

## **Class Domination, Social Hierarchy and the Fight for Equality**

Class domination has *not always* existed in human society, but once established, social hierarchy has deeply penetrated and permeated culture to create both implicit and explicit biases for social status, for hierarchy. Returning to an egalitarian society requires both systemic-institutional change and change in our conscious and unconscious minds.

As long as class society has existed, it has been a social dominance hierarchy. Hierarchy is a social construct, used to justify domination and exploitation. Myths have always been used to justify the rule of the few over the many. Kings and Lords maintained that God gave them the authority to rule over peasants. Slave-owners declared that non Christians could be enslaved. Today capitalists say that they are smarter and worked harder and thus have the right to privately own production and pay workers wages. They made themselves rulers, and then they sought to divide those whom they ruled.

The brutal economic system of slavery in America required social control to prevent the unity of black and white labor. The slave-owners created the lies and laws of racism. Frederick Douglas, the famous abolitionist, wrote: “The hostility between the Whites and the Blacks of the South is easily explained. It has its root and sap in the relation of slavery, and was incited on both sides by the cunning of the slave masters. Those masters secured their ascendancy over both the poor White and the Blacks by putting enmity between them. They divided both to conquer each.” The demonizing myths of racism created a culture of race hierarchy in the general population. When industrial capitalism began to expand it used the racist ideology to divide black and white to exploit and profit from the wage worker.

Today we live in a capitalist economy where the 1% owns controlling interest in corporations, industry, finance and land, while the 99% are exploited. A few thousand years of social hierarchy has created a cultural environment where it is largely accepted as “natural”. It is “in the air”, consciously and unconsciously embedded in our culture. We generally accept the oppressive

system of social dominance. Children as young as six are implicitly (unconsciously) aware of status.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-implicit-prejudice/>

Social status is widely accepted implicitly **even among those who hold egalitarian world views**. Studies have shown that status is more important than money.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/for-the-brain-status-is-better/> Significantly, social status is strongly linked to fear in our brain's emotional center. The 1% use their power to deflect and divide the 99% by promoting stereotypes and mass propaganda to dehumanize certain groups "which impact the limbic system, the primitive brain, with the powerful emotions of fear and hate" <https://www.lucifereffect.com/> When status is threatened the **emotion of fear** is generated leading to hatred and violence. History reveals that when the 99% begin to organize for progressive social change that could create more social equality, the ruling class feels threatened. "Confrontation is inevitable—since it is invariably initiated by the forces of reaction who see their power threatened."

[https://monthlyreview.org/2020/01/01/mr-071-08-2020-01\\_0/](https://monthlyreview.org/2020/01/01/mr-071-08-2020-01_0/) A famous economist once wrote: "... the most violent, mean and malignant

passions of the human breast, the Furies of private interest. “ <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/p1.htm>

The top down dominance of corporate capitalism continue to divide and subdivide the 99% into those who are considered worthy and those who are less worthy -- race, nation, religion, sex, immigrant, tribe and more, ad infinitum. The power systems of dominance hierarchy are built into the major institutions and organizations of society- corporations, the state, the police and the military for example. It is not a few bad apples, but “*the rotten barrel of the barrel makers*” <https://www.lucifereffect.com/>.

There are those who maintain that it is “in human nature” to dominate and exploit—they say it has always been so. **Nothing could be further from the truth.** Anthropologists have repeatedly demonstrated that humans have lived for thousands of years in egalitarian societies. In fact many have practiced “reverse hierarchy”—those who sought to dominate as despots were punished, banished or killed.

<https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674006911&content=reviews>

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237066826\\_Beyond\\_War\\_The\\_Human\\_Potential\\_for\\_Peace](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237066826_Beyond_War_The_Human_Potential_for_Peace)

Social hierarchy is a **created** oppressive social construct as is racism. It **can** be abolished. Social dominance hierarchy and the fear of losing status are not inevitable. We have the potential to unite the world's 99% and create a society of equals. It is crucial that those seeking to transform the political and economic system acknowledge not only must they build a movement for economic, social and political equality but also struggle to overcome their own implicit hierarchical biases. If not, social hierarchy will be carried into the future ***where leaders will become rulers*** who undermine and corrupt the egalitarian world view. History has clearly shown that only eternal vigilance of the rank and file mobilized against social hierarchy has the potential to win and maintain the solidarity of an egalitarian society. ***We must change ourselves while also seeking to change society.***

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## MARX

The peculiar nature of the materials it deals with, summons as foes into the field of battle the most violent, mean and malignant passions of the human breast, the Furies of private interest. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1867-c1/p1.htm>

## Hierarchy in the Forest, by Christopher Boehm, 1999

<https://www.hup.harvard.edu/catalog.php?isbn=9780674006911&content=reviews>

## The Human Potential for Peace, 2007, Fry, Douglas

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237066826\\_Beyond\\_War\\_The\\_Human\\_Potential\\_for\\_Peace](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/237066826_Beyond_War_The_Human_Potential_for_Peace)

“at some stage in the process violent

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\Monthly Review, January 2020

[https://monthlyreview.org/2020/01/01/mr-071-08-2020-01\\_0/](https://monthlyreview.org/2020/01/01/mr-071-08-2020-01_0/)

“implanted ideologically reinforces itself through its ability to produce... *forms of life* that make settler-colonialism’s constituted hierarchies seem natural” Monthly review Feb 2020

[https://monthlyreview.org/2020/02/01/mr-071-09-2020-02\\_0/](https://monthlyreview.org/2020/02/01/mr-071-09-2020-02_0/)

<https://www.lucifereffect.com/> The Lucifer Effect by Philip Zimbardo 2007

## Mind the implicit prejudice June 1 2006

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-implicit-prejudice/>

for the brain cash is good , status is better

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/for-the-brain-status-is-better/>