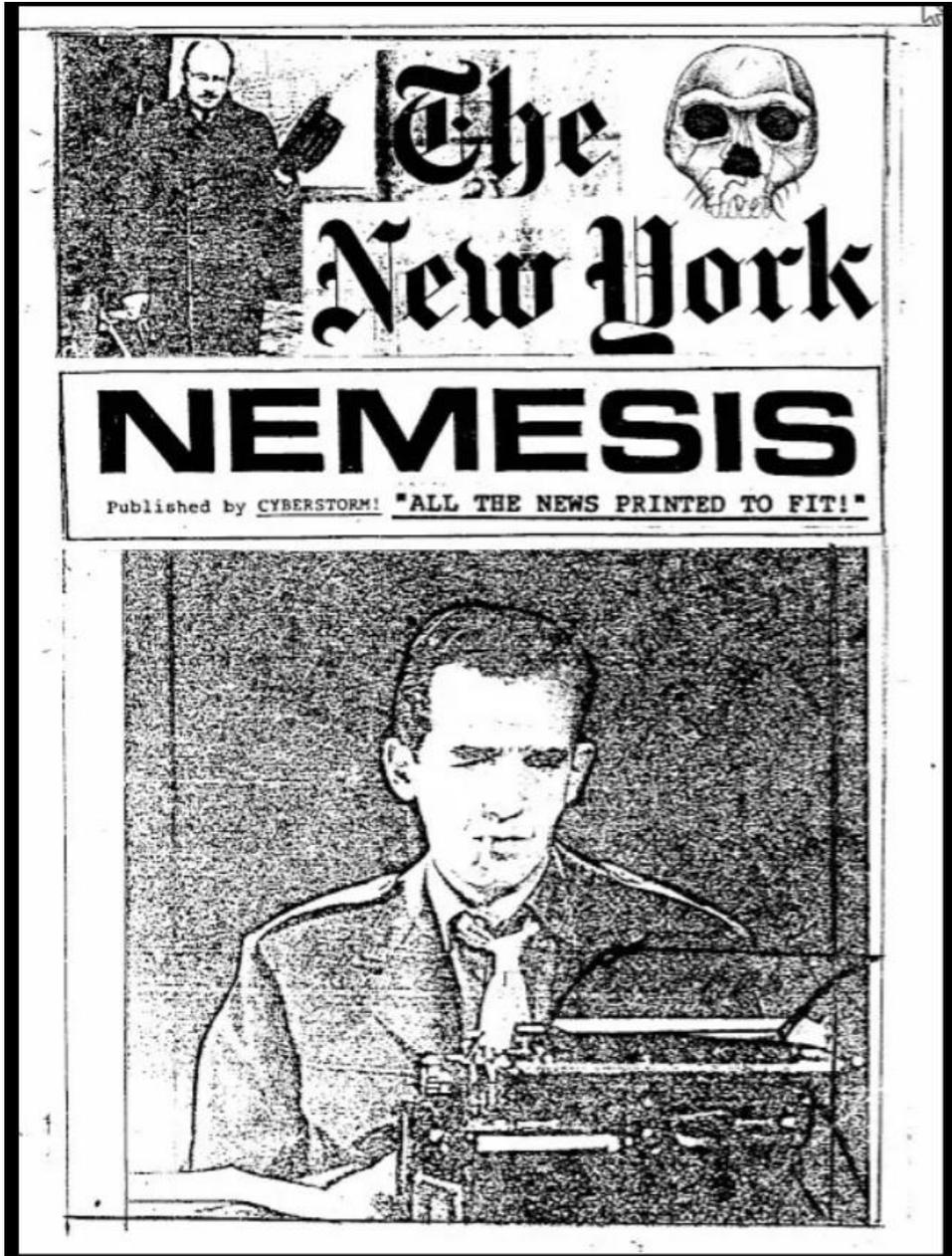


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Early morning newsgirl with your baggy eyes, quit trying to pass off your teleprompted lies, about grinning politicians or some little girl dead or who's been sleeping in the president's bed.

Baggy eyed newsgirl on the wakeup news, why not go home and take a snooze.

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Performance Review: “Key Largo,” Geffen Playhouse, Westwood, CA, 11/24/2019

The Story: Haunted by his past, Major Frank McCloud arrives at Hotel Largo with only his duffel bag and no visible means of support. He has come to pay respects to Nora, the widow of a soldier under his command he deserted during the battle of Cassino, who is living with her blind father-in-law, the owner of the hotel. Little does the Major know, the hotel has been taken over by gangsters led by notorious deportee Johnny Rocco, there to cut a drug deal with his connection driving down from Miami. The inevitable confrontation between the self-declared coward Major McCloud and the ruthless Johnny Rocco reaches its ultimate climax as a hurricane all but destroys the hotel in the meantime.



The Play: In two acts, from the Maxwell Anderson performance on Broadway in 1939, the plot follows roughly the stage presentation but the characters and era follow the film of the same name, Key Largo.

In the original play, the gangsters are swindlers who run a crooked gambling concession and use the hotel as their headquarters. Major “King” McCloud arrives to pay his respects and the widow is actually the daughter of the hotel owner and sister to the deceased soldier. As in the revised motion picture script, the current play at the Geffen Playhouse in Westwood, the Major is named Frank McCloud and the widow is a daughter-in-law. Most of the other characters follow the John Huston directed film while a number of lines are from the original play. There are plot variations with offstage events, such as escaped Seminoles, the Osceola brothers, who are suspected of killing their road gang foreman. In fact, in the play, the swindling gamblers are the culprits but in either case, McCloud uses it as a means of self-sacrifice to atone for his cowardice on the battlefield. The gangster

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Johnny Rocco, of course, isn't buying the heroics and eventually challenges the Major to a life-or-death choice, in which McCloud once again turns chicken in the face of death.

Act One is completely overtaken by the approaching hurricane, and it ends with Johnny Rocco, in the darkened lobby of the hotel, firing shots wildly at the storm with wind blowing, doors flapping and windows crashing. Act Two surrounds the standoff between the Major and Rocco, who has kidnapped Nora as a hostage to make good his escape following the dope deal. Others in the play have roles ranging from intermediate, such as the blind owner of the hotel, to Rocco's girlfriend, to his gangster cohorts; to incidental, such as the sheriff in search of the Osceola brothers; and Ziggy, the dope dealer from Miami.

The Stage: Ornate and classic, the hotel lobby becomes the one and only set for both acts of the play. With a high ceiling where large oval stained-glass windows are pelted constantly with rain, the lobby itself has a large sofa center stage and other chairs throughout. Downstage right is the bar, where Gaye Dawn, the gangster's over-the-hill girlfriend drinks heavily and listens to a horse race when McCloud first appears. Right center is a set of stairs leading to the hotel rooms, where Rocco, wearing a red bathrobe, enters in Act One. Stage left are the only two doors into the hotel; the main doors elevated behind a rail and a small door downstage. Upstage center is the check-in counter, where the phone rings several times as Ziggy reports his whereabouts in the storm. Large fans extend down from the high ceiling and lanterns substitute for lights when the storm knocks out the power at the end of Act One.

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Worth Noting: Some of the richest quotes survived the transition from the original play through the film to the current stage production at the Westwood playhouse. Johnny Rocco challenges Frank McCloud in a standoff;

ROCCO: That was your chance to shoot and you didn't do it. In my game you learn that there are just two kinds of men, those who are not afraid to die and those who are. A man who's not afraid to die, he's dangerous. The others you can handle. (Anderson, 71)

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Rocco’s assessment comes from his original counterpart Murillo, in Act One of the Anderson play. It appears later in the Geffen production. Yet another significant line, also spoken by Rocco, reflects the gangster’s rather low opinion of women (note the exact wording is based on Murillo);

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ROCCO: You will have, baby. You will have. It’s the same with women as with nations, baby; the fellow with the most money and the most guns wins. Always. Because that’s what the nations want! And what the women want!
(Anderson, 50)

In another scene, Gaye Dawn begs Rocco for a drink and he submits only if she sings for him, in the presence of all the others who are now on the stage. When she finishes and asks for a drink, Rocco says “No! It was the wrong song.” Another interesting line, in Act Two, that came nearly directly from the original script was by Sheriff Gash after accepting a \$5000 bribe when he discovers “Robert Brown” is actually the notorious Johnny Rocco and Nora suggests he be honest;

GASH: No, lady, I couldn’t. It’s been tried. You have to have a machine to stay in office, and nothing runs a machine but money. Now I’ve never been off the Keys, but I’ve heard it said there’s honest government elsewhere.... There’s a John Chinaman runs the laundry down at Star Key. He says in China the same word that means to govern means to eat. They’ve worked it out in China. The government eats you, but it protects you first, because if it didn’t you wouldn’t get fat enough to make good eating. (Anderson, 105)

The Cast:

Johnny Rocco, deported mobster; playing the lead role is Andy Garcia.

Gaye Dawn, over-the-hill lounge singer, alcoholic; played by Joely Fisher.

Nora D’Alcala, widow of Victor; played by Rose McIver.

Frank McCloud, the “Major;” played by Danny Pino.

Mr. D’Alcala, the blind hotel owner; played by Tony Plana.

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Sheriff Gash, takes a bribe; played by Richard Riehle.

Toots, gangster; played by Stephen Borrello.

Curly, gangster, played by Louis Mustillo.

Ziggy, the Miami connection; played by Bradley Snedeker

Credits:

Director, Doug Hughes

Writers (adapted from original), Jeffrey Hatcher and Andy Garcia

Music, Arturo Sandoval

Scenic Design, John Lee Beatty

Costumes, Linda Cho

Adapted from the original play written by Maxwell Anderson and from the film "Key Largo" (1946), Warner Bros., directed by John Huston.

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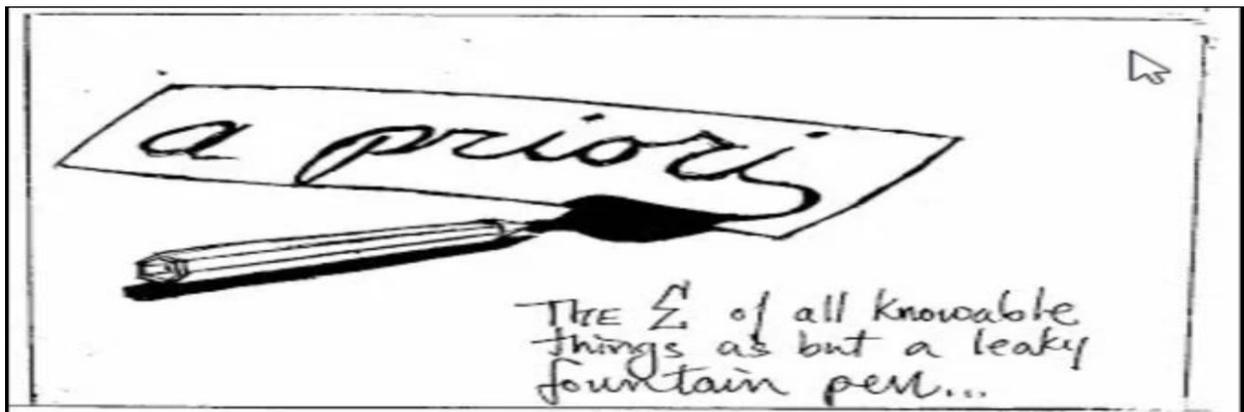
Key Largo (1946), <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0040506/>

Key Largo, Maxwell Anderson, Anderson House, Washington, D.C., 1939

Image:

<http://www.playbill.com/article/see-andy-garcia-joely-fisher-and-danny-pino-in-geffen-playhouses-key-largo>

The play has run to a nearly sold-out house nightly.



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West Side Story (1961): Once an Immigrant, Always an Immigrant

On the streets at night in major US cities such as Los Angeles, New Orleans or New York City, one can easily relate to why *West Side Story* (1961) was filmed in the latter. Whether the upper East Side, Off Broadway, the Garment District, Greenwich Village, Chinatown, the Bowery or Wall Street, the film captures the essence of the city. In particular, it emphasizes the cultural conflict in the poor side of town and the conflict that ensues. It would have been too easy to simply make another juvenile delinquent film such as *Blackboard Jungle* (1955) or *King Creole* (1958), where the principal characters are portrayed as hoodlums, not so in the case of *West Side Story*. It's a musical, it's a love story, a cultural statement and a step, a dance step, backwards in time, to an era where complications of young adulthood were translated into style. Beginning with the choreography and ending with Leonard Bernstein's musical score, the film is a celluloid masterpiece, never to be an anachronism, a throwback, as many from the era are. Daylight opens the film, but that doesn't last long, the rest of the film takes place in the dark on the streets of midtown Manhattan where, as we learn when the "rumble" is agreed upon in the soda shop, there are familiar places such as "the park," "the river," and "under the highway."

Dancing and singing their way toward a tragic ending, the youth of the Caucasian Jets and the Puerto Rican Sharks find themselves in a conflict with no resolution, with only one objective, to maintain control over their turf. From the beginning, in dance scene after dance sequence, the two opposing forces seek to establish hegemony on the basketball court, in the gymnasium at the dance, the soda shop, the alleyways and on the rooftops. Superbly executed, all of the dance performances are intertwined into the plot, which actually seems to settle the film down and make it credible. Opening with initial contact in broad daylight on the basketball court, the Jets and the Sharks square off in choreographic precision followed by some open street confrontations that exemplify Russ Tamblyn's (Riff) gymnastic skills. A signature dance gesture incorporated by both of the gangs is finger snapping, both for rhythm in step, but also as a signal to move or in some cases to inform a persona non grata to get lost, or "beat it." The Jets hatch a plot to goad the Sharks into a "rumble" even as the plot unfolds that will match the Jets' Tony with Maria, the sister of the Sharks gang leader, at the dance. The gymnasium dance sequence begins with a rather unorthodox roundabout with the ladies in an inner circle and the men on the outside. The idea was to allow intermingling of the

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rivals, but it didn't work out that way. Following an awkward moment, the Sharks family breaks out into the mambo and it is countered by a Jets performance, reduced ultimately to the gang leaders and their dance partners. Although playing second fiddle to Maria (Natalie Wood), the captivating Anita (Rita Moreno) steals the show, not just once, but many times over as the film progresses. Following the kiss between Maria and Tony on the dance floor, the plot unhatches forcing the two rival gangs into a showdown.

Tony introduces the number "Maria" on the street, meets up with Maria on the fire escape and the two lovers feature in the memorable song "Tonight." In the meantime, on the Puerto Rican rooftop, Tony is called a "pollock" and the Sharks find themselves in a lyrical gender battle with (I Like to Be in) "America." Once again, Rita Moreno gives a stellar performance dropping one-liners like, "Once an immigrant, always an immigrant," to her lover Bernardo (George Chakiris). The choreography here ranged from tap and shuffle from the 6 male counterparts, to can can Latina style from the 5 ladies. Waiting for the war council at Doc's Candy Shop, the Jets are confronted by police Lt Schrank (Simon Oakland) and his patrolman sidekick, who becomes the object of the satirical "Officer Krupke" performance. The lyrics are without a doubt the best in the film, with a portrayal of the juvenile delinquents, JD's, as victims of their upbringing and the culture. Ultimately, the war council is set and here the decision is made to fight "under the highway." It will become Tony's responsibility to stop the rumble.

Following the Intermission, the dress shop number features Maria, in love, dancing and singing "I Feel Pretty" along with her Latina seamstresses after which she is visited by Tony and they decide he has to stop the rumble. But by then it is too late, the ethnic turmoil boils over under the highway and both gang leaders are killed in a knife fight, Bernardo by Tony himself. Following the loss of Riff, the new leader has to ease the panic of the others, who by now are completely ragged and grimy, and this is achieved in the garage sequence "Cool." The next time Maria and Tony hook up, it's in her apartment where they make love and are discovered by Anita. Their plan to run away together soon turns sour as Chino (Jose de Vega), Bernardo's lieutenant in the gang, is out for revenge and looking to kill Tony. Once again, Rita Moreno is called into action and attempts to locate him at the candy shop, only to be almost sexually assaulted by the Jets before Doc breaks up the party. Her dazzling put-down of the Jets was too real. The lie that

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Maria had been killed by Chino, is outed and when she reunites with Tony on the basketball court outside, Chino gets his revenge. Broken hearted Maria, filled with hate, makes an effort to vent her own anger at the gang members only to break down as the police arrive.

What can be said for a film that has withstood the test of time other than any attempt to imitate it has failed miserably throughout the years. Whether in screenwriting, set and costume design, musical composition or dance sequences, there is no, and never will be, substitute for authentic. It's not necessarily about the musical at all, the dancing, singing and stage performances. It is about people, caught up in a hopeless situation where somebody had enough wisdom to create a lasting, memorable impression of a time many years ago that at the time, was relevant. There will never be another opportunity to present the struggle of youth in its formative years like that portrayed in *West Side Story*.

Old Faces

Old faces go, new ones show,
people move away, just as many
Stay, the world doesn't end when
you lose a friend but the hardest
to forget is the one you never met.

Old faces fade when new friends
are made; in the blink of an eye
all the memories die. The heartache
goes away with each fleeting day,
the good times that were not and
the kiss you never got.

Old faces never stay with you forever; the sadness and the pain washed away by
the rain. The one you didn't please who vanished in the breeze, only time erases, all
the old faces. Old faces fade, fade, fade away.



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CHARLIE CHAN, BEATNIKS & SAMOANS

Politeness--Involvement/Restraint:

Heard all too often today is the expression “Thank you so much”, and in many cases the fine line of ambiguity between polite and sarcastic (restrained) is often blurred. Suffice it to say that the expression may not have originated in the English language at all and can be attributed cross-culturally to Sidney Toler’s role as “Charlie Chan” in his many portrayals as the Chinese detective in the late 30’s and early 40’s.

Three Different Contextual Representations of the Same Thing:

Although the following doesn’t necessarily represent a plea, apology or excuse, it is nonetheless an example of a bona-fide contextual interpretation of a given expression:

Whether it was Kerouac, Kaufman, Ginsburg or Caen who came up with the phrase, “The Beat Generation” (and its derivative “beatnik”) meant many things to different people. To Post-Korean War veterans, the term meant “beaten”, weary, over-it-all. The jazz musicians of the 50’s era indirectly considered it a reference to their particular unique style of music. Still others considered it an envied lifestyle, replete with its own brand of dress, poetry, culture and language.

Samoan vs. American Greetings Comparisons:

It is clear there is a more formal hierarchy of greetings in Samoan culture as exemplified by the lack of consideration for children in the community. What wasn’t made clear in the Duranti article was another of his works, “Linguistic Anthropology, A Reader” (Blackwell Publishing, 2009). Here, Duranti editorializes the Benjamin Bailey article on “interethnic” communication in a Culver City Korean store. The encounters were between the Korean store owner, other Koreans and African-Americans and referred to the above involvement-restraint politeness service encounters between them. In the Samoan observations, the encounters were not cross-cultural and therefore lacked a genuine base of comparison except within the circle of the community.

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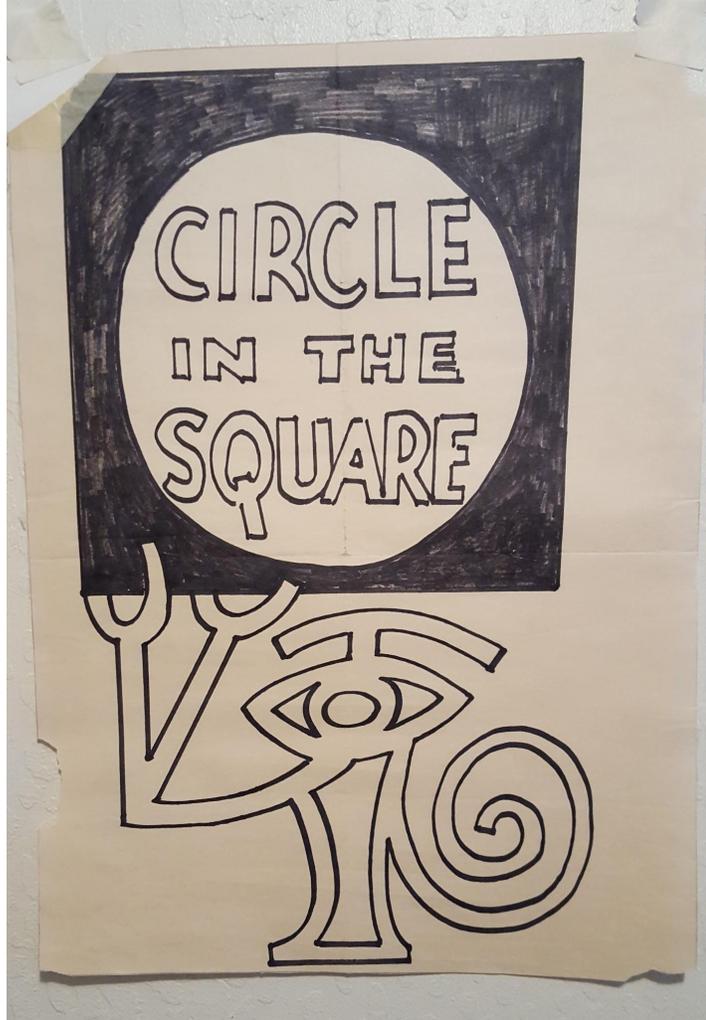
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Peace Eye Cafe (excerpt)

EXT --Washington Square, Greenwich Village, New York City. Late afternoon; clouds are thick in the sky, there is a stiff breeze blowing from the southeast and a mist is setting in over the park. Near the arch, a large encampment of OCCUPY VILLAGE PROTESTERS are busy sandbagging and securing a variety of tents, makeshift structures and impromptu shelters. Nearby, a caravan of city vehicles, escorted by a number of local police cars and news media, pulls to a stop.

OFFICIALS emerge from the vans in the convoy, begin to assemble a platform with a podium that will serve as a press conference.



The DMZ

The remoteness of it all; remote, moat; isolation, and of course, the committee. War lords and peace lovers, always peace lovers. The meeting is called to order. Argument and agreement but never understanding. A delegate speaks of dissent:dissent, present. Here tomorrow, lost today at this folly through reason and confusion. Non-existent existences, the foe. Warriors coagulate, veins clogged in hate, and I return to the Earth.

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Noam Chomsky & the Green New Deal

Known for his outspoken manner and tone in discourse, MIT linguistics Professor Noam Chomsky exhibited that style in a recent telephone interview with David Masciotra for *Salon* magazine. The topic of discussion was Chomsky's new book, *Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal*, co-authored with Robert Pollin, professor of economics at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Seven questions were fielded. Setting the tone for the interview, Masciotra notes in the first question;

“while our mainstream discourse often presents a ‘debate’ surrounding climate change, there is no debate at all-”

The comment was related to the recent hearings of Amy Coney Barrett for the Supreme Court where the nominee stated she was unfamiliar with the climate change controversy and deferred the issue to scientists. The following series of inquiries covered a Department of Transportation report, natural gas fields in the eastern Mediterranean, fossil fuels, zero emissions, sustainable energy, the auto industry bailout and the election. The most significant responses for rhetorical analysis are questions related to the Department of Transportation report, fossil fuels and the Green New Deal, and the auto industry. With respect to the first, Chomsky highlights the findings in one sentence;

“It concluded that on our present course we will reach four degrees centigrade above pre-industrial levels by the end of the century.”

He sets the table for replies to subsequent criticism over the direction the political and

economic spheres of influence are taking with regard to the commonplace known as “global warming.” The culprit being fossil fuels and the utter disregard the energy universe has in an effort to contain the use of it, the solution in the mind of the MIT linguist is to “socialize them” or “tax the fossil fuels, but then redistribute the profits to the people who need it.” As for the Green New Deal, Chomsky adds;

“Jobs ranging from construction to retrofitting houses to mass transportation to installing solar panels and wind turbines to research and development. That whole range presents many more opportunities than there are in fossil fuels, and it makes for a better world.”

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With respect to the auto industry bailout in 2009, Chomsky states it was “nationalized,” adding that management was paid off and it was responsible for traffic jams nationwide.

From the outset of the interview, when Chomsky noted that Supreme Court nominee Barrett was a scientist, neither he nor the co-author of the book at the center of the interview, Robert Pollin, are not scientists as well. Even before a close reading to discover the rhetorical methodology in Chomsky’s responses, it is evident from those very responses the strong sense of persona and ethos on which Chomsky relies in order to validate his claims. Those traits are not lost on Masciotra in his introduction;

“Noam Chomsky, one of the world's foremost public intellectuals, has provided the international left with wisdom, guidance and inspiration for nearly 60 years. Proving that he operates at the locus where argumentation and activism meet, he demonstrates indispensable intellectual leadership on issues of foreign policy, democratic socialism and rejection of corporate media bromides.” The interviewer also notes Chomsky’s “manifesto against the Vietnam War.” Clearly, the role of the MIT linguist’s ethos plays an important part in that very credibility. With a close reading, however, and with the use of Jay Heinrichs’ novel approach to examining rhetoric through what he characterizes as “The Seven Deadly Logical Sins.”

Beginning with Chomsky’s comparison of the Department of Transportation’s report whereby it advised a reduction of emission regulations on vehicles instead of the opposite, his comparison was to the 1942 document in Nazi Germany to eradicate the Jews. This might fall between two of Heinrichs’ taboos, *False Comparison* and *Bad Example*. Although there is no direct correlation between the two documents, it does fit reasonably into being “false, unbelievable, irrelevant, or wrongly interpreted.” The comparison was clearly meant to sensationalize and is in bad taste. Chomsky calls the Transportation report “the most extraordinary document in human history,” in the same category as the decree to exterminate the Jews. The linguist had an opportunity to utilize facts related to carbon emissions, instead he chose persona and ethos. The first chapter in his co-authored book is replete with scientific evidence of fossil fuels and global warming, along with deforestation, cattle farming and industrial fertilizers. (Chomsky, Pollen, 1-39)

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Again, his selling points for the Green New Deal can be deconstructed utilizing Heinrichs fallacies. Chomsky's solution for the fossil fuel industry is to "socialize them." Next, tax and redistribute fossil fuel income. He cites Amy Coney Barret's retreat into scientific ignorance and Greta Thunberg's call to arms to the youth. All of these appeal to ignorance, betrayal and false dilemma. The *False Choice* fallacy is evident;

"The number of choices you're given is not the number of choices that actually exist."

According to *Climate Crisis and the Global New Deal*, capitalism is the global warming culprit and socialism is the answer. Tax and more tax, as Chomsky states in the interview, socialism, the enemy of the rich can be compared to "...Social Security, ...we ram it down their throats through popular pressure."

The claim of the auto industry "have them go back to what they were doing — make traffic jams in Chicago and Boston" is patently false. Through a hasty generalization, Chomsky uses no examples and arrives at a ludicrous conclusion, that car manufacturers are responsible for freeway gridlock and not the drivers of the vehicles.

Across the board, in spite of his skills as a world renowned linguist with the capacity to influence using sound rhetorical tools, Noam Chomsky relied on his charisma and personality to validate the points made during the interview. In black and white, the evidence for his claims were spelled out in no uncertain terms in his newly released book. Perhaps the content might just have been too dry for the audience.

[Climate Crisis and the Global Green New Deal: The Political Economy of Saving the Planet: Chomsky, Noam, Pollin, Robert, Polychroniou, C.J.: 9781788739856: Amazon.com: Books](#)

#REDBEACH67---"Get to the Coast" (excerpt) --- That's where the big deal, Big Sur thing comes in. Old men trying to relive their youth in the crowded after dark Highway One saloons that line the road in this overrated surf town below Carmel, beyond the Bixby Bridge... As for those legendary road trips by rule of thumb, maybe they were exaggerated, out and out fabricated.

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Aoki is OK, but Not Necessarily New

“Selections from Ryka Aoki” clearly reflects the same rejection and marginalization that Allen Ginsberg had so clearly defined in his initially banned free-verse poem *Howl*, but for a different reason. Based on that observation, it becomes less difficult to use theoretical-critical methods, whether synthetic or analytic, to get to the heart of Aoki’s meaning. The (Seminar Paper) Guidelines states the following;

“Biographical details, historical context, and contemporary critical reception can be used if they are relevant to your argument and necessary for that argument’s rhetorical success.”

For that matter using feminist critical theory, as well as that found in Lois Tyson’s *Critical Theory Today* on lesbian, gay and queer criticism, would work alongside new and postcolonial criticism. The difference in Aoki and Ginsberg is what might be defined in Anzaldúa’s *Borderlands* with respect to “El Movimiento;”

“The Latinoist movement (Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans and other Spanish-speaking people working together to combat racial discrimination in the marketplace) is good but it is not enough.” (Cotera, Blackwell, Espinosa)

Substituting LGBTQ for “Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Cubans...” in Anzaldúa gets to the heart of Aoki’s problem. A similar argument can be found in the “Combahee River Collective Statement” in Section 3: Problems in Organizing Black Feminists;

“The major source of difficulty in our political work is that we are not just trying to fight oppression on one front or even two, but instead to address a whole range of oppressions. We do not have racial, sexual, heterosexual, or class privilege to rely upon, nor do we have even the minimal access to resources and power that groups who possess any of these types of privilege have.”

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Historical context is necessary according to the above in order to get a better understanding of the frustration in the rejection of Aoki's philosophy by mainstream culture. Written in between the lines of Aoki's free verse are those same rejections of the attitudes of that very mainstream culture that Ginsberg related in the founding of the Beat *movement*, which in the end became a *generation*. The Latinoist and Combahee River movements failed to make that transformation; it may be possible through analysis of Aoki to see if LGBTQ can make that transition.

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"Hell No, We Won't Go," (excerpt)--

Laguna Beach, CA, (1968)--Sitting playing guitar and drinking beer, I went unnoticed or at least I thought by a group of beach ladies in the corner booth where a hatch cover served as the table. One of the ladies soon hopped, with coin in hand, walked over to the jukebox, dropped the coin in and selected a song, drowning out my guitar playing. I went over to the table, confronted her about interrupting my guitar playing and she apologized. She introduced herself, Patti Dell, from Newport Beach.