

Fifty shades of law

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Fifty Shades of Law: By Daniel Perlman The other day I had the pleasure of going to see the highly anticipated movie “ Fifty Shades of Grey.” Besides the fact that it was perhaps the worst film I’ve ever seen, perhaps because of it’s insidious roots in the grossly overrated “ Twilight” franchise. Aside from the actors terrible chemistry, the lack of plot depth and serious lack of emotion, leading my friend to accurately describe it as, “ A porno, yet not a particularly well-directed or arousing one,” there was one interesting tangent of my thoughts inspired by this film. Don’t worry; it wasn’t of the erotic kind.

Anastasia Steele isn’t necessarily falling for Christian Grey, yet is undoubtedly attracted to him, eventually causing her to submit to his questionable sexual techniques. One could point out that it isn’t just the physical qualities of Mr. Grey that make him so overly dominant, but his immense wealth as well. It is worth considering whether Anastasia would have submitted so easily to Christian if he were of a lower economic standing, and whether he would have the same aura of power and control surrounding him. So, in essence, Anastasia is really only attracted to Christian because of his power and control, due to his socio-economic status, and in a way her submission is dependent on whether he retains that status. An interesting comparison can now be drawn, from this train-wreck of a film, to theories of Law and ideology.

In their book “ The German Ideology,” written in 1845, Karl Marx and Friederich Engels once said, “ The ideas of the ruling class are, in any age, the ruling ideas.” In this day and age, that phrase still holds true. Frequent examples of this can be seen in the increasingly ignorant American individual. How many lower classed people must have voted Conservative in

order for them to gain a significant majority? Approximately 40% of Americans still identify themselves as Conservative, yet the party has increasingly taken to making it's policies beneficial towards the rich. They oppose Obama-care, yet have no significant alternative health plan to offer, they fight against any attempt to end poverty which may increase taxes paid by the 1%, and they describe the poor as, " Stray cats that should stop being fed," and that they are, " Too lazy or too stupid" to do anything about their situation. Judges, too, are influenced by the 1%, and increasingly laws are reflecting the views of those with the most wealth in society.

Why is this? Surely politicians have the ability to say no to legislative suggestions by the rich, surely judges have the power to reject the influence of the wealthy? The problem lies in the fact that all politicians and 85% of judges in the USA have to run for office. Now, perhaps at the beginning of their attempt to represent the people, their ideology is pure and just. However, political campaigns are incredibly expensive, allowing corporations and rich " benefactors" to gain a foothold in Congress' door. This can be done legally, in accordance with the USA's campaign funding rules, or questionably through donations to various funds and trusts related or somehow involved with the politician/judge. Now, once they are in office, they may still be ideologically pure, yet once they walk into a courthouse or congress, they have submitted to the dominance of the ruling social class.

For example, let's say X wants you to oppose environmental legislation/regulation. Your ideology/conscience wants you to fight against X's wishes, yet if you do, what's to stop X from supplying your opponent with funds in order to beat you next election. In this way, politicians and judges

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are at the mercy of the dominance of and power of corporations and wealthy individuals, in a similar way to Anastasia having to submit to the dominance and power of Christian. Every-time a politician is elected, or a judgeship given, they become foot-soldiers in a greater game, the game of dollars and cents, of gold and silver, of personal gain at the expense of the rest of the world. Yes, it is foolish to believe that all politicians public beliefs are their personal ones, and it is truly frightening to see the 1% pulling the previously moderate conservative party increasingly to the right in the USA. Something needs to be done, effective legislation needs to be put in place to restrict donations made by the 1%, campaign debates need to be much tougher, government's should be under increased scrutiny by the public, media needs to be independent of political influence, the clown-car of corrupt elected officials must be cleared out.

We, the 99%, must be Anastasia at the end of the movie, the Anastasia that walks out on Christian, that rejects his dominance and power, partially because of the fear it arouses in us, mostly because Christian is not who we would be best of being in a relationship with. There are people out there who could change the world; people who could with their minds and visions of a better future guide us to the light at the end of the dark tunnel we've been in for the past 100 years. However, these people will either be shut out or corrupted if society can't, in a single voice, just like Anastasia after being physically harmed by the sexual techniques of Christian, come together and say, " We will not be ruled."