



"Listen Liberal" by Thomas Frank

The Ruin of the Democratic Party by Meritocracy and Technocracy

Reviewed by Dr. Dick Burkhardt

[Thomas Frank](#) really tears into the Clintons and Obama for abandoning the US working class in their quest for a utopia of meritocracy and technocracy for the professional class. Instead we have a nightmare of inequality and dysfunction. This in spite of, or perhaps because of, their personal charm, educated brilliance, and rhetoric of virtue. These liberal elites stabbed their Democratic base in the back while handing out extraordinary favors to the elites of Wall Street and the 'New Economy'.

Obama on monopolies: "Anti-monopoly investigations went from a barely breathing 4 in 2009 to a flat 0 in 2014"(p 156). Obama on Wall Street "unwound Bush's bailouts...fired bad regulators...stopped AIG bonuses...put 'zombie' banks into receiverships...shifted FBI agents to white collar crime..."(p 157). The Trump victory was understandable to Thomas Frank. Like Bernie Sanders, he has long called for a return of the Democratic Party to its New Deal roots and says, "Would Bernie have won? Hell, Yes". Yet, unlike Bernie, who called for a "political revolution", Frank calls for moral outrage –that liberal leaders put on great displays of moral virtue (toward women and minorities) even as their loyalties now lie with the top 10%, not the bottom 50%.

The jolt of activism impelled by the Trump disaster gives me hope, yet, living in liberal Seattle, I see that Frank's moral revolution has a long way to go. And with an increasingly corrupt and entrenched oligarchy, that means a rough road ahead. [Dr. Dick Burkhardt, UUJEC Board Member]