

KALAMAZOO'S PROMISE: EXPLORING THE VIOLENCE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Boone Shear and Vin Lyon-Callo

Introduction

On a blustery March 2011 morning, weⁱ dragged ourselves to a rally to “save the middle class” at Sojourner Truth Park in Battle Creek, Michigan. Over 500 union workers, public school teachers, clergy, politicians, university faculty, students, representatives from civil rights organizations, and other concerned citizens came together to give impassioned speeches decrying new state policies and budget proposals while voicing chants such as “this is what democracy looks like” and “they did it in Egypt, why not Michigan”.. University faculty and members of the building trades unions even interacted with each other as fellow workers. Armed with a list of demands we then marched, first to City Hall, carrying placards proclaiming “stop attacks on working families.” From City Hall, we continued past dozens of empty storefronts on the main downtown streets to the Chamber of Commerce office. After the march, the rally soon broke up with participants congratulating themselves on a successful event and planning a similar event two days later in nearby Kalamazoo.

Once priding itself as “Cereal City USA”, but now largely abandoned by the Kellogg Company, the rally in Battle Creek was just one of many such events we attended that spring. Placards, speeches and chants at these protests proclaimed a fight to save the middle class, to save education, and to save democracy. But, why did democracy and the middle class need saving? And, more importantly, how did participants imagine producing democracy and a middle class?

In this paper, we reflect and ruminate on some of our ethnographic research in Kalamazoo conducted over the past 10 years. We focus on three, very different, responses to problematic and

deteriorating social conditions in Kalamazoo: efforts to create affordable housing by Kalamazoo activists, economic development projects led by developers and city government, and an innovative, philanthropic scholarship initiative. Through discussions of these projects, we explore how contemporary capitalist relations are naturalized through the very efforts that attempt to transform their impacts. We suggest that the lack of articulated alternatives to exploitation and commodity exchange in a capitalist market can have the discursive effect of both naturalizing and concealing capitalism.

The rallies in Michigan joined a growing chorus of nation-wide opposition to reactionary budget cuts and state level social policy initiatives that many people believed were intended to further advance elite interests through privatization, marketization, and favorable tax policies for corporations and the wealthy. In addition to the austerity measures folded into many state budgets, proposed legislation included efforts to take away bargaining rights in Wisconsin, to do away with child labor laws in Missouri, a bill that would make it illegal for people receiving public assistance to carry more than \$20 in their pockets in Minnesota, and a bill in Arizona requiring public schools to report students who cannot provide documentation of legal residence. In Michigan, the state that beat the rest of the nation into the “Great Recession” by several years, proposed cuts and policies appeared particularly vicious. Governor Snyder proposed a budget that promised to “lay a new, sound foundation for Michigan's reinvention” by featuring new taxes on pensions, \$180 million dollars in cuts to public employees, cutting about \$142 million from state revenue sharing with local governments, over 20% cuts to higher education, and a \$470 per pupil cut to K-12 education.ⁱⁱ Also, included in the plan were “incentives” to communities that adopted “best practices” by “right sizing” employee compensation with cuts in wages and health and retirement benefits. These measures were in part necessitated by deficits caused by \$1.8 billion in cuts to corporate taxes as well as continuing to spend \$2 billion, or nearly 25% of the total state budget, on corrections. Perhaps most notable, was a bill that would give the governor the authority to appoint an

“emergency manager” to manage any community or school board that failed to remain fiscally solvent. Upon appointment, the manager would have the power to disband locally elected boards and commissions, sell off public assets, and overturn negotiated union contracts. A few weeks after the emergency manager bill was signed into law, Michigan became the first state to cut unemployment benefits to twenty weeks, thereby saving employers another estimated \$300 million.

Though policy proposals were rationalized as being necessary to counter the several year long trend in Michigan of high unemployment, falling property values, and declining tax revenues, counter arguments were sometimes voiced. A few people suggested increasing taxes on the wealthy while more argued for investing more fully in education so that companies could find skilled workers in Michigan. All of these proposals, though, are largely predicated on a faith that decreasing costs and providing resources for private capital would lure firms to the state where they would then invest some of their new profits into creating new jobs and wealth that could be taxed; it is the old model of supply side, trickle down capitalist economics combined with a more interventionist and authoritarian state (necessitating the large corrections budget).

Some activists have represented what was being carried out on the state level as part of a national, political assault that can be understood in terms of Naomi Klein’s theoretical model, the Shock Doctrine (Klein 2008). This model suggests that budget crises were being leveraged to impose austerity measures, justify attacks on labor, and further privatization. In this way, neoliberal transformations are not only represented as necessary for competing in a global economy, but also necessary because there are no other options due to our current crises. One way to understand these dynamics is that these are the sinister and greedy intentions of an elite that has only has their own class/self interests in mind. This deterministic account is one possibility, but, as Jodi Dean suggests (2011), such a belief that crisis and austerity are simply and solely carried out as openings to self-interest vis-à-vis neoliberal transformations is also politically and intellectually

limiting. What if some of the social actors proposing privatization and austerity truly believe that what they are supporting is actually also good for society, good for the people writ-large? In other words, what if corporate greed and calculated self-interest are not viewed as *the* source of social inequality? At the same time, could it be possible that social actors engaging in practices out of a sense of benevolence might also be producing or maintaining the structures of inequality? If we let go of our desires to on the one hand simply confront and oppose the bad behaviors of the powerful, or on the other hand, our inclinations to laud and support benevolent and well meaning efforts, what new understandings and possibilities might come into focus in the field of political struggle?

Like those supporting the governor's proposals and those protesting against these state-level measures, we too are concerned about the ongoing impacts of socio-economic restructuring in the Midwest. As has been very well documented by now (see, for example, Wolff 2009), despite economic growth vis-à-vis increasing productivity, the last three decades in the United States have been characterized by increased economic inequality, economic and ecological insecurity, community instability, personal debt, authoritarian state practices, and global corporate conglomerates accompanied by decreased tax burdens on the wealthiest. To be clear, we are certainly sympathetic to the oppositional stance taken up by protestors, and we share the desire to defend the communities that we live in. However, while some may see the tax cuts for corporations and decreased public funding as solutions, and others may see the rise of oppositional movements as a hopeful sign for reconstituting a left that might be able to work towards a more democratic and equitable future, we remain unconvinced by both efforts.

Neither the economic troubles nor the dominant ways of responding to inequities represent anything altogether new to us. We have been exploring responses to poverty, deindustrialization, and systemic inequities in Kalamazoo for over a decade. In this ethnographic work, we have seen severe economic and social hardships for some, extreme wealth for a few others, and a wide range of most likely well intentioned economic development efforts and resistance practices. As we

discuss in this paper, the responses to restructurings have done little to alter the consequences of such restructurings for most members of the community. To analyze these processes, we explore a few interconnected questions:

What are the conditions producing hardships?

How are concerned community members responding to those hardships?

What are the effects of such practices?

And, how do those responses make sense to the subjects enacting them?

Through this analysis, we hope to offer suggestions on what is to be done if we were to actually try and alter current conditions.

Politics and the Real

How can we find popular responses and resistance to what are discussed as attacks on workers, unions, and the middle class problematic”? Throughout Michigan in 2011, political organizing began to take place across unions and social movements in ways that had not been seen across in the state in decades. Large rallies are just the public face of increased public discussion of, and solidarity against, deteriorating social conditions, and, perhaps, an increasing awareness of the policies creating them. Discontent is palpableⁱⁱⁱ. However, these nascent movements can be usefully understood as an example of what James Ferguson describes as “**the antis**” -- “a project of resisting and refusing harmful new development in the world” (2009). As Ferguson suggests, it is easy to document how policies promoting deregulation, privatization, and diminished taxes on corporations and wealthy individuals have produced much increased economic inequality and insecurity; it is easy to be anti-emergency managers, , or anti-tax breaks for large corporations and anti-neoliberal capitalism. Moreover, individual and collective opposition to such policies is not difficult to find in Michigan. Indeed, we have witnessed, and taken part in, many such actions during our ethnographic work in Kalamazoo. We have worked on political campaigns of pro-labor

and progressive city commission candidates, , with a range of anti-poverty groups, with a coalition that sought to enact a living wage ordinance in the city , on a city-wide multicultural festival that hoped to create community across religious, ethnic and racial lines, and we established a 0o collaborative media project with our research “subjects” intended to foment dialogue in multiple directions and provide a space for critique and debate (Shear and Lyon-Callo 2008). In these efforts, we found widespread disenchantment with deteriorating conditions and significant opposition to policies structuring those conditions. But, as Ferguson asks, “what if politics is really not about expressing indignation or denouncing the powerful? What if it is, instead, about getting what you want?” (2009: 167). Framing political struggle this way helps us think more carefully about what remains problematic in most of the responses to growing inequality and economic insecurity. What is it exactly that people want? How are these desires produced? What political responses do they delimit and conceal? Imagining alternatives to the exploitation and commodity exchange that produce inequalities and alienation, remain remote and marginal in Kalamazoo, and surely elsewhere in the rust belt of the US.

In our work, we have aimed, not simply to understand the cultural production of inequalities and violence, but to help with changing them. We have taken an engaged, dialogical approach and aligned ourselves with groups of social actors who are responding in different ways to economic restructuring . By working alongside local activists in shared political space, we have attempted to establish more trusting, collegial relationships in which frank dialogue might more readily emerge (Lyon-Callo 2004), as well as inhabit partially shared, “positioned objectivity” (Hale 2008) with our research subjects from which we hope to analyze with more acumen the conditions in which we and our research subjects are immersed.

We find Slavoj Zizek’s work on violence (2008) and his differentiation between “reality” and “The Real” particularly useful in exploring those processes. For Zizek, the violence of capitalism is part of the process that obscures and naturalizes that very violence. He defines reality as the social-

symbolic reality of the actual people involved in interactions, the perceived experiences and conditions of people's lives, but by **The REAL** he wants us to consider a part of existence that is extra-symbolic, that remains outside of our reality even as it shapes it. The REAL is the domain of capitalist exploitation and its inexorable "abstract", spectra-logic that determines what goes on in social reality; an underlying logic that both produces reality and is largely ignored, silenced, or consented to as "just the way things are". "We live in a society where ...certain features, attitudes, and norms of life are no longer perceived as ideologically marked. They appear to be neutral, non-ideological, natural, commonsensical...it is precisely the neutralization of some features into a spontaneously accepted background that marks out ideology at its purest and most effective"(2008: 36) So, in this way Zizek is urging us to consider not just the reality of violence, but in how violent events appear to people and how that impacts responses. It thus becomes imperative to understand how concerned social actors are brought into discursive practices that help to naturalize exploitation and, ultimately, violence,

Zizek identifies overlapping aspects of the violence in today's world, subjective and objective violence. Subjective violence, describes the violence being performed by clearly identifiable agents. Subjective violence can appear as a disruption of the normal, routine functioning of our economic and political systems. In 2011, examples of subjective violence might be seen as the severe cuts to education in Michigan or the emergency manager legislation. These were widely represented as ruptures to normal political processes and, consequently, received the most attention of activists. The focus on subjective violence allows objective violence, the violent consequences of the smooth, routine functioning of our economic and political processes to go largely unchallenged. This objective violence is often invisible precisely because it is the "normal". And, Zizek argues, if we are to understand the disruptions produced by **subjective violence** we must account for how **objective violence** helps create the conditions for such subjective acts. One aspect of Zizek's intervention on violence that cannot be overemphasized is that he is not

articulating an argument simply about a mystification or ignorance of the real conditions . Rather, drawing upon the insights of Jacques Lacan, Zizek suggests that sometimes it makes emotional sense not to acknowledge what you know if you also understand yourself to be powerless to alter those real conditions. For Zizek, emotional and psychological processes must be analyzed along with the political and economic if we are to understand violence and how human subjects respond to it. Faith in the fantasy that more productive and profitable corporations will increase employment and wages as “the economy recovers” is one example of this process. However, to explore more fully how violence in its economic, ideological, and emotional complexity produces and maintains inequalities, we turn now to a focus on our ethnographic work in Kalamazoo.

Economic Restructuring

Kalamazoo is a company town. Local enterprises, most notably the pharmaceutical manufacturer the Upjohn Co., and more recently the medical equipment company Stryker, have generated tremendous economic growth and private wealth in the area, which have given the business community, developers and local elites great political influence. Indeed, as discussed later in the paper, Kalamazoo’s three billionaires join old-money-ed families and multiple philanthropic foundations to contribute to an ongoing array of development efforts, cultural events, and innovative social initiatives. And Kalamazoo’s major public university Western Michigan University, the private Kalamazoo College, and Kalamazoo Valley Community College contribute to a more progressive political climate than much of the region. Despite these unique features, Kalamazoo has been reshaped in ways similar to other Rust-Belt cities over the past few decades. The reality is that, like most of Michigan, Kalamazoo County has undergone profound economic restructuring resulting in high unemployment, underemployment, and extreme inequalities. Coinciding with the loss of over 3000 jobs, four paper mills closed , a General Motors factory closed, and the

multinational Kellogg Company in nearby Battle Creek shuttered one of their plants. After over a century in Kalamazoo, the pharmaceutical manufacturer Upjohn Company, the city's largest employer, merged with Pharmacia in 1995. Then, in 2003, Pharmacia merged with Pfizer. The subsequent consolidation and transfer of jobs cut the workforce in half from 6,400 jobs to 3,200 in Kalamazoo County as of 2009 (Prichard 2009).

The loss of thousands of jobs has corresponded with other impacts on the community. The city of Kalamazoo's population decreased by nearly 10% in the last decade (77,140 to 70,561). Unemployment increased to 13.3% by July of 2010. Longstanding racial and class inequities in the region have become further exacerbated. Two particularly troubling indicators of this are infant mortality and child poverty. During the 2004-2008 time period, Kalamazoo had a white infant mortality rate of 4.8, compared with a black rate of 17.7. This disparity of almost 5 to 1 far surpassed the rates nationally and statewide (Wendt, Ready, and Miles 2010). Meanwhile, Kalamazoo's 25% poverty rate in 2000 leapt to 35.5% in 2007 to tie Flint for the highest poverty rate in the state. The poverty rate for black children in the city in 2007 was 62%, including an astounding 75% poverty rate for black children under the age of five (Kalamazoo County Community Action Agency 2009, Ready 2008). Hunger and homelessness is widespread. Number of shelter nights provided by Kalamazoo area homeless shelters increased from just over 60,000 annually in 1995, to over 90,000 in 2004. That number jumped to over 97,000 nights in 2005 and, since 2006 that number has remained at over 100,000 shelter nights per year (Affordable Housing Partnership 2010, Jessup 2009a). A disproportionate number of shelter stays are by non-white residents. For example, in 2008 45% of homeless people in the county were black compared to 10.1% in the general population (Jessup 2009b).

Of particular important to us is that these conditions have not simply been accepted or even tolerated. In Kalamazoo many people actively engage in a wide range of practices intended to confront and improve social conditions. Downtown development projects, investments in

education, living wage movements, entrepreneurial training programs, anti-racism advocacy, an interfaith based advocacy effort, diversity celebrations, anti-poverty organizing, efforts against police racial profiling and violence, advocacy for homeless people, and a campaign around establishing affordable housing are just a few of the movements.. Each of these efforts may represent the dedicated practices of committed and well intentioned community members. Despite those efforts, however, the inequalities continue. We suggest in the following examples that the focus on what is perceived to be reasonable, or realistic, is maintained by, and helps to maintain, the normal workings of capitalism which appear as inevitable, natural, or altogether invisible. In other words, relations of exploitation remain in the realm of the REAL.

Homelessness and Affordable Housing

A 2004 meeting of the Kalamazoo Poverty Reduction Task Force meeting was redirected by members of the Michigan Organizing Project (MOP) who suggested that rather than continue to focus on community education, the task force should move towards eliminating homelessness through organizing for the establishment of an affordable housing trust fund in the community. While the task force never fully embraced the proposal in practice, perhaps partly due to the contentious tone in which some organizers advocated their position, organizing around the proposal did develop.

MOP organizers began working with some people who were homeless and founded a new community organization, the Kalamazoo Homeless Action Network (KHAN). KHAN began to bring national experts on housing to the city and became a consistent presence testifying at city government, county government, and community meetings for the next two years. Finally, in 2006, the cities of Portage and Kalamazoo as well as Kalamazoo County pledged a total of approximately one million dollars to be spent on providing affordable housing vouchers for four years. The result was not the trust fund that had been requested and the voucher program embraced the medicalized

approach to homelessness (Lyon-Callo 2004) with recipients of vouchers being required to identify what issues within themselves caused their homelessness and to work with a sponsor to fix themselves, but a program was enacted. As a result, 117 different individuals and families were able to afford housing and end their homelessness. For recipients, the housing vouchers have been very helpful. However, despite the program, the number of homeless people in the region continued to increase throughout those four years. While offering some relief to individual people, the affordable housing vouchers alone were not a solution to homelessness.

That individualized help was scheduled to stop when funding for the program ran out at the end of 2010. In response, another group of mostly homeless and formerly homeless community members, People United to Secure Housing (PUSH), helped facilitate a coalition to work on securing a longer term, more secure funding source for the program. Largely through the efforts of PUSH, MOP and another community group, Interfaith Strategy for Advocacy and Action in the Community (ISAAC) agreed to work together for the first time on this effort. That agreement facilitated several other community organizations agreeing to join the coalition.

To some extent, this is a clear example of community groups coming together to solve a pressing community need. And, in part, it counters the notion of just being “anti” and taking an oppositional stance towards state policies, as this was/is a movement for government supported affordable housing. However, examining this effort through the lens of Zizek’s insights on violence, some shortcomings begin to become apparent.

The most obvious problem is that the goal of solving homelessness was not accomplished as, despite the people helped, the total number of people requesting a bed at local homeless shelters greatly increased. But, more problematic still is that the program while focusing on solving the subjective violence for a few people of living on the streets or in shelters, does little to address the objective violence that produces the need for homeless shelters. Even if everyone was housed, but still living in abject poverty with little hope of a decent income, reliable transportation,

adequate health coverage, or access to a healthy life, how is that measured as a success? If people are housed but the systemic racism that produces so much greater homelessness among African-Americans or the social processes that produce such disproportionate homelessness among LGBT youth are not altered, the conditions producing the violence of homelessness remain in place.

These issues were discussed and debated during late 2010 within PUSH, after PUSH members asked us to write a first draft of a guest editorial for homeless awareness week to appear in the local newspaper. The goal was to spell out why it was essential to fund the housing program. We wrote a draft emphasizing how vital such a program was in the community, but also suggested that if the goal was to end homelessness, the systemic conditions producing poverty needed to be addressed. The discussions that followed were particularly informative. After some initial hesitancy, and silence from some members, nearly all of the most active members of the group acknowledged that although they had often thought about the need to alter the conditions producing homelessness, they also asserted that this analysis should not be included in the letter. Almost everyone had voiced understandings in other settings regarding how the problems were systemic and that, if we hoped to end homelessness, eventually those processes would need to be altered. But at this moment, they tried not to acknowledge that understanding because they also “knew” that we could not change those conditions.

Two concerns dominated these discussions. One focused on how as an organization we were too small to actually transform the normal workings of global or local capitalism; similar to what the geographers JK. Gibson-Graham discuss in their work on the detrimental discursive power of overestimating the dominance of global capitalism (Gibson Graham 2006). Related to this was a concern that we would lose potential coalition partners if we appeared to be asking for too much change. Therefore, we needed to be strategic in advocating what is reasonable or realistic.

We were unable to imagine altering the social processes producing inequality via exploitation and social exclusion and they therefore remained largely unchallenged. We saw a very similar outcome in other very different interventions in Kalamazoo as well.

Local Growth Coalitions and Economic Development

Another response to changing conditions in Kalamazoo commonly advocated and practiced by local developers, the city commission, and the chamber of commerce has been to direct public resources towards the interests of private capital. This vision, with the purported goals of attracting or keeping corporate patronage, and encouraging more development in the city center, argues that such development will create jobs and wealth which will eventually benefit all members of the community. These efforts are sometimes led by what Holland et al refer to as “local growth coalitions” (2007) consisting of developers, business owners, and other local elites who, in collaboration with elected officials and decision makers, work to create a “favorable business climate” (189) in which “the rights of corporate elites to invest in corporate resources wherever they wish, at lowest cost to them, or to disinvest from the communities in accordance with self-interested market logics, all in the name of growth, go entirely unquestioned” (190).

In Kalamazoo, local growth coalitions work closely with local and state governments through a variety of public-private partnerships, and they exert heavy influence on economic policy. One well publicized example of how local growth coalitions operate occurred in 2008, during a celebration at the Kalamazoo Country Club. In attendance were company representatives of the locally based drug research company MPI research, local politicians, local business leaders, Michigan’s governor, and representatives from “Southwest Michigan First,” perhaps the most celebrated growth coalition in the area. The event was organized to announce a \$330 million expansion of MPI. With much fanfare, the announced expansion deal promised to create 3,300 new full-time jobs in Kalamazoo County over the next 5-7 years. In order to secure these jobs,

Kalamazoo and Michigan residents were slated to provide incentives to MPI in order to outcompete other potential locations in the U.S. and in China for the expansion. The state's portion of the package included an \$86 million tax credit, an award of \$2 million dollars from the states 21st Century Jobs Fund and a promise to develop the public roadways around new MPI facilities. In addition, the city agreed to lease two buildings gifted by Pfizer to MPI for \$1 a year. In addition, a "Renaissance Zone" was created around the buildings that would allow MPI to forgo property taxes for 15 years (Brown and Beckman, Nixon 2008). This transfer of public resources into private hands was heralded as a victory by Michigan's Democratic Governor Jennifer Granholm, "we worked hard to win MPI's investment, and we will continue to go anywhere and do anything to get more companies like this to locate in Michigan,"(Brown and Beckman). In the same press release, Ron Kitchens, CEO of Southwest Michigan First which was part of the effort to arrange the deal for MPI, and whose board of directors includes the CEO and Chairman of MPI , boasted that "Nowhere else in the country can a community work together like here in the Kalamazoo region" (Brown and Beckman).

By the end of 2010, MPI had actually decreased employment by about 200 workers since the announcement and failed to reach hiring and investment obligations in downtown Kalamazoo. Yet, they still planned to claim state tax credits for 2010 for creating new jobs as their argument is that they eliminated different jobs than they created (Nixon 2010).

Despite deteriorating social conditions, growing inequalities and problematic efforts of local growth coalitions, a mantra that we hear again and again from local elites, visitors to Kalamazoo, and some progressive residents activists is that Kalamazoo is doing great or is about to be doing great, that Kalamazoo has a lot to offer and is a great place to live. And, indeed, if you are of a particular social class and race, Kalamazoo might have a lot to offer; local growth coalitions and the business community have had success in developing and gentrifying parts of the city, especially downtown. In some ways, Kalamazoo appears to be thriving. Just in the past fifteen years,

development projects have included a new downtown movie theatre, a major hotel convention/center,, a new festival site with a music shell, walking paths along the Kalamazoo river and creek beds, new upscale restaurants, a repaved brick street through the downtown walking mall, and proposals for a convention center, a sports arena and riverbank commercial and residential development. In addition, the headquarters of the Arcus Foundation, a liberal philanthropic organization founded by one of the Kalamazoo areas three billionaires was relocated from New York to Kalamazoo's downtown. Other locally based multi-million dollar foundations and local corporations help to support community and cultural events including an international music festival, arts initiatives including a monthly Art Hop, and an array of downtown festivals and concerts.

Accompanying those cultural events and development efforts have been new ordinances to control public space through policing the bodies of youth, poor people, people of color and homeless people. Sleeping in public parks and washing of bodies or items in park fountains or city creeks and rivers was banned, alcohol was prohibited in city parks unless for a specifically approved festival and "panhandling" was prohibited on public property including streets, sidewalks, schools, and parking lots. It also became illegal to ask for money for a false purpose or when the solicitor has the funds to meet that need.

Development, Charity, and Kalamazoo's Promise

Economic development and philanthropic efforts become interwoven and entangled in discussions of improving Kalamazoo's social conditions. Cultural events supported through foundations and charitable giving are often assessed in terms of the type of economic return that they might have in creating a vibrant city center. Economic development schemes, in contrast, are often presented as unequivocally good for the entire Kalamazoo community. And since these projects are directed by local growth coalitions, the health of the community can be understood as

made possible through the hard work, beneficence and generosity of local elites. These logics became quite clear when, in 2003, a lavish New Year's Eve party was held by and for Kalamazoo's elite at the downtown Radisson hotel complex, where tens of millions of dollars in renovations were nearing completion. As reported by the Kalamazoo Gazette, invitations to the party were sent out with bouquets of flowers and tiaras and the event featured an appearance by Jerry Seinfeld. The private party's guest list was comprised of a "who's who of area business people and clients" and the event was hosted by a local businessman, investment manager and developer.

A few blocks away from the Radisson, racialized poverty, and homelessness continued to escalate. We found these contradictions to be self-evident and severe, as did some of our research subjects. But we were also intrigued, by the response of some Kalamazoo residents, when we attempted to bring up the contradictions of development efforts in Kalamazoo. For example, in response to a question about the appropriateness of the largess of local elite and the sheer magnitude of their resources, one woman who has been involved in local politics vehemently told us that after all the money that they had given to Kalamazoo through investment and charity, they could choose to spend their money however they wanted and that it wasn't up to us to question it. 'Where would Kalamazoo be without them?' she wondered aloud.

Here, Zizek's model of violence can be especially instructive in helping us to analyze the discursive impacts of elite practices in naturalizing the Real of capitalism (2008). Zizek asks us to move away from focusing on what he refers to as subjective violence-the violence performed by identifiable agents and forces upon human subjects- and suggests that we think about how objective violence- the violent consequences of the routine functioning of our economic and political systems and the violence embodied in the normalization of those practices - is held in place through dominant practices associated with the normal workings of capitalism. For one example, Zizek asserts that an essential ingredient in maintaining the system that distributes objective violence in late capitalism is through "extra-economic charity" (24) which, masks exploitation and

is necessary to “sustain the cycle of social reproduction” (24). To illustrate, Žižek presents us with the figure of the “liberal communist”, today’s wealthy philanthropists who, “while they fight subjective violence” (36), are the “very agents” (36) who create the conditions for subjective violence to emerge. And through their beneficence they both materially and discursively obfuscate and naturalize exploitation and related processes. In this framework, the development schemes and charity of local elite, would then work to organize responses of social actors by eliding an analysis of the conditions they are responding to. We can see these dynamics in responses to and discussions of the monumental, charitable gift, the Kalamazoo Promise.

Kalamazoo’s Promise^{iv}

On November 11, 2005, we met for lunch at our favorite Indian restaurant in Kalamazoo. Over plates loaded with curries from the buffet, we would discuss local politics, keep each other up to date about the latest economic development efforts, mull over the actions of local activists and critique each-other’s efforts and ideas. That day, however, we had a singular topic on our minds: The Kalamazoo Promise. The *Kalamazoo Gazette* had just reported that a group of seven anonymous philanthropists had created a city-wide scholarship program which would guarantee payment of college tuition to any public college or university in Michigan for graduates of Kalamazoo Public Schools¹. It was hard to not be blown away by the sheer magnitude of the Promise. This was a lot of money. And, really, this was an unusually large and significant philanthropic display, even for a city with a long history of corporate patronage. “The Promise”, as it was sometimes called, was said to offer a multi-pronged strategy addressing social problems in Kalamazoo: it might fix the Kalamazoo Public School system, provide an incentive that would respond to low graduation rates in KPS (particularly among lower income and minority students),

¹ The only requirements for the Kalamazoo Promise are that students maintain a C average and graduate from Kalamazoo Public School System. Number of years in the school system determines what percentage of tuition is paid for on a graduate scale of 60%-100%.

cure Kalamazoo's failing housing market, halt and reverse middle class (read: white) flight, spur economic growth by providing an incentive for families to move to the area, and persuade businesses to remain or relocate to the area. In short, the Kalamazoo Promise was believed to be a panacea for Kalamazoo's social and economic troubles.

For weeks after the announcement the *Kalamazoo Gazette*, Kalamazoo's daily newspaper, was inundated with joyful letters to the editor. Residents spoke of crying upon hearing the news being "overcome with joy", "and being in shock", by this "brilliant!", "selfless", and "dream of a gift" given by "angels of God", who were able to see "beyond any boundaries". The scholarship program was referred to as "the most important event in the history of Kalamazoo since the founding of The Upjohn Co.", and was said to "set an example of love for humanity". One editorial compared the donors to super heroes: "So we have heroes among us. Something akin to the Justice League of Kalamazoo. If you look closely, you can see their tights and capes peeking out from under their well-tailored suits and dresses" (KG November 27, 2005). Respondents spoke in the *Gazette* of the sense of pride they now had of being a resident of Kalamazoo after the beneficent considerations of Kalamazoo's elite:

"It is a total shift in our perception about our community"

"I am very proud of Kalamazoo"

"The Promise makes us proud when we think of the exciting future of Kalamazoo"

"I have been proud of our community on many occasions, but never have I been so moved as by the generous gift of the Kalamazoo Promise to our students, our community and our county"

"It tells (young people) that we, as a community, care about them."

"Such a gesture shows the true color of the community. It shows the true heart that lies within"

The superintendent of schools echoed this statement, "It's been said that Kalamazoo is a very special community. Tonight, we have proof of that now more than ever before" (KG November

11, 2005). Kalamazoo Mayor-elect expressed it best in saying “I can’t believe we have such a generous community” (KG November 11, 2005).

Of course, on the surface, the Kalamazoo Promise is wonderful. Who wouldn’t be happy for some rich folks offering to pay for college for everyone else? We certainly wouldn’t mind that our selves. And, it certainly is better that they want to invest in the community rather than other possible spending. However, we want to pay attention to the ideological and discursive effects of the Kalamazoo Promise. One area of concern is that the Kalamazoo Promise might enhance the logic that poverty is simply the result of “cultural” patterns and poor individual choices. As one elected official in Kalamazoo put it, “now there is no excuse for any child in Kalamazoo not to succeed”. Seventy-five percent of black youth under the age of five living in poverty is just an excuse by that logic.

More subtle, has been the way that discourse around the Promise enlisted community members into a political project in which the normal functions of capitalism producing the extreme class and racialized inequalities are elided. Media and Kalamazoo leadership called for community support of the Kalamazoo Promise. The Vice Mayor “challenged Kalamazoo residents to be ‘keepers of the promise’ by assisting local schools in preparing all students to take advantage of the scholarship opportunity” (KG November 15, 2005). One Kalamazoo Gazette editorial exhorted, “this entire community must become involved in developing ways to make The Promise become The Reality” (KG November 16, 2005) and then stated the importance of volunteering. Another editorial lauded the efforts of civic institutions that were supporting the Promise and then “urge[d] the entire community, both minority and non-minority, join together in this very important endeavor” (KG January 4, 2006).

Letters to the editor offered in the Kalamazoo Gazette demonstrate both the gratitude and obligation felt to local elite.

“We must now leverage this opportunity and not drop the ball”.

“Your gift challenges the adults in our community to support, encourage and inspire our students”.

“we as a community must step up and involve ourselves in the education of our youth inside and outside the classroom”.

“Families who intend to accept the scholarships can honor the donors by volunteering at their students’ schools, their churches and/or in the community right away”.

This obligatory move to honor the donor through reciprocal action might be understood in terms of Marcel Mauss’s insights around gift economies. Mauss argues that a gift imparts a debt or obligation on the receiver that must be recompensed, “the unreciprocated gift still makes the person who has accepted it inferior” (83). At the same time, as the gift contains an essence of the person giving, gift exchange deepens social relationships and creates more social cohesion, bringing people closer together. The gift of the Kalamazoo Promise, which offers individual and community success, obligates Kalamazoo residents to reciprocate by making sure that the offers are taken up through hard work and community support; through this reciprocal giving the community is formed and residents stand in solidarity with Kalamazoo elite.

Indeed, we have found that very few people want to hear questions regarding why we should accept a political economic situation of a few people having tens of millions of extra dollars to donate and determine education and economic policy, while many in the community suffer. On the numerous occasions that we have tried to engage our friends and research subjects on the matter, conversations go something like this:

Us: It’s not that we’re saying the Kalamazoo Promise is just “bad”. In fact it’s really nice. It will help people. But don’t you think that there is something just a little bit problematic about our community when seven people are able to pony up this type of cash but our homeless shelters are literally overflowing?

Friend: I don't see how you can say anything bad about this. Free education to everyone?!

What more can you ask for?

Us: Look. We're not saying that this isn't nice or that it won't help some people. But shouldn't we have a more democratic process in shaping social policy? How are we to the point that the only way that significant social policy can happen is because seven super rich people decide that it should? Wouldn't it be better if we had more equality in our community?

Friend: Yeah, but we don't. And this is something that we should accept and take advantage of.

We have little doubt that the Kalamazoo Promise donors sincerely intend to improve conditions in Kalamazoo. But, as Zizek suggests, it makes no difference whether or not the charitable efforts of the elite are sincere efforts to improve conditions, or if they are more about self-interest. Following Mauss, we believe that it's likely that there are often multiple motivations going on in individual economic decisions and acts. The importance is that these acts allow capitalism to postpone its crisis through a material redistribution and, more importantly, through ideological domination. Relations of exploitation, financial speculation and accompanying coercion and oppression are made to disappear as the mega-elite, who both create and benefit from those conditions, are elevated above the economy and become extra-economic "super heroes."

Zizek asserts that "liberal communists are the enemy of every progressive struggle" (2008: 37). Their desire to ameliorate the conditions brought about by global capitalism are the "direct embodiment of what is wrong with the system." (37) It is not just the liberal communists are problematic, but, rather, the ways in which their interventions come to be understood as the most logical and practical ways of responding. Their philanthropic acts and accompanying redistribution of wealth obfuscate their position in maintaining and benefitting from the normal workings of capitalism and help us to "avoid the key issue" (22) of exploitation. In this ideological rendering,

the charity of those who make and maintain their billions through exploitation and oppression, works to obscure the objective violence of the routine workings of the system itself.

This is precisely what we have seen in relation to the announcement of the Kalamazoo Promise and a similar act of charity in the spring of 2011 when another anonymous community member in Kalamazoo gave Western Michigan University a one hundred million dollar cash donation to assist with developing a medical school. Believing that there is no alternative, or thinking one can only respond to systemic violence by reforming or resisting capitalism, is the real ideology. Whether elided and naturalized through charitable giving, enacted as a commonsensical approach to improving social conditions, or viewed as intractable or unchangeable, capitalism is based upon the violence of exploitation., the commonsensical, sleight of hand that moves value and resources away from those that produce it and towards the elite. That's the real reality. We need to engage in challenging that reality if we hope to make another world really thinkable and doable.

This brings us back to the protestors and their politics. What is it that they were protesting and what did they want to have happen instead? Progressives, liberals and organized labor responded to state level reforms by pointing out that the budget crisis was actually a revenue crisis, that corporations were experiencing record profits at a time of budget shortfalls and low unemployment, and that economic inequalities are at record levels. Appeals to the common good, saving the middle class, and accusations of corporate greed were made, even from the political center in local dailies and in mainstream media. And the ongoing displays of worker and community solidarity in the form of protests across the nation calling for taxation on the wealthy, strengthening of public services, and investment in communities, suggests a growing, counter-ideological move against corporate power and in some cases neoliberal policies.

We absolutely agree that Wall Street speculation, corporate-tax loopholes and corporate greed are all "bad". And we are compelled to support and stand with union workers and communities against corporate greed and we want to help to stand up to further privatization and

marketization of the public sphere. Indeed, levels of inequality in the United States have increased in relation to “neoliberal” policies that have dismantled unions, social welfare policies, and regulations on capital. Resistance, defense and reform can certainly make a tangible difference in the intensity of exploitation, oppression, and levels of subjective violence.

At the same time, we are concerned by what an investment in such a stance can simultaneously both conceal and naturalize. By entering the debate from a position that is in opposition to and resisting dominant ideology, we inhabit a discursive field in which capitalist relations are largely invisible. For example, while there appear to be growing calls to reign in corporations and make them pay their fair share for the public good, there appear to be few calls, at least in this context, for ethical markets as opposed to commodity trading, or for the creation of non-capitalist firms. And for unionized labor and public employees, the primary issue at hand is one of workers rights. Goals become holding onto the right to bargain in order to either give up more concessions or, hopefully, be a little bit less exploited. Questioning the viability and existence of capitalist relations is, of course, not really on the table.

Let us clarify our position a bit further by drawing from Jean and John Comaroff’s (1991) distinction between ideology and hegemony (19-27), the two “dominant forms” (22) in which they conceptualize power as entering “culture”. Ideology, they suggest, is an “agentive” form of power in that it is deployed in a contestation of wills and interests between different social groups within a field of visible meanings, beliefs and practices. In dialogue with Bourdieu, the Comaroffs suggest that ideologies- as a set of discourses and signifiers- may be either orthodox or heterodox projects. Although never complete or total, a dominant group’s ideological package is at any one time able to seem more viable or convincing, in other words, orthodox. Ideology can strengthen dominant structures and relations or can present resistance and alternatives to the orthodox and challenge their dominance. While ideologies are visible and “open to contestation” (24), hegemony, in

contrast, is “non-negotiable” (24). It’s everywhere, homogenizing and internalized and is thus, rendered invisible. It conceals itself (see Dougherty 2004 for an excellent brief explication).

If, as Žižek puts it, “the central task of the ruling ideology in the present crisis is to impose a narrative which will place the blame” (2009: 19) not on capitalism, but on “secondary and contingent deviations”(2009: 19)—like on the one hand public employees and government largess, or on the other hand corporate greed—then an ideological struggle over economic restructuring in its current form would seem to keep capitalism invisible or un-symbolizable. Capitalist relations of production remain in the register of the REAL. It seems to us then that our central challenge is not to simply push back against corporate-elite interests within a pre-established set of discursive parameters, but to politicize capitalist class processes and commodity exchange by revealing and confronting it with a full range of economic possibilities, and thus lay the ground for an ideological struggle in which the economy itself is the terrain of cultural politics.

CONCLUSIONS

How do we work to create such a world? We need to move beyond simply analyzing coping strategies or describing the violence of neoliberal capitalism. Rather, we need to challenge the ideology of “there is no alternative” to exploitation and capitalist markets. We need to facilitate and amplify political and economic alternatives and begin to build non-capitalism. The answer is not in more violence, like the systemic violence facilitated through the charitable but coercive efforts of the sympathetic wealthy; nor in protesting and resisting the policies that were created by, and are favorable towards, the wealthy. Rather, capitalism needs to be challenged culturally, emotionally, ideologically and politically. Simply being anti-neoliberalism or even anti-capitalism isn’t good enough. Here, we find Antonio Gramsci’s political strategy particularly instructive. As Jerry Harris explains:

Capitalism needs to be challenged at every one of these points and not just by an anti-hegemony protest movement. Even a failing system can continue unless it is opposed by a counter-hegemony movement that offers concrete alternatives and a vision rooted in real social practice, actively developed at an institutional level. The challenge for any revolutionary movement is to move from protest to power and it is here that Gramsci's ideas come into play. Gramsci argued that the multi-dimensional forms of capitalist rule would necessitate a long march through civil society. Therefore, class struggle would be characterised by a transitional period in which the battle over politics, culture and ideology was key. Gramsci termed this a war of position in which popular social forces need to build counter-hegemonic institutions that contend with capitalism and occupy autonomous social and political space. (2007: 3)

Fortunately, and as Gibson-Graham make clear, alternative and non-capitalist institutions, practices and subjectivities already exist in the "here in now", ready to be amplified and cultivated (2006). Gibson-Graham ask us to re-orient our politics away from only resistance and opposition and towards economic possibility. They posit a vision of the economy that is heterogeneous and contingent rather than solely and inevitably capitalist. In their formulation the economy is inhabited by different class arrangements around the production, appropriation and distribution of surplus; alternative and ethical markets, different forms of sociality; and so on. The significance of their theoretical intervention, for us, is that it expands the field of politics from an ideological struggle over capitalism, to a war of position in which the meaning and terms of the economy themselves are in play. From this perspective, we can bring capitalist exploitation into the symbolic field and begin to see non-capitalist possibilities around us. One example is the group PUSH. Many of the members of this group once worked with another more oppositional group in the city, but found the hierarchical and authoritarian structure within the group problematic. Instead, in PUSH, they work to build a civil institution based on community, democracy in practice, and egalitarianism. Engaged in ideological struggles by challenging notions about homeless people and

the everyday systems of inequality which produce homelessness, they work to craft an institution to create new ways of resolving housing, economic, and emotional insecurities. Another example involves the Kalamazoo People's Food Coop and the related group Fair Food Matters. In 2010, the People's Food Co-op began work on a \$1.7 million building which would quadruple its space, provide a food market near one of the poorest sections of the community which was largely a food island, create new employment at higher wages, and include leased space for a non-profit food-business incubator. More saliently, Fair Food Matters, meanwhile, has been acting to produce food security through promoting urban agriculture at cooperative, community based, urban farms. Or we might draw inspiration from a much lauded development effort in Cleveland, Ohio, The Evergreen Cooperative Initiative. Inspired by Spain's industrial cooperative conglomerate, Mondragon International, this fledgling network of worker cooperatives draws on the purchasing power of large "anchor institutions" in the area which help to ensure the success of worker cooperatives by providing a ready market for their products. These businesses hire locally, generate wealth as well as income, and presumably provide workers with some democratic control over their working conditions and surplus that they create.

Would it be possible, with Kalamazoo's private resources to create a similar initiative in the city? What's particularly interesting about Evergreen is that it emerged as a top-down, philanthropic initiative. The financial and strategic plans were launched by the non-profit the Cleveland Foundation. In contrast to most philanthropic development efforts, however, like the Kalamazoo Promise for example, that look to grow or help people individually compete and participate in the market economy, Evergreen leverages private and public monies to create an alternative to capitalism. These efforts are fairly nascent and localized but they move beyond simply opposing policies or responding to the obvious manifestations of subjective violence. Their significance for us is that they offer visions and practices to build on and organize around that are non-capitalist in nature. More precisely, they offer economic possibilities that go beyond the

ideological struggle that is attached to the unseen, inevitable dominance of market capitalism. Rather than only resisting or opposing capitalism (like the progressive protestors), advancing market imperatives (like the local growth coalitions), or only trying to create a more inclusive capitalism through philanthropic redistribution (like the Kalamazoo Promise Initiative), these efforts create new, institutional class arrangements around decision making, work-life, and—in the case of worker cooperatives—around the production and appropriation of surplus. From this vantage point, where we can see non-capitalism as realistic, capitalism itself becomes visible, and political struggle acquires a new, non-capitalist horizon.

What has occurred in Kalamazoo is similar to what has been taking place across the nation; a systemic transfer of wealth, increased economic insecurity, disruptions in families and communities, a dismantling of public and collective spaces and institutions, gated communities, an embracing of localism. There has also been an increased emotional insecurity which has profound impacts upon the ways in which people respond to today's social conditions and on the bodies of human subjects and their physical and emotional health. In response to such insecurities, many people seek out "safety" and security without actually resolving the conditions producing violence and insecurity. If we hope to transform the social processes producing the increased inequality within the United States over the last three decades, alternatives to capitalism must become psychologically and materially imaginable as reasonable and realistic.

References Cited

Affordable Housing Partnership

2011 The Face of Homelessness <http://www.kalamazooahp.org/the-face-of-homelessness>
(accessed 10/14/2010)

Brown, Megan and Bridget Beckman

2008 MPI Research Launching Major Expansion in Mattawan

<http://www.michiganadvantage.org/Press-Releases/MPI-Research-Launching-Major-Expansion-in-Mattawan-Kalamazoo/> (accessed april 2011)

CityData.com

2011 Kalamazoo, Michigan (MI) Poverty Rate Data-Information about Poor and Low Income Residents. <http://www.city-data.com/poverty/poverty-Kalamazoo-Michigan.html> (accessed April 11, 2011)

Comaroff, Jean and John Comaroff.

1991 *Of Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism and Consciousness in South Africa*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dean, Jodi

2010 "Who's Cynical, Anyway" http://jdeanicite.typepad.com/i_cite/2011/01/whos-cynical-anyway.html (accessed on April 23, 2011).

Dougherty, Elizabeth

2004 "The Balance of Practice." **Elizabeth Dougherty, Left Brain: Right Brain**. Web. <http://www.elizd.com/website-LeftBrain/essays/practice.html>

Ferguson, James

2009 "The Uses of Neoliberalism" *Antipode* 41(1):166-184.

Gibson-Graham, JK

2006 *A Postcapitalist Politics*. Minneapolis : University of Minnesota Press.

Hale, Charles

2008 Introduction. *In Engaging Contradictions: Theory, Politics, and Methods of Activist Scholarship*. Edited by Charles R. Hale. 1-27. Berkeley and Los Angeles CA: University of California Press.

Harris, Jerry

2007. Bolivia and Venezuela : the democratic dialect in new revolutionary movements. *Race & Class*. 49(1) : 1-24.

Holland, Dorothy and Catherine Lutz, Donald M. Nonini, Lesley Bartlett, Maria Frederick-McGlathery, Thaddeus C. Guldbrandsen, Enrique G. Murillo Jr.

2007 *Local Democracy Under Siege: Activism, Public Interests, and Private Politics*. New York University Press.

Jessup, Kathy

2009a Homeless Numbers Rise in Kalamazoo. *Kalamazoo Gazette*. 7/18/2009.
http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2009/07/homeless_numbers_rise_in_kalam.html. (accessed 10/14/2010)

Jessup, Kathy

2009b White males make up bulk of homeless in Kalamazoo. *Kalamazoo Gazette*. 7/18/2009.
http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2009/07/white_males_make_up_bulk_of_ho.html (accessed 10/14/2010)

Kalamazoo County Community Action Agency.

2009 Poverty in Kalamazoo County-2009 Update.
http://www.kalcounty.com/hcs/pdf_files/poverty%20report%202009.pdf (accessed 10/18/2011).

Kalamazoo Gazette

2005 What a Gift!. November 11, A1.

Kalamazoo Gazette

2005 Let's Make Most of 'Incredible Opportunity', New Mayor Says. November 15, A1.

Kalamazoo Gazette

2005 Making The Promise The Reality. November 16, A6.

Kalamazoo Gazette

2005 Kalamazoo Can Take Comfort in Secret Superheroes. November 27, B1

Kalamazoo Gazette

2006 Help Students in Need Benefit From Promise. January 4, A4

Klein, Naomi

2008 The Shock Doctrine : The Rise of Disaster Capitalism. New York : Picador Books

Lyon-Callo, Vincent

2004 Inequality, Poverty, and Neoliberal Governance: Activist Ethnography in the Homeless Sheltering Industry. Petersborough, ON: Broadview Press.

Mauss, Marcel

2002 The Gift: the Form of Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies. W.W. Abingdon: Routledge.

Nixon, Alex

2008 MPI Research's 3300 new jobs one of the largest economic developments in Michigan. Kalamazoo Gazette. 4/22/2008.

www.blog.mlive.com/kzgazette/2008/04/jill_mclane_baker_and_jennifer.html

(accessed 1/11/2013)

Nixon, Alex.

2010 Was MPI Research's 3,300-job expansion plan oversold by MEDC, politicians? Kalamazoo Gazette. 10/17/2010. <http://www.mlive.com/kalamazoo/> (accessed 10/20/2010).

Prichard, James.

2009 Leaner Pfizer Still Big Presence in Michigan Despite Leaving Ann Arbor. Associated Press. 4/20/2009/.

www.mlive.com/business/ann-arbor/index.ssf/2009/leaner_pfizer_still_big_presen.html

(accessed 1/11/2013)

Ready, Tim

2008 Poverty in Kalamazoo, 2007

<http://www.wmich.edu/walkerinstitute/Documents/povertyinKalamazoo2007.pdf>

(accessed 10/14/2010)

Shear, Boone and Vincent Lyon-Callo

2008 "Inside the Zoo: Alternative Media and the Practice of Engaged Ethnography.

Practicing Anthropology. 30(2):37-42.

Wendt, Annie, Timothy Ready and Ann Miles.

2010 Kalamazoo County Health Indicators Disaggregated by Race, Place and Socioeconomic Status and Key References for Understanding Health Disparities and for Building Healthier

Communities. <http://www.wmich.edu/walkerinstitute/files/factsheet.pdf> (accessed 4/13/2011).

Wolff, Richard

2009 *Capitalism Hits the Fan: The Global Economic Meltdown and What to Do About It*.

Northampton, MA: Olive Branch Press

Žižek, Slavoj

2008 *Violence*. New York: Picador Books.

Žižek, Slavoj

2009 *First as Tragedy, Then as Farce*. New York: Verso Books

ⁱ We use “we” in situations where one of us was at an event and when we both were involved or present. The bulk of Shear’s research was conducted between 2003-2006, with less directive research and follow up research occurring before and after these years.

ⁱⁱ Michigan has an uncommon method of funding public schools. A portion of lottery income as well as state sales taxes produce a statewide school aid fund. Those funds are then distributed to local school districts on a per pupil basis. Local communities are not allowed to supplement the general operating funds with an increased local millage.

ⁱⁱⁱ This essay was written before the Occupy movement which brought this discontent even further into the popular imagination. Initially at least, Occupy was much more than a resistance movement, more than a politics of “the antis”, but helped to open space for alternative visions of being in the world.

^{iv} Portions of this section were taken from Shear’s 2006 MA Thesis at Western Michigan University, “Neoliberalism, Hegemony, and Community Imaginings”