

# capitalonialism 101001

OK, computer. its time i program you with some structural analysis. repeat after me...



that's it? structural analysis is easy. i can't believe academics make a living doing this!

no, we haven't begun yet. i was just thinking.

when i'm thinking, you see a beach ball of many colors.



ok, repeat after me:  
Capitalonialism.  
  
that's not a word.

No, not officially. but its an important concept. its nice to have new words for important concepts



Computer, what are you made of?

0 1  
1 0  
0 1  
0 1  
0 1  
0  
  
0  
0 0  
1 0 1  
1 1 0  
0 0 1  
1 1 0  
0 1 0

True. but you're also made of lots of other things. You're made of wires and metals and plastic pieces that were manufactured and assembled by human beings using machines and shipped from other places on an airplane which itself is made of many smaller parts manufactured and assembled by human beings. you were purchased using money—money that exists in a bank account somewhere that is connected to a piece of plastic called a credit card.



it all seems like pretty advanced technology, doesn't it?

i am highly advanced.



True! but the "advancement" that makes you possible relies on some very old ideas. these ideas are Capitalism and Colonialism. In north america—and in other places too—theyre reliant on each other.

See, to be "successful," Capitalism requires growth. growth takes resources—natural and human. in capitalist logic, growth is supposed to continue forever. but nothing in the world is infinite or unlimited—things get used up. in capitalism, growth always has a cost.



When people in power talk about one thing, they usually mean something different. So when people in power talk about big, lofty things like "development," "advancement" and "growth," they usually mean "we want those things for ourselves only." "development," "advancement" and "growth" for people in power always comes at the cost of people that the powerful one have decided aren't important. usually, those people are far away, look different and/or have things like land and resources that powerful people need to continue their unchecked growth

WELL. Sometimes they do it because people who came before them did too. Sometimes, they do it just because they can. Sometimes, they do it because it's written into the law. for example, in 1452 pope Nicholas V wrote a document called "the doctrine of discovery" it said that "Christians" had the right to "CAPTURE, VANQUISH AND SUBDUCE ENEMIES OF CHRIST" to put them into "PERPETUAL SLAVERY" and "TAKE ALL THEIR POSSESSIONS AND PROPERTY." When Christopher Columbus accidentally landed in north america, he used this document to murder and enslave people he claimed to have "discovered." the document was used many times during the colonization of the americas. It was actually adopted into US law in 1823 and used to disposses first nations people of their lands and, often, their lives

they take water, soil and oil?  
yup. they also try and take peoples' bodies—their labour, their strength. Capitalism needs to exploit land and people for growth to continue. When natural resources have dried up in one place or when people in power decide that it's too unsightly to exploit, enslave and coerce people openly in their own communities, they go to faraway places and set up shop.

but how do people justify taking over land that isn't theirs? or putting people to work in terrible conditions? how do they convince themselves that they are worth more than other people?

Canadian law—especially the disregard of first nations treaty rights—works on the same principles.

we're talking about the 1800s, right? what does this have to do with me?

this same logic—that some peoples lives are expendable, or that some land is built to be exploited—is at play in the world today. Its in immigration policy, in the courts, in the wars being waged by canadian and american soldiers. Its in the way we get and use fuel, in the way we build cities. its everywhere.

i mean...  
Its also what makes big computer Companies move their factories far away—too far for the people who buy their computers to see the terrible working conditions in the factories.  
of course, no one talks about the reasons for these terrible working conditions. they're mostly the result of foreign policy, sanctions or economic restructuring by the WTO, IMF or companies and governments of places like the US and Canada.

so you're saying...  
i'm a product of capitalonialism?  
i'm saying we all are, though it impacts our lives in different ways.

well that's depressing.

Sure. its hard when you figure out that you come from a system that relies on violence and calls it growth. Its tough when you realize that, even though you didn't design this system, you're complicit in it.  
but we're not just programmed

i am.

hah, you have free will. we both have the ability to think about where we came from, what we're implicated in, and how we're going to try and make things better for everybody.  
  
how are we going to do that?

Well, more vocabulary lessons should be a good start.  
are you ready to learn a new one?

there is only one one.  
  
and one zero.

repeat after me:  
homotransphobisexiclassracism.

ism this  
interesting..

THE  
END.