the peon's concern with the reactions of others, as contrasted with the natural assurance of the patrician.

### **The Eccentricity Clause**

Which brings me to a further complicating factor: taste is often judged, in social terms, not by the deed but by the doer. If someone is securely established as a member of a particular class, his or her house may feature a number of exceptions to the rules I have mentioned without any danger of reclassification downwards or upwards. I read somewhere recently that Princess Anne's house, Gatcombe Park, is cluttered with displays of every gift she has ever received, including the sort of tacky national dolls and cheap African carvings normally only found in working-class 'front rooms'. Such signs of plebeian tastes among the upper classes or even long-established upper-middles are generally regarded as harmless eccentricities.

### **. . . . . The Ironic-gnome Rule**

Leaving aside the proletarian neatness of nanny-gardeners, if you do spot an unexpectedly and unmistakably plebeian feature in such a garden, it is worth asking the owner about it. The response will tell you much more about the owner's class than the feature itself. I once expressed mild surprise at the presence of a garden gnome in an upper-middle-class garden (I said something intelligent like 'Oh, a gnome'). The owner of the garden explained that the gnome was 'ironic'. I asked him, with apologies for my ignorance, how one could tell that his garden gnome was supposed to be an ironic statement, as opposed to, you know, just a gnome. He rather sniffily replied that I only had to look at the rest of the garden for it to be obvious that the gnome was a tongue-in-cheek joke.

But surely, I persisted, garden gnomes are always something of a joke, in any garden – I mean, no-one actually takes them seriously or regards them as works of art. His response was rather rambling and confused (not to mention somewhat huffy), but the gist seemed to be that while the lower classes saw gnomes as intrinsically amusing, his gnome was amusing only because of its incongruous appearance in a 'smart' garden. In other words, council-house gnomes were a joke, but his gnome was a joke about council-house tastes, effectively a joke about class. A subtle but clearly very important distinction. Needless to say, I was not invited back.

This man's reaction to my questions clearly defined him as upper-middle, rather than upper class. In fact, his pointing out that the gnome I had noticed was 'ironic' had already demoted him by half a class from my original assessment. A genuine member of the upper classes would either have boldly admitted to a passion for garden gnomes (and eagerly pointed out other examples of the genre dotted about his otherwise effortlessly elegant garden) or said something like 'Ah yes, my gnome. I'm very fond of my gnome.' and left me to draw my own conclusions. The upper classes do not care what a nosey anthropologist (or indeed anyone else) thinks of them, and in any case do not need ironic gnomes to emphasise their status.

To look at yet another of the immense number of examples of patrician elegance over the peon's "upscale", a small and telling example is the amusing concept of the monogram. The peon fantasy of the monogram insists that the monogram is to be considered a form of heraldry.

In actual heraldry there are such things as badges, and if one has a household, or if one has some large enough object that really does have to get differentiated from some similar object, one can ensure that household and object have the respective required badges to identify where they belong, so that one doesn't have to confirm every little detail.

Aside from being an excellent movie on its own, "A Man For All Seasons" gives ongoing examples of badges and their usage, with the many occurrences of someone whose clothing includes a large capital H. In all such cases, this is someone who works for King Henry VIII. In more modern times, one sees the use of the badge in gas station signs and the logos on airplanes, to name two of many. In personal usage that is actually plausible, as opposed to the monogram, a security badge or conference membership pass slung around a shoulder are themselves badges which proclaim "I belong here."

To cite a later example of royalty, while Queen Elizabeth has a fleet of cars, there is no such thing as The Royal Car, as signified by The Royal Monogram. The reality is that if the Queen is to ride in a particular vehicle, from car to train to airplane, if the particular trip has been so arranged for the Queen, then some form of Royal insignia is attached to that vehicle, for the time of that trip. Furthermore, as one notes from a fast look through Google, the English Royals have a long history of taking regular trains as well as airplanes on occasions. In such cases, assorted guards and staff ride along, the regular ticket price is paid as part of the trip, and aside from the security handling, both train and schedule are the perfectly standard variety that get used every day.

In turn, of the monogram, the peon places it on shirts, sheets, paper, underwear, and anything else that can be reached by someone with a stamp and infinitely more energy than taste. The patrician couldn't be bothered to and will identify something if needed, and if not needed, won't bother. One's shirts are one's shirts, and one has them,

and gets more if needed, and one never bothers with a superfluous label.

As Fussell comments;

Proles join with the middle class in the pleasure with which they contemplate their own names, which is to say, the assurance they derive from knowing that they are not as anonymous and replaceable as society, in its dealings with them, seems to imply. Hence the popularity among both these classes of having their catalog purchases "personalized." This need is like that of little children who by similar means gain assurance of their identity and value: "This is my very own shoe bag," "My very own cup and plate," etc. Thus from one middle-class catalog you can order His-Her wristwatches, with "John" on the face of one, "Mary" on the other. This feature will bring you pleasure countless times a day as you glance at your wrist to ascertain the time and find your own valuable name there: what a comfort-you are somebody after all. The motive is recognizably similar to the one impelling the destitute delinquents who deface subway cars to do so with graffiti consisting of the artist's name and address. The psychic predicament of users of flagrantly mass-produced articles can be inferred from the prole and middle-class need to buy from their catalogs a little mock-brass plate you stick onto the dashboard of your car.

It reads CUSTOM BUILT FOR (NAME)

The full meaning of that little plate would be understood by the Walt Whitman intensely aware of threats to the self posed by the American emphasis on the *en masse*.

There's hardly anything you get from a catalog that can't be personalized. You can get a Lucite napkin ring, personalized with three initials; you can get a canvas log carrier for the fireplace with your "monogram" on it ("Ours alone, with bold navy initials"); you can get a fake-gold metal case designed to hold a pack of chewing gum, engraved with your initials: "Gum's more fun when you carry it in an engraved gold-tone metal case." One catalog sells sets of front-seat car mats with your full name not only in letters three inches high but enclosed in quotation marks as well, in conformity with prole usage. Or how about a navy-blue flameproof hearthrug with your family name in Gothic letters beneath seven spaced gold stars and above a golden eagle, in "Federal" style? That will certainly straighten out visitors puzzled about whose living room they've wandered into.

I don't want to make too much of the pathos of these constant assertions of selfhood, but surely there's something touching about the need to have one's "own" business card reproduced in brass, bronze, or glass on the front of one's living-room clock, or the need to have a fancy desk nameplate. Desk nameplates are ipso facto pathetic, favored as they are by people not certain they deserve desks, like auto salesmen, military officers, and others similarly doubtful of their status. Consider the need to use a "Personalized Book Embosser," which "seals your name and initials in every book you own. No question about whose book it is. It states 'From the Library of...'" Having a "library" itself, of course, fills a deep need, like having a "wine cellar" or fixtures implying one. Thus the carafe obtainable by mail reading "Vin Maison," with the blank filled with YOUR FAMILY NAME, or the wine set "for two," which adds to the personalized carafe two glasses with the couple's first names on them. If now and then something should whisper that it's not really classy to advertise your name all the time, you can still do it slightly undercover, the way the upper-middle class get its initials onto the stationwagon door by expressing them in yacht signal flags: you can order a silver "cartouche" in the Tutankhamen tradition with your name spelled out but in "hieroglyphics." This item is to be worn on a chain around the neck: "Let It Adorn You as It Might an Egyptian Sovereign." The housewife who puts up the soothing plaque in her kitchen can also invest in a stoneware pie dish reading "Pies by Karen" (any name available). One wants to weep. And by the way, if you want to get an idea of which names for children the middle class imagines have status, you can learn a lot from the names stamped on the children's pencils illustrated. They are heavy with British "romance" overtones: for girls, Stacy and Kimberley; for



boys, Brian, Jason, and Matthew. There are a very few occasions when *The Official Preppy Handbook* goes off the rails, but one is surely when it recommends initials and monograms as in any way classy (satire may be intended, but I don't think so).

Actually what Fussell misses here is that the sole intent and entire content of the particular book is indeed all satire and not a shred of anything viable or likely---after all the only category the book has ever been found in is humor.

What he does quite correctly continue with is:

No matter what class exhibits them, monograms suggest some doubt about one's importance, some need to impress an audience. Actually, if you're securely upper-middle-class, your name should appear nowhere but on checks and typed underneath (illegible) signatures.

Such being not what one finds among the preppy/yuppy variety peons.

The totally unsurprising extension of the monogram is the cult of making certain that a brand name is clearly displayed on what is considered to be clothing instead of a surreal costume, and has the exact same result on delineating the peon to have neither taste or style.

A parallel example of titles not being as important as people comes from the military, enshrined in a joke with very limited variations and ongoing real life reenforcement. The joke involves a comparative chart of all the military officer ranks and their respective descriptions. At the very top of the chart is;

#### General

Faster than a speeding bullet.  
More powerful than a locomotive.  
Leaps tall buildings in a single bound.  
Walks on water.  
Lunches with God, but must pick up tab.

This outline works its way down through the ranks until it reaches the very bottom of the officers

#### Officer Cadet

Under no circumstances to be issued with gun or ammunition, and must even be closely supervised when handling sharp pieces of paper - staples are right out.  
Says: "Look at choo choo!"  
Not allowed inside buildings of any size.  
Makes good boat anchor.  
Mere existence makes God shudder.

Finally, the very last item of every variation on the joke goes below the officer ranks and into the top of the enlisted ranks, the senior of those who salute even that most junior of officers, those who carry out all of the commands of the officers.

#### Sergeant-Major

Catches bullets in his teeth and eats them.  
Kicks bullet trains off their tracks.  
Uproots tall buildings and walk under them.  
Freezes water with a single glance; parts it with trifling gesture.  
is God.

As cited back in the notes for the periodic table of the classes, the sergeant major is also ranked at the same relative level as the marshal, and above the other very senior officers. The reason why is the well documented situation that when any sergeant major with ten and twenty years experience decides that he or she has something to say, that S.M. will have every officer paying Very Close Attention . . . because a sergeant major does salute the officers, or with a very long time in service, tend to salute, but the sergeant major has that much more experience.

One of the particularly surreal examples of peon fantasies is the recurring instances among peons of declaring to be called or nicknamed Lord, Sir, Lady, Princess, Etc. Among the reasons that one never sees this among patricians is that the patrician recognizes that every one of these is not a name or part of a name. Every one of these is a job title, and very often the higher the apparent title the more work that is involved, and the work never ends, or only ends once one dies.

Fussell also notes a parallel that further reinforces the immense difference that stretches all the way from the insecure, posturing, underclass peon up to the patrician, with no concern at all as to whether an upper class patrician or lower class patrician.

But high proles are quite smart, or at least shrewd. Because their work is not closely supervised, they have pride and a conviction of independence, and they feel some contempt for those who have not made it as far as they have. They are, as the sociologist E.E. LeMasters called them and titles his book, Blue Collar Aristocrats (1975), and their disdain for the middle class is like the aristocrat's from the other direction.

. . . Like other aristocrats, says LeMasters, these 'have gone to the top of their social world and need not expend time or energy on 'social climbing.'" They are aristocratic in other ways . . .

. . . Since they're not consumed with worry about choosing the correct status emblems, these people can be remarkably relaxed and unself-conscious. They can do, say, wear, and look like pretty much anything they want without undue feelings of shame, which belong to their betters, the middle class, shame being largely a bourgeois feeling. . .

The issue gets underlined when considering clothing and going into combat. The peon fantasy calls for more and more detailing and bits and complications and shiny things, and processes, and inspections to make certain the shiny bits are present and accounted for, and all the other details of complete and demonstrable failure. The patrician remains focused on just being in whatever the moment.

A trio of novels by Robert Frezza, *A Small Colonial War*, *Fire In A Faraway Place*, and *Cain's Land*, tells of an infantry and a few other things battalion that ends up dealing with issues of interplanetary warfare---itself a complete analogue to intercontinental warfare, and the need to train and be ready for all varieties of changing environments and situations.

In *Cain's Land*, infantry from the battalion and from an additional unit are being merged together, and an introductory exercise is set up. The commander of the new infantry assures of their readiness for combat, stating "In our most recent unit-readiness inspection, we were scored at the 105th percentile."

When given the choice to attack or defend, the new commander chooses to attack. With extreme care and attention to detail, the new commander walks his unit into a three sided ambush. Further, when the attacking commander realizes he got hit with three times the forces he was expecting, the exercise coordinator comments "I wanted to see how your people would respond to something unanticipated." The defending infantry commander later tells his troops the report from the same exercise coordinator; ". . . also gave me the devil for springing a U-shaped ambush, which he though was gilding the lily just a bit. . ."

In a manner of speaking, the military does not have uniforms, the military has a focus on victory. The wearing of uniforms in a declared manner simply provides identification that lets the member individuals move on to the far

more important and actual issues of winning in active combat. Only the peon focuses on the uniform, and pulling a collar up on end, and wearing a neck tie, and having a jacket with a blatantly fake badge on it, and adding in football pads, and putting pleats and cuffs on pants, all to make the peon look even more deformed and inept than ever. The civilian patrician simply grabs what is elegant, simple, is placed immediately on hand, and most importantly then simply moves on to do what is actually needed.

Of yet another example of what one does vs. what one has, there is a concept that's turned up in black American culture of "Bourgie", pronounced something like "boozjy". As a look through Google will show, there is an utterly immense amount of commentary on what is, isn't, should be, who is, what is, go see for yourself.

As of Late October in 2009, a general scan seemed to find four particular definitions of Bourgie. While all of them conflict with the others, the same division of patrician and peon as noted here does turn up, a division which continues to apply to anyone, and thus applies here.

One: See my shiny things with really large price tags and my very visible practices that I am to be admired for and must be seen doing so that I show and remind you that you must consider me more important and capable than you!!!!

Two: See the trashy and glitzy upscale garbage and total waste of time that someone thinks is to be admired, but which proves that someone just an idiot.

Three: You are to be despised because you dared go to school, you have a real job, you actually learned to think, you take care of yourself and your people, and I'm going to scream about how tacky and fake and unimportant you are.

Four: I went to school, I have a real job, I learned to think, I take care of myself and my people and really don't care if another approves, disapproves, or, most importantly, even notices.

One and three is the peon, two and four is the patrician.

Cooper has notes about the smaller scale issues of day to day getting around and getting things done. The patrician just shows up and does something, the peon makes the great show. The patrician actively plans for the simplest and most elegant solution in all things, where the peon insists on unneeded or called for complexity and attention.

The routine of parents taking children to school by car on a rota basis, often known as the 'milk run', causes more aggravation than any other part of the school day, particularly when mothers are trying to collect children from three different schools all coming out at the same time. Where the children are concerned it's one of the last bastions of snobbery-the bigger and shinier the car you're picked up in the better. On the whole, mothers dress more scruffily the higher-class they are. Caroline Stow-Crat turns up in jeans in a filthy Range Rover and is admonished by George who thinks she ought to wear smarter trousers and clean the car more often. Why can't she be more like Mrs Nouveau-Richards who is always dressed up to the nines and takes the 'show-fur' and the Rolls?

In the early twenty-first century, the peon might get a Prius, but would get it bright red and fantasize that the message is that all non-Prius owners are worthless idiots who must recognize the superiority of the particular peon. The patrician will get a Prius for the mileage, and has no care what others get or think as long as they actually and competently drive instead of chattering on a cell phone while on the road. The color of the patrician Prius will be a grey, a tan, something utterly unobtrusive, and may soon acquire a light coating of dust. Fussell comments on cars and reminds that where the peon fantasy claims that if the car becomes flashy or detailed enough, hopefully someone could someday get impressed, where the patrician matter of factly and realistically just gets the most effective form of transport.

The automobile, like the all-important domestic facade, is another mechanism for outdoor class display. Or class lack of display we'd have to say, if we focus on the usages of the upper class, who, on the principle of archaism, affect to regard the automobile as very nouveau and underplay it consistently. Class understatement describes the technique: if your money and freedom and carelessness of censure allow you to buy any kind of car, you provide yourself with the meanest and most common to indicate that you're not taking seriously so easily purchasable and thus vulgar a class totem. . . . and in the least interesting style and color. It may be clean, although slightly dirty is best. But it should be boring. The next best thing is to have a "good" car, . . . but to be sure it's old and beatup. . . .

Fox echoes with her comments.

### **Car-care and Decoration Rules**

But class distinctions, and class anxieties, don't stop with the make of car you choose to drive. The English will also gauge your social rank by the appearance and condition of your car – the way in which you care for it, or do not care for it.

. . . . How clean and shiny – or dirty and scruffy – is your car? As a crude rule of thumb: spotless, shiny cars are the hallmark of the middle-middle, lower-middle and upper-working classes; while dirty, neglected cars are characteristic of the uppers, upper-middles and lower-workings (or in many cases 'not-workings' – the deprived, unemployed, underclasses). In other words, dirty cars are associated with both the highest and very lowest ends of the social scale, clean cars with the middle ranks.

But it's not quite as simple as that. More specific class distinctions depend not only on the cleanliness of your car, but also on precisely how it got that way. Do you wash and polish the car yourself, lovingly and religiously every weekend, in the driveway or street outside your house? Then you are almost certainly lower-middle or upper-working. Do you take it frequently to a car-wash? Then you are probably either middle-middle or lower-middle with middle-middle aspirations (if you are upper-middle, your car-care habits betray middle-middle origins). Do you simply rely on the English weather to sluice off the worst of the grime for you, only resorting to a car-wash or bucket when you can no longer see out of the windows, or when people start finger-writing graffiti in the dirt on the boot? Then you are either upper class---The exception being very wealthy members of the upper class whose servants are responsible for their car care, and whose cars are therefore cleaned to impeccable upper-working-class standards.---, upper-middle or lower-working/underclass.

This last rule might seem to suggest that one cannot distinguish between an upper-class car and an underclass one. In terms of degree of neglect, it is indeed impossible to tell the difference, but this is where one has to take the make of car into consideration as well. At the higher end of the social scale, the filthy car is likely to be a Continental make (or, if British, either a 'country' four-wheel drive, a Mini or something grand such as an old Jaguar, Bentley or Daimler); while at the lower end, the grubby vehicle is more likely to be British, American or Japanese.

More or less the same principle applies to the state of the interior of the car. A scrupulously tidy car indicates an upper-working to middle-middle owner, while a lot of rubbish, apple cores, biscuit crumbs, crumpled bits of paper and general disorder suggests an owner from either the top or the bottom of the social hierarchy. And there are still smaller clues and finer distinctions. If you not only have a tidy car, but also hang your suit-jacket carefully on the little hook thoughtfully provided for this purpose by the car manufacturers, you are lower-middle or possibly at the lower end of middle-middle class. (All other classes simply sling their jacket on the back seat.) If you hang your jacket on a coat-hanger attached to the little hook, you are definitely lower-middle. If you also hang a neatly-ironed shirt on a coat-hanger from the little hook, to change into before

arriving at your 'important meeting', you are lower-middle of working-class origins, and anxious to proclaim your white-collar status.

There are minor variations to the interior car-care class rules, relating mainly to sex-differences. Women of all classes generally tend to have somewhat less tidy cars than men – they are rather more prone to scattering sweet-wrappers and tissues, and leaving stray gloves, scarves, maps, notes and other paraphernalia strewn over the seats. Men are usually a bit more 'car-proud', a bit more anal about keeping such things in the glove- compartment or side-pockets, rather less tolerant of clutter and muddle. Having said that, the upper and upper- middle classes of both sexes have a high tolerance of dog-related dirt and disorder (an immunity they share, again, with the lower-working/under class). The interiors of their cars are often covered in dog hair, and the upholstery scratched to bits by scrabbling paws. The middle-middles and lower-middles confine their dogs to a caged-off section behind the back seats.

The lower-middles might even hang a flat, tree-shaped, scented dangly-thing from their rear-view mirror to counteract any doggy smells, or indeed any smells. Their houses also tend to be full of air-fresheners, loo- fresheners, carpet-fresheners and other deodorizers – as are those of the middle-middle class, but the middle- middles know that hanging scented tree-things or any other dangly objects from your rearview mirror is lower class. In fact, you will not see any decorative objects anywhere in cars belonging to the middle-middle and higher social ranks. Nodding dogs on the back shelf, Garfields clinging to windows and other cutesy animal motifs are lower-middle and working-class indicators, as are bumper-stickers and windscreen-stickers informing you of the car's occupants' taste in holiday destinations and leisure activities. There are only two exceptions to the no-sticker rule, and these are virtuous animal-charity stickers and smugly safety-conscious 'Baby on Board' notices, which you will see on the rear windscreens of both lower-middle and middle-middle cars – although the middle- middle notices are less likely to sport the logo of a nappy-manufacturer. (A few borderline upper-middles may also display 'Baby on Board' signs, but they are sneered at by the majority of upper-middles, particularly the intelligentsia.)

Only the peon has ever claimed that the SUV is a sign of sophistication and ability. Actually from the beginning, the SUV has been and has remained absolutely the city equivalent to the stereotypical, metaphorical, totally back country, broken down pickup truck that is loaded up with pigs. And for any and all attempts by any peon to refute this fact, Jilly Cooper's Caroline Stow-Crat still drives a totally filthy Range Rover and not a BMW, and with that the number of metaphoric pigs in the back of the peon's SUV increases exponentially with each denial of tastelessness, and there is nothing the peon will ever do to change any of these facts.

What one does in the moment rather than what one has in the moment remains the issue at all times and remains the patrician practice. The peon remains the one who tells all about What Must be Done in the vain hope that someone might get fooled into thinking the peon has a clue, and inevitably the peon demonstrates the fatuity by jumping the wrong way.

More Cooper, on clothing:

On the one hand you have the tear-away from Eton wearing polyester trousers and shirts with key motifs to irritate the establishment, on the other the working class undergraduate, determined to identify himself with the establishment, who smothers himself in college regalia. The hacking jacket has just about filtered down the class system to Sharon Definitely-Disgusting, while Fiona Stow-Crat turns up at a party with bright purple hair, wearing a leopardskin rayon jump suit and gold stiletto-heeled boots. Although the upper classes usually settle down sartorially with marriage, I did meet an extremely grand, much divorced old lady recently wearing orange satin drainpipes and a white T-shirt with 'I AM A VIRGIN' printed across the bust. Meanwhile the majority of parvenu Tory ladies in Weybridge, terrified of betraying their origins by putting a foot wrong, dress exactly like the Queen.

Recently I went to a lunch party in a middle-class house where some Americans had been invited to meet a duke's daughter. The daughter of the house, herself apprehensive about meeting a member of the aristocracy, wore a tweed coat and skirt, flat shoes, a pale blue cashmere jersey and pearls. The duke's daughter roared up on a motor bike wearing a leather skirt, fishnet stockings, a tight black sweater and punk eye make-up. The Americans, who arrived just after her, made a justifiable mistake.

One comfort is that even the grandest people worry about what to wear. That scourge of the middle classes, Nancy Mitford, was thrown into total panic by a last minute invitation to dine with Edward VIII.

On one hand, yes, the reference is to that Edward VIII, but very much on another hand, look up the Mitford sisters. Being a totally prosaic peon, the best Edward ever achieved was to fail, and in failing left those around him to pick up the pieces. The Mitford sisters, in turn, went on to actively create their own much greater impact on the twentieth century.

Back to Cooper;

I was told a rather touching story by one of the Queen's dressmakers. The Queen was visiting his shop and admired a very beautiful evening dress, glittering with crystal and rhinestones. When both the dressmaker and her lady-in-waiting urged her to buy it, she shook her head wistfully saying, wasn't it a pity, but really she hadn't got anywhere smart enough to wear it.

What she probably meant was that it was too ostentatious.

Traditionally the aristocracy survived because they were the wiliest of the tribe and knew when to lie low. Let the nouveau riche swagger around in their finery, showing off their wealth and getting their heads chopped off by royalty, or later by revolutionaries. Harry Stow-Crat's ancestors were prepared to dress up in their robes when the King commanded it; otherwise they camouflaged themselves and blended in with their surroundings. Thus today Harry is only copying his forebears when he wears a dark suit in the grey of London, and green, dung-coloured or brown clothes in the country. There was an additional reason for this. Harry's ancestors lived on what they shot, hunted and fished. It is easier to land your prey, whether it be a girl in London or a salmon on the Tay, if you blend with your background.

If there is one single class indicator where clothes are concerned it is colour. The upper classes tend not to wear crude, garish, clashing colours. Not for them the da-glo oranges or reds, the jarring lime greens and citrus yellows, the royal blues, mauves and cyclamen pinks. One thinks of the aristocrat dismissing the rating officer, coming out shooting 'in his dinky little blue suit, or a friend who was witheringly written of as 'the sort of girl who wears shocking pink in the country'. Mrs Nouveau-Richards can pore over *The Tatler* and *Jennifer's Diary*, and find out exactly when and' in what styles different clothes should be worn, but while the photographs go on being printed in black and white she'll never get the colours quite right.

Traditionally, too, because the upper classes believe in supporting their own industries, they regard anything that's lived---wool, leather, silk, cotton-as all right, but anything man-made---crimplene, polyester or plastic---as decidedly vulgar.

At a meeting of the Historic Houses Association, Clive Jenkins and Lord Montagu, the departing president, wore identical clothes-dark blue suits, slightly lighter blue plain shirts, and dark blue ties with red spots; the difference was that Clive Jenkins was dressed in man-made fibres. He looked somehow much shinier and less substantial.

The upper classes, as Michael Fish has said, also believe it is morally wrong to buy more clothes than you have to. So as clothes have to last they have to be conservative and of decent stuff. It is a point of pride for Harry at forty to be able to get into the same coat and trousers he wore at Eton.

Fox also has particular comments on clothing and other accessories, such as pets. Starting with the latter:

What you do with your pet can also be a class indicator. Generally, only the middle-middles and below go in for dog shows, cat shows and obedience tests, and only these classes would put a sticker in the back window of their car proclaiming their passion for a particular breed of dog or warning other motorists that their vehicle may contain 'Show Cats in Transit'. The upper classes regard showing dogs and cats as rather vulgar, but showing horses and ponies is fine. There is no logic to any of this.

Middle-middles and below are also more likely to dress up their dogs and cats in coloured collars, bows and other tweeknesses – and if you see a dog with its name in inverted commas on its collar, the animal's owners are almost certainly no higher than middle-middle. Upper-middle and upper-class dogs usually just wear plain brown leather collars. Only a certain type of rather insecure working-class male goes in for big, scary, aggressive-looking guard dogs with big, scary, studded, black collars.

As always, the most simple, elegant, understated the person or situation, the more patrician. Only the peon goes for the added details, the superfluous extras, like brand names, as Fox also notes.

It is much harder nowadays to tell a person's class by his or her dress, but there are still a few fairly reliable indicators. Nothing as obvious as the old distinctions between cloth-caps and pin-stripes, but if you look closely, you can identify the unwritten sartorial rules and subtle status-signals.

### **Youth Rules and Yoof Rules**

Class indicators are most difficult to detect among the young, as young people of all classes tend to follow either tribal street-fashions or mainstream trends (which are in any case usually diluted versions of street-fashions). This is annoying for class-conscious parents, as well as class-spotting anthropologists. One upper-middle-class mother complained, 'Jamie and Saskia look just like those yobbos from the council estate. Honestly, what is the point?' Meaning, presumably, what is the point of taking the trouble to give your children 'smart' upper-middle-class names and send them to expensive upper-middle-class schools, when they insist on dressing exactly like Kevin and Tracey from the local comprehensive.

But a more observant mother might have noticed that Jamie and Saskia do not, in fact, look exactly like Kevin and Tracey. Jamie may have his hair cut very short and often gelled into spikes, but Kevin will go one step further and have his shaved off almost entirely, leaving just a few millimetres of fuzz. Saskia's multiple ear-piercings may horrify her parents, and the more audacious Saskias may even have their belly-buttons pierced, but most Saskias will not, like the Traceys, have rings and studs in their eyebrows, noses and tongues as well. Princess Anne's daughter, Zara, had a tongue-stud, but this was a breach of the rules shocking enough to make front-page headline news in all the tabloids. The upper class and aristocracy, like those at the bottom end of the social scale, can ignore the unwritten dress codes because they don't care what the neighbours think. They do not suffer from middle-class class anxiety. If middle-class Saskia gets her tongue pierced, she is in danger of being thought 'common': if aristocratic Zara does it, it is daring and eccentric.

Leaving aside the occasional upper-class exceptions, sartorial differences between middle-class youth and working-class 'yoof' are generally a matter of degree. . . .

As a rule, middle-class children's and teenagers' dress tends to be both more restrained and somewhat more natural-looking than working-class yoof attire. Tracey and Saskia may both wear the same fashionable style and shape of t-shirt and trousers, but Saskia's will be matte rather than shiny, with a higher proportion of natural fibres, at least in the daytime. The class indicators are quite subtle. Saskia and Tracey may shop at the same teenage high-street chains, and often buy the same items, but they combine them and wear them in slightly different ways. They may both have a short denim jacket from TopShop, but Tracey will wear hers with tight, slightly shiny, black lycra/nylon trousers and clumpy, black, high-heeled, platform shoes, while Saskia's identical jacket will be worn with a pair of cords, boots and a big, soft scarf wrapped several times round her neck. For some reason, middle- and upper-class young people are much more inclined to wear scarves than the lower ranks, and generally more willing to wrap up warmly in cold weather. Kevin and Tracey often seem perversely determined to be cold, going out on freezing January nights wearing just a t-shirt under a leather jacket (Kevin) or a mini-skirt with thin, shiny tights (Tracey). Such inadequately dressed yoof are a particularly common sight in the North.

This is not a question of money, and the cost of clothes is not a reliable guide to the class of the wearer. Saskia's and Jamie's clothes are no more expensive than Tracey's and Kevin's, and Tracey and Kevin are just as likely to have a number of expensive items of 'designer' clothing in their wardrobes. But again, there are tell-tale differences. When working-class yoof, male or female, wear 'designer' clothes, they tend to go for the ones with the big, obvious logos. The reasoning seems to be: what is the point in having a Calvin Klein or Tommy Hilfiger sweatshirt if no-one can tell? The upper-middles and above regard big designer logos as rather vulgar.

If in doubt, look at the hair. Hair is a fairly reliable class-indicator. Tracey's haircut is likely to look more 'done', more contrived, more artificial than Saskia's – and her style will involve more obvious use of gel, dye and spray. Almost all upper-middle to upper-class public-schoolgirls have straight, shiny-clean, floppy hair, falling loose so that they can be constantly pushing it back, running their fingers through it, flipping and tossing it, tucking it behind their ears, pulling it into a rough twist or ponytail then letting it fall back again, in a sequence of apparently casual, unconscious gestures. This public-schoolgirl floppy-hair display is a highly distinctive ritual, rarely seen among working-class females. . . .

### **Adult Class Rules**

Grown-up sartorial semiotics are marginally less complex than the teenage rules and signals, and the class indicators are somewhat clearer.

The current Debrett's Guide to Etiquette and Modern Manners advises us to 'forget the old British adage that it is ill-bred to be overdressed'. The author claims that this rule dates from a time when 'it was the accepted norm to dress up for any activity more than gardening'. At this time, he says, 'overdressing meant being got up in a flashy, overly elaborate or embarrassing way and took no account of the modern invasion of sports-inspired clothes that has enslaved whole swathes of the nation into sweats and trainers.' He has a point, particularly where men are concerned, but among females, flashy, over-elaborate dress is still an unmistakable lower-class indicator, while the higher echelons still manage to 'dress up' without looking fussy and overdone.

### **Female Class Rules**

Too much jewellery (especially gold jewellery, and necklaces spelling out one's name or initials), too much make-up, over-coiffed hair, fussy-dressy clothes, shiny tights and uncomfortably tight, very high-heeled shoes are all lower-class hallmarks, particularly when worn for relatively



casual occasions. Deep, over-baked tans are also regarded as vulgar by the higher social ranks. As with furniture and home-decoration, too much twee, laboured matching of clothes or accessories is also a lower-class signal, particularly if the scheme involves a bright colour – say, a navy dress with red trim, red belt, red shoes, a red bag and a red hat (take off two more class points if any of these items are shiny as well as red). This kind of overdressing is often seen at working-class weddings or other special occasions. The same over-careful matching but with a more muted ‘accent’ colour, such as cream, would be lower-middle class; reducing the number of matched accessories to just two or three might raise the whole outfit to middle-middle status – but it would still be an ‘outfit’, still too fussy and Sunday-best, still too obviously dressed-up for the upper-middles.

For the crucial distinction between lower/middle-middle and upper-middle dress, think Margaret Thatcher (careful, stiff, smart, bright-blue suits; shiny blouses; matching shoes and bags; coiffed helmet of hair) versus Shirley Williams (worn, rumpled, thrown-together – but good quality – tweedy skirts and cardigans; dull, sludgy colours; nothing matching; messy, unstyled hair)<sup>59</sup>.

59. Apologies to those too young to remember Shirley Williams in her heyday, but I could not find a good contemporary example, as all female politicians now seem to dress in a rather lower/middle-middle manner – or at least I have seen none with Williams’s unmistakably high-class brand of unkemptness.

This is not to say that any sort of scruffiness is ‘posh’, or that any attempt at dressing up is automatically lower-class. An upper-middle or upper class woman will not wear Waynetta Slob leggings and a grubby velour sweatshirt to go out to lunch at a smart restaurant – but she will turn up in something fairly simple and understated, without lots of heavy-handed matching and effortful accessorizing. Her hair may be casually ‘unstyled’, but it will not be greasy, or display several inches of dark roots straggling into a brassy-blonde dye with a half-grown-out perm.

Among adult English females, the amount of flesh on display can also be a class indicator. As a rule, the amount of visible cleavage is inversely correlated with position on the social scale – the more cleavage revealed by a garment, the lower the social class of its wearer (a daytime garment, that is – party dresses and ball gowns can be more revealing). For the middle-aged and over, the same rule applies to upper arms. And skimpy, skin-tight clothes clinging to bulges of fat are also lower class. The higher ranks have bulges too, but they hide them under looser or more substantial clothing. . . . .

### **Male Class Rules**

One way or another, it is usually possible to gauge English women’s social class from their dress. Men, however, pose rather more of a problem for the class-spotter. There is far less variety in adult male clothing, particularly work-clothes, which means less choice, which means fewer opportunities to make either deliberate or inadvertent sartorial class-statements. The old blue-collar/white-collar distinction is no longer reliable. The decline of the manufacturing industry and the casual dress codes of many of the newer companies and industries mean that a suit per se no longer distinguishes the lower-middle from the working-class male. The young man going to work in jeans and a t-shirt could be a construction-site labourer, but he could equally be the managing director of an independent software company. Uniforms are more helpful, but not infallible. Yes, a shop assistant’s or bus driver’s uniform is probably a working-class indicator, but a barman’s or waiter’s is not, as middle-class students often take jobs in bars and restaurants. . . . .

Jewellery and accessories are a better guide. Size is important. Large, bulky, ostentatious metal watches, especially gold ones, are a lower-class signal – even if they are frightfully expensive Rolexes (or those James-Bond-wannabe gadgetty ones that tell you what time it is in six countries and will work at the bottom of the sea and withstand a small nuclear attack). Upper-middles and above tend to wear more discreet watches, usually with a simple leather strap. A similar

principle applies to cufflinks: big, flashy, show-off cufflinks are lower class; small, simple, unobtrusive ones are higher. Again, the cost of the items is irrelevant.

Any rings other than a plain wedding ring indicate that the wearer is probably no higher than middle-middle. Some upper-middle and upper-class males might wear a signet ring, engraved with their family crest, on the little finger of their left hand, but these are also often sported by pretentious middle-middles, so they are not a reliable guide. A signet ring with initials on it rather than a crest, and worn on any other finger, is lower middle. Ties are marginally more helpful. Very brash, garish colours and loud patterns (especially cartoony/joke ones) are lower class; ties in a single, solid colour (particularly if pale, bright and/or shiny) are no higher than middle-middle; the upper-middles and above wear ties in relatively subdued, usually dark colours, with small, discreet patterns. But I'll come clean and admit that I rarely, if ever, manage to identify be-suited males' class by dress alone: I have to cheat and look at their body language or their newspaper. (Whatever they are wearing, only working-class males sit on trains or buses with their legs wide apart; and most upper-middle-class males do not read the tabloids – or at least not in public.)

Casual clothes are a bit more revealing, in both the physical and class-indicator sense, than suits, as there is more variety and men have to exercise more choice. . . . .

As a general principle, winter or summer, higher-class males just seem to wear more clothes. More layers, more coats, more scarves and hats and gloves. . . . .

Upper-class English males take the 'don't stand out' rule to extremes, dressing to blend in not only with each other but also with their surroundings: tweedy greens and browns in the country; sombre greys and dark blue pinstripes in town – a sort of high-class camouflage. Wearing inappropriate 'city' clothes in the country, for both males and females, is a serious social solecism. In some very old and grand upper-class country circles, this taboo extends to the wearing of anything even remotely fashionable: the more frumpy and out-of-date you look, the higher your social status.

Digging into Wikipedia for a moment, an article on social classes at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social\\_class](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_class) specifically has a captioned picture that compares two differently dressed men.

This photo of two men on a street in New Orleans uses visual appearance to contrast the social class of two people: a man in casual, possibly work-soiled clothes (note hardhat), and a man with a briefcase in a suit and tie.

Considering the circumstances of patrician situational ease contrasted with the claimed regulations of the peon, the patrician high working class manager in the jeans and the hard hat will clearly and always out class the underclass salespean having to deal with the equally underclass corporate regulation that it must be seen wearing a tie.---No doubt the aficionados of such unthinking and totally revealing regulations would also claim that there could be such a thing as an upper class mall.

The subtlety here is where the peon keeps insisting on a designated rule where there is none, and keeps being in error.---that rather unmistakable example being the idea of having napkin rings. By contrast, the patrician can often seem to ignore rules, but only when the rules are actually superfluous. The issue is the matter of elegance, of doing what is needed at a moment and moving on. The patrician will do that, adjusting actions and decisions as needed for the greatest result and least effort, and the peon will repeatedly opt for the greatest regulated disturbance, effort, and failure.