

THE LEFT CASE AGAINST OPEN BORDERS

by

Angela Nagle

Before “Build the wall!” there was “Tear down this wall!” In his famous 1987 speech, Ronald Reagan demanded that the “scar” of the Berlin Wall be removed and insisted that the offending restriction of movement it represented amounted to nothing less than a “question of freedom for all mankind.” He went on to say that those who “refuse to join the community of freedom” would “become obsolete” as a result of the irresistible force of the global market. And so they did. In celebration, Leonard Bernstein directed a performance of “Ode to Joy” and Roger Waters performed “The Wall.” Barriers to labor and capital came down all over the world; the end of history was declared; and decades of U.S.-dominated globalization followed.

In its twenty-nine-year existence, around 140 people died attempting to cross the Berlin Wall. In the promised world of global economic freedom and prosperity, 412 people died crossing the U.S.-Mexican border last year alone, and more than three thousand died the previous year in the Mediterranean. The pop songs and Hollywood movies about freedom are nowhere to be found. What went wrong?

Of course, the Reaganite project did not end with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Reagan—and his successors from both parties—used the same triumphalist rhetoric to sell the hollowing out of trade unions, the deregulation of banks, the expansion of outsourcing, and the globalization of markets away from the deadweight of national economic interests. Central to this project was a neoliberal attack on national barriers to the flow of labor and capital. At home, Reagan also oversaw one of the most significant pro-migration reforms in American history, the 1986 “Reagan Amnesty” that expanded the labor market by allowing millions of illegal migrants to gain legal status.

Popular movements against different elements of this post-Cold War vision came initially from the Left in the form of the anti-globalization movements and later Occupy Wall Street. But, lacking the bargaining power to challenge international capital, protest movements went nowhere. The globalized and financialized economic system held firm despite all the devastation it wreaked, even through the 2008 financial crisis.

Today, by far the most visible anti-globalization movement takes the form of the anti-migrant backlash led by Donald Trump and other “populists.” The Left, meanwhile, seems to have no option but to recoil in horror at Trump’s “Muslim ban” and news stories about ICE hunting down migrant families; it can only react against whatever Trump is doing. If Trump is for immigration controls, then the Left will demand the opposite. And so today talk of “open borders” has entered mainstream liberal discourse, where once it was confined to radical free market think tanks and libertarian anarchist circles.

While no serious political party of the Left is offering concrete proposals for a truly borderless society, by embracing the moral arguments of the open-borders Left and the economic arguments of free market think tanks, the Left has painted itself into a corner. If “no human is illegal!” as the protest chant goes, the Left is implicitly accepting the moral case for no borders or sovereign nations at all. But what implications will unlimited migration have for projects like universal public health care and education, or a federal jobs guarantee? And how will progressives convincingly explain these goals to the public?

During the 2016 Democratic primary campaign, when Vox editor Ezra Klein suggested open borders policies to Bernie Sanders, the senator famously showed his vintage when he replied, “Open borders? No. That’s a Koch brothers proposal.”¹ This momentarily confused the official narrative, and Sanders was quickly accused of “sounding like Donald Trump.” Beneath the generational differences revealed in this exchange, however, is a larger issue. The destruction and abandonment of labor politics means that, at present, immigration issues can only play out within the framework of a culture war, fought entirely on moral grounds. In the heightened emotions of America’s public debate on migration, a simple moral and political dichotomy prevails. It is “right-wing” to be “against immigration” and “left-wing” to be “for immigration.” But the economics of migration tell a different story.

Useful Idiots

The transformation of open borders into a “Left” position is a very new phenomenon and runs counter to the history of the organized Left in fundamental ways. Open borders has long been a rallying cry of the business and free market Right. Drawing from neoclassical economists, these groups have advocated for liberalizing migration on the grounds of market rationality and economic freedom. They oppose limits on migration for the same reasons that they oppose restrictions on the movement of capital. The Koch-funded Cato Institute, which also advocates lifting legal restrictions on child labor, has churned out radical open borders advocacy for decades, arguing that support for open borders is a fundamental tenet of libertarianism, and “Forget the wall already, it’s time for the U.S. to have open borders.”² The Adam Smith Institute has done much the same, arguing that “Immigration restrictions make us poorer.”³

Following Reagan and figures like Milton Friedman, George W. Bush championed liberalizing migration before, during, and after his presidency. Grover Norquist, a zealous advocate of Trump’s (and Bush’s and Reagan’s) tax cuts, has for years railed against the illiberalism of the trade unions, reminding us, “Hostility to immigration has traditionally been a union cause.”⁴

He’s not wrong. From the first law restricting immigration in 1882 to Cesar Chavez and the famously multiethnic United Farm Workers protesting against employers’ use and encouragement of illegal migration in 1969, trade unions have often opposed mass migration. They saw the deliberate importation of illegal, low-wage workers as weakening labor’s bargaining power and as a form of exploitation. There is no getting around the fact that the power of unions relies by definition on their ability to restrict and withdraw the supply of labor, which becomes impossible if an entire workforce can be easily and cheaply replaced. Open borders and mass immigration are a victory for the bosses.

And the bosses almost universally support it. Mark Zuckerberg's think tank and lobbying organization, Forward, which advocates for liberalizing migration policies, lists among its "founders and funders" Eric Schmidt and Bill Gates, as well as CEOs and senior executives of YouTube, Dropbox, Airbnb, Netflix, Groupon, Walmart, Yahoo, Lyft, Instagram, and many others. The cumulative personal wealth represented on this list is enough to heavily influence most governing institutions and parliaments, if not buy them outright. While often celebrated by progressives, the motivations of these "liberal" billionaires are clear. Their generosity toward dogmatically anti-labor Republicans, like Jeff Flake of the famous "Gang of Eight" bill, should come as no surprise.

Admittedly, union opposition to mass migration was sometimes intermingled with racism (which was present across American society) in previous eras. What is omitted in libertarian attempts to smear trade unions as "the real racists," however, is that in the days of strong trade unions, they were also able to use their power to mount campaigns of international solidarity with workers' movements around the world. Unions raised the wages of millions of non-white members, while deunionization today is estimated to cost black American men \$50 a week.⁵

During the Reagan neoliberal revolution, union power was dealt a blow from which it has never recovered, and wages have stagnated for decades. Under this pressure, the Left itself has undergone a transformation. In the absence of a powerful workers' movement, it has remained radical in the sphere of culture and individual freedom, but can offer little more than toothless protests and appeals to noblesse oblige in the sphere of economics.

With obscene images of low-wage migrants being chased down as criminals by ICE, others drowning in the Mediterranean, and the worrying growth of anti-immigrant sentiment across the world, it is easy to see why the Left wants to defend illegal migrants against being targeted and victimized. And it should. But acting on the correct moral impulse to defend the human dignity of migrants, the Left has ended up pulling the front line too far back, effectively defending the exploitative system of migration itself.

Today's well-intentioned activists have become the useful idiots of big business. With their adoption of "open borders" advocacy—and a fierce moral absolutism that regards any limit to migration as an unspeakable evil—any criticism of the exploitative system of mass migration is effectively dismissed as blasphemy. Even solidly leftist politicians, like Bernie Sanders in the United States and Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom, are accused of "nativism" by critics if they recognize the legitimacy of borders or migration restriction at any point. This open borders radicalism ultimately benefits the elites within the most powerful countries in the world, further disempowers organized labor, robs the developing world of desperately needed professionals, and turns workers against workers.

But the Left need not take my word for it. Just ask Karl Marx, whose position on immigration would get him banished from the modern Left. Although migration at today's speed and scale would have been unthinkable in Marx's time, he expressed a highly critical view of the effects of the migration that occurred in the nineteenth century. In a letter to two of his American fellow-travellers, Marx argued that the importation of low-paid Irish immigrants to England forced them into hostile competition with English workers. He saw it as part of a

system of exploitation, which divided the working class and which represented an extension of the colonial system. He wrote:

Owing to the constantly increasing concentration of leaseholds, Ireland constantly sends her own surplus to the English labour market, and thus forces down wages and lowers the material and moral position of the English working class.

And most important of all! Every industrial and commercial centre in England now possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he regards himself as a member of the ruling nation and consequently he becomes a tool of the English aristocrats and capitalists against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social, and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude towards him is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the Negroes in the former slave states of the U.S.A. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker both the accomplice and the stupid tool of the English rulers in Ireland.

This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short, by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organisation. It is the secret by which the capitalist class maintains its power. And the latter is quite aware of this.⁶

Marx went on to say that the priority for labor organizing in England was "to make the English workers realize that for them the national emancipation of Ireland is not a question of abstract justice or humanitarian sentiment but the first condition of their own social emancipation." Here Marx pointed the way to an approach that is scarcely found today. The importation of low-paid labor is a tool of oppression that divides workers and benefits those in power. The proper response, therefore, is not abstract moralism about welcoming all migrants as an imagined act of charity, but rather addressing the root causes of migration in the relationship between large and powerful economies and the smaller or developing economies from which people migrate.

The Human Cost of Globalization

Advocates of open borders often overlook the costs of mass migration for developing countries. Indeed, globalization often creates a vicious cycle: liberalized trade policies destroy a region's economy, which in turn leads to mass emigration from that area, further eroding the potential of the origin country while depressing wages for the lowest paid workers in the destination country. One of the major causes of labor migration from Mexico to the United States has been the economic and social devastation caused by the North American Free Trade Agreement (nafta). Nafta forced Mexican farmers to compete with U.S. agriculture, with disastrous consequences for Mexico. Mexican imports doubled, and Mexico lost thousands of pig farms and corn growers to U.S. competition. When coffee prices fell below the cost of production, nafta prohibited state intervention to keep growers afloat. Additionally, U.S. companies were allowed to buy infrastructure in Mexico, including, for example, the country's main north-south rail line. The railroad then discontinued

passenger service, resulting in the decimation of the rail workforce after a wildcat strike was crushed. By 2002, Mexican wages had dropped by 22 percent, even though worker productivity increased by 45 percent.⁷ In regions like Oaxaca, emigration devastated local economies and communities, as men emigrated to work in America's farm labor force and slaughterhouses, leaving behind women, children, and the elderly.

And what about the significant skilled and white-collar migrant workforce? Despite the rhetoric about "shithole countries" or nations "not sending their best," the toll of the migration brain drain on developing economies has been enormous. According to the Census Bureau's figures for 2017, about 45 percent of migrants who have arrived in the United States since 2010 are college educated.⁸ Developing countries are struggling to retain their skilled and professional citizens, often trained at great public cost, because the largest and wealthiest economies that dominate the global market have the wealth to snap them up. Today, Mexico also ranks as one of the world's biggest exporters of educated professionals, and its economy consequently suffers from a persistent "qualified employment deficit." This developmental injustice is certainly not limited to Mexico. According to Foreign Policy magazine, "There are more Ethiopian physicians practicing in Chicago today than in all of Ethiopia, a country of 80 million."⁹ It is not difficult to see why the political and economic elites of the world's richest countries would want the world to "send their best," regardless of the consequences for the rest of the world. But why is the moralizing, pro-open borders Left providing a humanitarian face for this naked self-interest?

According to the best analysis of capital flows and global wealth today, globalization is enriching the wealthiest people in the wealthiest countries at the expense of the poorest, not the other way around. Some have called it "aid in reverse." Billions in debt interest payments move from Africa to the large banks in London and New York. Vast private wealth is generated in extractive commodity industries and through labor arbitrage every year, and repatriated back to the wealthy nations where the multinational corporations are based. Trillions of dollars in capital flight occurs because international corporations take advantage of tax havens and secrecy jurisdictions, made possible by the World Trade Organization's liberalization of "trade inefficient" invoicing regulations and other policies.¹⁰

Global wealth inequality is the primary push factor driving mass migration, and the globalization of capital cannot be separated from this matter. There is also the pull factor of exploitative employers in the United States who seek to profit from nonunionized, low-wage workers in sectors like agriculture as well as through the importation of a large white-collar workforce already trained in other countries. The net result is an estimated population of eleven million people living in the United States illegally.

Corporate Interests and Moral Blackmail

Open borders has no public mandate, but immigration policies that place the burden of enforcement on employers instead of migrants do attract overwhelming support. According to a survey by the Washington Post and ABC News, support for mandating use of the federal employment verification system (E-Verify), which would prevent employers from exploiting illegal labor, is at nearly 80 percent—more than double the support for building a wall along

the Mexican border.¹¹ So why do presidential campaigns revolve around building a vast border wall? Why do current migration debates revolve around controversial ICE tactics to target migrants—especially when the more humane and popular method of placing the burden on employers to hire legal labor in the first place is also the most effective?¹² The answer, in short, is that business lobbies have been blocking and sabotaging efforts like E-Verify for decades, while the open-borders Left has abandoned any serious discussion of these issues.

Recently, the Western Growers Association and California Farm Bureau Federation, among others, blocked a bill that would have made E-Verify mandatory, despite several pro-business concessions.¹³ Democrats seemed totally absent from this debate. As a result, workers from economies devastated by U.S. agriculture will continue to be invited in with the promise of work in order to be cheaply and illegally exploited. Lacking full legal rights, these noncitizens will be impossible to unionize and will be kept in constant fear of being arrested and criminalized.

It has now become a common slogan among advocates of open borders—and many mainstream commentators—that “there is no migrant crisis.” But whether they like it or not, radically transformative levels of mass migration are unpopular across every section of society and throughout the world. And the people among whom it is unpopular, the citizenry, have the right to vote. Thus migration increasingly presents a crisis that is fundamental to democracy. Any political party wishing to govern will either have to accept the will of the people, or it will have to repress dissent in order to impose the open borders agenda. Many on the libertarian Left are among the most aggressive advocates of the latter. And for what? To provide moral cover for exploitation? To ensure that left-wing parties that could actually address any of these issues at a deeper international level remain out of power?

The immigration expansionists have two key weapons. One is the big business and financial interests all working on their side, but an equally powerful weapon—wielded more expertly by the left-leaning immigration expansionists—is moral blackmail and public shame. People are right to see the mistreatment of migrants as morally wrong. Many people are concerned about the growth of racism and callousness toward minorities that often accompanies anti-immigration sentiment. But the open borders position does not even live up to its own professed moral code.

There are many economic pros and cons to high immigration, but it is more likely to negatively impact low-skilled and low-paid native workers while benefiting wealthier native workers and the corporate sector. As George J. Borjas has argued, it functions as a kind of upward wealth redistribution.¹⁴ A 2017 study by the National Academy of Sciences called “The Economic and Fiscal Consequences of Immigration” found that current immigration policies have resulted in disproportionately negative effects on poor and minority Americans, a finding that would have come as no surprise to figures like Marcus Garvey or Frederick Douglass. No doubt they, too, would have to be considered “anti-immigrant” by today’s standards for warning of this.

In a public speech on immigration, Hillary Clinton said: “I believe that when we have millions of hardworking immigrants contributing to our economy, it would be self-defeating and inhumane to try to kick them out.”¹⁵ In a leaked private speech delivered to Latin American bankers, she went further: “My dream is a hemispheric common market, with open trade and open borders, some time in the future with energy that is as green and sustainable as we can get it”¹⁶ (though she later claimed that she only meant borders open to energy). These statements, of course, drove the anti-immigration, pro-Trump Right crazy. Perhaps more revealing, however, is the convergence between the open-borders Left and the “respectable” pro-business Right that Clinton’s remarks epitomized. In a recent *National Review* article responding to Trump’s “nationalism,” Jay Cost wrote, “To put matters bluntly, we do not have to like one another, so long as we continue to make money off one another. That is what will keep us together.” In this monstrous sub-Thatcherism, the Buckleyites sound exactly like the liberal “cosmopolitans”—but without the glamour or flair for moral self-delusion.

As the child of migrants, and someone who has spent most of my life in a country with persistently high levels of emigration—Ireland—I have always viewed the migration question differently than my well-intentioned friends on the left in large, world-dominating economies. When austerity and unemployment hit Ireland—after billions in public money was used to bail out the financial sector in 2008—I watched my entire peer group leave and never return. This isn’t just a technical matter. It touches the heart and soul of a nation, like a war. It means the constant haemorrhaging of idealistic and energetic young generations, who normally rejuvenate and reimagine a society. In Ireland, as in every high-emigration country, there have always been anti-emigration campaigns and movements, led by the Left, demanding full employment in times of recession. But they’re rarely strong enough to withstand the forces of the global market. Meanwhile, the guilty and nervous elites in office during a period of popular anger are only too happy to see a potentially radical generation scatter across the world.

I’m always amazed at the arrogance and the strangely imperial mentality of British and American pro-open borders progressives who believe that they are performing an act of enlightened charity when they “welcome” PhDs from eastern Europe or Central America driving them around and serving them food. In the wealthiest nations, open borders advocacy seems to function as a fanatical cult among true believers—a product of big business and free market lobbying is carried along by a larger group of the urban creative, tech, media, and knowledge economy class, who are serving their own objective class interests by keeping their transient lifestyles cheap and their careers intact as they parrot the institutional ideology of their industries. The truth is that mass migration is a tragedy, and upper-middle-class moralizing about it is a farce. Perhaps the ultra-wealthy can afford to live in the borderless world they aggressively advocate for, but most people need—and want—a coherent, sovereign political body to defend their rights as citizens.

Defending Immigrants, Opposing Systemic Exploitation

If open borders is “a Koch brothers proposal,” then what would an authentic Left position on immigration look like? In this case, instead of channelling Milton Friedman, the Left should take its bearings from its own long traditions. Progressives should focus on

addressing the systemic exploitation at the root of mass migration rather than retreating to a shallow moralism that legitimates these exploitative forces. This does not mean that leftists should ignore injustices against immigrants. They should vigorously defend migrants against inhumane treatment. At the same time, any sincere Left must take a hard line against the corporate, financial, and other actors who create the desperate circumstances underlying mass migration (which, in turn, produces the populist reaction against it). Only a strong national Left in the small and developing nations—acting in concert with a Left committed to ending financialization and global labor exploitation in the larger economies—could have any hope of addressing these problems.

To begin with, the Left must stop citing the latest Cato Institute propaganda in order to ignore the effects of immigration on domestic labor, especially the working poor who are likely to suffer disproportionately from expanding the labor pool. Immigration policies should be designed to ensure that the bargaining power of workers is not significantly imperiled. This is especially true in times of wage stagnation, weak unions, and massive inequality.

With respect to illegal immigration, the Left should support efforts to make E-Verify mandatory and push for stiff penalties on employers who fail to comply. Employers, not immigrants, should be the primary focus of enforcement efforts. These employers take advantage of immigrants who lack ordinary legal protections in order to perpetuate a race to the bottom in wages while also evading payroll taxes and the provision of other benefits. Such incentives must be eliminated if any workers are to be treated fairly.

Trump infamously complained about people coming from third-world “shithole countries” and suggested Norwegians as an example of ideal immigrants. But Norwegians did once come to America in large numbers—when they were desperate and poor. Now that they have a prosperous and relatively egalitarian social democracy, built on public ownership of natural resources, they no longer want to.¹⁷ Ultimately, the motivation for mass migration will persist as long as the structural problems underlying it remain in place.

Reducing the tensions of mass migration thus requires improving the prospects of the world’s poor. Mass migration itself will not accomplish this: it creates a race to the bottom for workers in wealthy countries and a brain drain in poor ones. The only real solution is to correct the imbalances in the global economy, and radically restructure a system of globalization that was designed to benefit the wealthy at the expense of the poor. This involves, to start with, structural changes to trade policies that prevent necessary, state-led development in emerging economies. Anti-labor trade deals like nafta must also be opposed. It is equally necessary to take on a financial system that funnels capital away from the developing world and into inequality-heightening asset bubbles in rich countries. Finally, although the reckless foreign policies of the George W. Bush administration have been discredited, the temptation to engage in military crusades seems to live on. This should be opposed. U.S.-led foreign invasions have killed millions in the Middle East, created millions of refugees and migrants, and devastated fundamental infrastructure.

Marx’s argument that the English working class should see Irish nationhood as a potential compliment to their struggle, rather than as a threat to their identity, should resonate

today, as we witness the rise of various identity movements around the world. The comforting delusion that immigrants come here because they love America is incredibly naïve—as naïve as suggesting that the nineteenth-century Irish immigrants Marx described loved England. Most migrants emigrate out of economic necessity, and the vast majority would prefer to have better opportunities at home, among their own family and friends. But such opportunities are impossible within the current shape of globalization.

Just like the situation Marx described in the England of his day, politicians like Trump rally their base by stirring up anti-immigration sentiment, but they rarely if ever address the structural exploitation—whether at home or abroad—that is the root cause of mass migration. Often, they make these problems worse, expanding the power of employers and capital against labor, while turning the rage of their supporters—often the victims of these forces—against other victims, immigrants. But for all Trump’s anti-immigration bluster, his administration has done virtually nothing to expand the implementation of E-Verify, preferring instead to boast about a border wall that never seems to materialize.¹⁸ While families are separated at the border, the administration has turned a blind eye toward employers who use immigrants as pawns in a game of labor arbitrage.

Meanwhile, members of the open-borders Left may try to convince themselves that they are adopting a radical position. But in practice they are just replacing the pursuit of economic equality with the politics of big business, masquerading as a virtuous identitarianism. America, still one of the richest countries in the world, should be able to provide not just full employment but a living wage for all of its people, including in jobs which open borders advocates claim “Americans won’t do.” Employers who exploit migrants for cheap labor illegally—at great risk to the migrants themselves—should be blamed, not the migrants who are simply doing what people have always done when facing economic adversity. By providing inadvertent cover for the ruling elite’s business interests, the Left risks a significant existential crisis, as more and more ordinary people defect to far-right parties. At this moment of crisis, the stakes are too high to keep getting it wrong.

This article originally appeared in American Affairs Volume II, Number 4 (Winter 2018): 17–30.

Notes

¹ Ezra Klein, “[Bernie Sanders: The Vox Conversation](#),” Vox, July 28, 2015.

² Jeffrey Miron, “[Forget the Wall Already, It’s Time for the U.S. to Have Open Borders](#),” USA Today, July 31, 2018.

³ Sam Bowman, “[Immigration Restrictions Make Us Poorer](#),” Adam Smith Institute, April 13, 2011.

⁴ Grover G. Norquist, “[Samuel Gompers versus Reagan](#),” American Spectator, Sept. 25, 2013.

- ⁵ Bhaskar Sunkara, [“What’s Your Solution to Fighting Sexism and Racism? Mine Is: Unions,”](#) Guardian, Sept. 1, 2018.
- ⁶ David L. Wilson, [“Marx on Immigration,”](#) Monthly Review, Feb. 1, 2017.
- ⁷ David Bacon, [“Globalization and nafta Caused Migration from Mexico,”](#) People’s World, Oct. 15, 2014.
- ⁸ Gustavo López, Kristen Bialik, and Jynnah Radford, [“Key Findings about U.S. Immigrants,”](#) Pew Research Center, Sept. 14, 2018.
- ⁹ Kate Tulenko, [“Countries without Doctors?,”](#) Foreign Policy, June 11, 2010.
- ¹⁰ Jason Hickel, [“Aid in Reverse: How Poor Countries Develop Rich Countries,”](#) Guardian, Jan. 14, 2017.
- ¹¹ [“Immigration, DACA, Congress, and Compromise,”](#) Washington Post, Oct. 20, 2017.
- ¹² Pia M. Orrenius and Madeline Zavodny, “Do State Work Eligibility Verification Laws Reduce Unauthorized Immigration?,” IZA Journal of Migration 5, no. 5 (December 2016).
- ¹³ Dan Wheat, [“Ag Groups Split over Latest House Labor Bill,”](#) Capital Press, July 17, 2018.
- ¹⁴ George Borjas, [“Yes, Immigration Hurts American Workers,”](#) Politico, September/October 2016.
- ¹⁵ Borjas.
- ¹⁶ Chris Matthews, [“What’s Important about the Clinton Campaign’s Leaked Emails on Free Trade,”](#) Fortune, Oct. 11, 2016.
- ¹⁷ Krishnadev Calamur, [“Why Norwegians Aren’t Moving to the U.S.,”](#) Atlantic, Jan. 12, 2018.
- ¹⁸ Tracy Jan, [“Trump Isn’t Pushing Hard for This One Popular Way to Curb Illegal Immigration,”](#) Washington Post, May 22, 2018.

About the Author

Angela Nagle writes for the *Atlantic*, *Jacobin*, *The Irish Times*, and *The Baffler*. She is the author of *Kill All Normies: Online Culture Wars from 4chan and Tumblr to Trump and the Alt-Right* (Zero Books, 2017).