

# THE SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY OF FRAUD: DRAMATURGY, CARNEGIE AND PUPPET THEATER

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Mid-American Review of Sociology, 1986, Vol. XI, No. 1:

## THE PRIVATIZED DRAMATURGY OF CAPITALIST CIVIL SOCIETY.

Sauntering through the typical franchise bookstore in the typical suburban shopping mall, the radical social psychologist cannot help chuckling and grimacing at the titles of the slick paperbacks usually found in the "self-improvement" and "Psychology" sections. A battery of titles exist giving evidence of a preoccupation with mastering the principles of human relations as they exist in their current alienated forms. *How to Sell Yourself, The Power of Positive Thinking, Winning Through Intimidation, Looking Out for Number One, Dress for Success, The Executive Look, Office Politics, Power! How to Get It, How to Use it, Your Erroneous Zones, and Guerilla Tactics in the Job Market* are titles of books and workshops which speak of a concern on the part of those in bureaucratic and/or capitalist societies attempting to succeed. Furthermore, all of these indicate that interpersonal strategies exist which can make success easier to attain. Of course, "success" in the present American lexicon refers typically to the crude possession of power, money, prestige, and the commodities which accrue from these. In addition, these titles and their contents suggest that the person can affect - to some quantitative extent - the course of his/her fortunes through the development of a style, an image or a presentation of self that is acceptable to those who control access to success and the valued commodities. In these so-called self-improvement books are all of the elements of a fraudulent dramaturgy at the level of interpersonal relations in everyday life. With the specific reference to popular culture these provide one of the best illustrations of the existence of a dramaturgical society (Young and Massey, 1977). Certainly, they indicate that human interaction has become reduced in many instances to a ritualistic acting out of externally prepared scripts.

To the extent that persons read these self-improvement books, attend the various workshops and seminars, and generally orient their thoughts and behaviors as they are so taught, these efforts constitute an important

part of the socialization process as they offer detailed instruction in the mechanics of self presentation. Those who participate in the instruction of these mechanics can be referred to as, "presentation coaches." All socialization processes entail some form of presentation coaching since the self is the product of socialization and since the social process requires the presentation of self to others.

In the presentation coaching found in the socialization processes of ordinary human drama, significant others such as parent, teachers, and peers tend to encourage a form of self which is capable of and oriented to authentic social intercourse, social bonding and human reciprocity. In the presentation coaching offered by these "how to" guides to financial success, a technical cadre of behavioral experts encourages a form of self which is more oriented to privatizing, not sharing, human meaning; to external guides for behavior such as money and bureaucratic rules; to exploitation and private advantage than equity and human reciprocity; and is much more oriented to fraud and manipulation as *modus operandi* in everyday interactions.

Consequently, although Benjamin Spock's books on child care (1974, 1976) and Judith Martin's *Miss Manners* guides to child rearing (1983, 1984) can be considered to be mass produced examples of presentation coaching, just as much as anything written by Dale Carnegie, Wayne Dyer or Robert Ringer, it is clear that there are substantial differences between them. The personnel and management training seminars offered by corporations such as Padgett, and Thompson (*Kansas City Times* 1984:D7) must be understood as a qualitatively different form of presentation coaching than that of parents attempting to teach a child table manners.

We can suggest that these socialization processes differ in the following respects:

- (a) the form of presentation coaching the socialized receive;
- (b) the social contexts in which they occur;
- (c) the social uses to which the forms of self-presentation are oriented and to which they are put;
- (d) the forms of self they produce; and
- (e) the forms of interactional encounters which result.

There can be little doubt that Dale Carnegie, the grandfather of capitalist, rationalized presentation coaching, is a major ideologue in the mass inculcation of the principles of the sociology of fraud at the interpersonal level. Carnegie achieved this through his books, lectures, and the institutes and

seminars which bear his name and method, in short, through the entirety of his attempts and technology for teaching persons "how to win friends and influence people." His personal story is often presented as a testament to the putative morality and validity of his methods. The extent to which the Carnegie technology has permeated interpersonal relations is staggering. At the present, hundreds of Carnegie Institutes exist internationally. Thousands of Carnegie lectures are given yearly in the U.S.A. and in at least 45 other countries. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (1981) has sold over 15,000,000 copies (*Kansas City Times*, 1981:C1) and even dated paperback editions have gone through over 100 printings (Carnegie, 1964:III). However, Carnegie's influence as a presentation coach does not stop there, it continues in the imitative "how to" books and workshops mentioned earlier.

This analysis is about the Carnegiesque form of presentation coaching, its social origins, and its consequences for human relationships. At the outset it must be made clear that while my focus is on Carnegie, especially what he presents in *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, the basic argument pertains to any of these "how to" guides to "self-improvement." All such efforts will be referred to as "Carnegieism." The enormity of the influence of Carnegieism, its social base, and its dramaturgical content make this phenomenon an object of interest for a critical dramaturgical sociology. In attempting to ground Carnegie's work in an organizational base, Charles Perrow (1979:67) is correct in positing that Carnegieism began to flourish in an atmosphere of a shifting of capitalist legitimations as American workers organized and developed social power. This shift was from Chester Barnard's explicitly authoritarian and exploitative management theory to the "exploitation with a smile" perspective of Elton Mayo and the human relations school of organization management theory. However, it is not enough to dismiss Carnegieism as a technique management uses to induce workers to cooperate with the goals and values of the capitalist organization. Certainly, Carnegieism does that, but much more is involved. Critical social psychology must examine the content of this ideology and its social base. To the extent that it becomes an accepted part of the ideological culture, Carnegieism serves as a guide for structuring social action. Although every example of Carnegieism presentation coaching I reviewed promised its students a happier, fuller, more rewarding life in ways additional to the pecuniary, it is clear that pupils of Carnegieism suffer many forms of psycho-social abuse as a consequence of their search for financial and personal rewards (Hochschild, 1983a, 1983b). Furthermore, it is clear that Carnegieism

legitimates destructive and alienative social relationships and it deserves to be known as such. The society in which such a falsification of interpersonal relations can thrive and help reproduce itself needs to be radically changed.

*How to Win Friends and Influence People* is the quintessence of Carnegieism and is the classic statement on capitalist presentation coaching. As presented in that book, Carnegie's method is a clever and easily understood guide for dramaturgical presentments in everyday life. The "everyday life" mentioned here is that of capitalist civil society. In the social theories of Thomas Hobbes (1982), George Hegel (1967), and Karl Marx (1970), civil society is that form of social existence in which the individual is pitted against every other individual, the *bellum omnium contra omnium*. Civil society need not be understood as the will to physical battle or violence implied in the expression, "the war of each against all." However, within civil society individuals eagerly and actively pursue their particular privatized interests and do so without concern or regard for the collective good or the well-being of other human individuals. Some of Carnegie's imitators are openly disdainful of such concerns (Ringer, 1973, 1977). In capitalist civil society, freedom is freedom from common concerns, freedom from the public sphere. The assumption is that the common good emerges out of the sum of privately negotiated individual good. If wealth and social power were distributed equally among negotiating private parties, this assumption might be valid, but, even so, there are serious structural flaws in this concept of freedom. Civil society is a system which elevates the rights of the egoistic individual, mainly toward the protection of private property. It is not really a society, since the bonds between people are not social, nor is there any guarantee that it is civil.

Among other things, Carnegieism assumes (1) that persons exist within the objective facticity of capitalist civil society, (2) that money or profit is the legitimate arbiter of social worth, and (3) that each individual pursues a course of action which s/he believes will lead to the maximization of money. Theft and physical violence are also roads toward making money. The presentation coaching of Carnegieism, however, emphasizes not fear and threats but inducement and manipulation. The person who is forced to survive, make do, or succeed within the confines of capitalist civil society confronts a social and economic environment that is essentially hostile. S/he is dependent upon the judgments and decisions made by others - those who control access to survival and success. One can, therefore, be successful - make money - or get promoted in a state or corporate bureau by attempting to influence the attitudes and decisions made by more powerful others.

Impression management, the art of staging one's self in order to create a desired image of self for other, which was so skillfully analyzed by Goffman (1959), becomes an overriding concern of those attempting to survive and become successful in capitalist civil society. *How to Win Friends and Influence People* is a compendium of impression management strategies for making money or being successful in capitalist civil society, as are all of the allied presentation coaching strategies. Its title might be more appropriately changed to *How to Manage Impressions in Order to Make Money*. This "self-improvement" book instructs its readers and students in the fine art of "how to make people like you" and "how to win people to your way of thinking." To be sure, the book comes off as a collection of simplistic bromides and anecdotes, but the intention and overall effect is clear: if one is to achieve financial success under the conditions of capitalist civil society, one must learn the "fundamental techniques in handling people."

Carnegieism is an ideology which legitimates and encourages people to interact strategically. It does not encourage those who must suffer the social conditions of capitalist civil society to question or alter those conditions, but it does show people the underlying logic of the social system and how to use this logic for private advantage. Carnegieism further assumes that there is an essential and natural harmony between the value of making money, which is the commonsense expression of the underlying logic of the capitalist system, and other human values, including: enthusiasm, friendliness, helpfulness, cheerfulness, and sincerity. Thus, the book, as well as the entire capitalist presentation coaching movement, has been able to present Carnegieism in a proud tone and with a vocabulary which almost succeeds in making the privatized dramaturgy appear ethical. For instance, Carnegie tells us to become genuinely interested in other people (1964:110). Being genuinely interested in other people is a human value that is not always in harmony with the capitalist value of making money. It is obvious that the values of making money and being genuinely interested in other people are frequently in conflict. What Carnegie is really saying is that if one wants to make money, becoming genuinely interested in others helps. This genuine interest is not a value but an instrument for making money. Functionally, because Carnegieism assumes the ahistorical givenness of the logic of capitalist civil society, it necessarily subordinates genuine interest in others to the making of money and, whenever conflict between the two arise, making money wins out.

There is a very real sense in which Carnegieism reflects the basic instability and contradiction of capitalism: people cannot indefinitely sub or-

dinate human values to making money, but if they do not, the very existence of capitalism is threatened. Historically, capitalism has developed a variety of rationalizations or legitimations attempting to smooth over these contradictions and maintain at least a semblance of equilibrium. It should not be surprising that, as one type of rationalization, Carnegieism instructs people in everyday life how to smooth over the contradictions which threaten to tear the system apart. Carnegieism accomplishes this by means of thorough training in manipulating what sociologists call "vocabularies of motive" (Mills, 1940). With selected vocabularies of motive one can legitimate, either authentically or fraudulently, one's behavior and/or impel another to a desired behavior through the careful selection of words or rhetoric the other will accept. One of Carnegie's rules for "making people like you" is to talk "in terms of the other persons' interest" (1964:94-7). Under capitalist conditions of production and distribution, the overriding concern of the isolated, egoistic individual is making money. Why, then, talk in terms of the other's interests? The answer is, to manipulate others in order to take private advantage. In capitalist civil society wealth is not understood to be collectively produced and it is certainly not collectively enjoyed. Instead, wealth is accumulated by individuals pursuing their privatized interests and it is "enjoyed" as such. Thus, when the Carnegie pupil talks in terms of the other's interest s/he does so for the purpose of making money.

Furthermore, since there is no necessary harmony between making money and other human values, one's talk does not have to match reality. Carnegie is simply saying that if we want to make money, then we must develop a rhetoric or a vocabulary of motive which appeals to the other's interest. Corporations which peddle noxious, dangerous products such as Coca-Cola, attempt to sell their wares through advertising slogans which talk in terms of the other's interest. "Coke adds life," is one example of talking in terms of the other's interest, but it is not matched by the chemical capacity of the beverage. It is probably true that all successful forms of exploitation and manipulation either arise from or are maintained by the powerful other talking in terms of the exploited others interests. The logic of capitalist commodity relations, that is, the extraction of surplus value, is good for the workers. Ask any capitalist. Ghettos build character for Blacks. Ask any slum lord. Women want and need subordinate roles. Ask any sexist. Blessed are the meek . . . Ask any religious functionary. So, when Carnegie urges us to talk in terms of the other person's interest he is simply saying: in order to make money we must adopt whatever rhetoric or vocabulary the other will accept. Within capitalist civil society, altruistic,

collective, and nonpecuniary relationships and vocabularies will not work to accumulate wealth; appeals to egoistic, privatized, and pecuniary interests will. Conflict, exploitation, injustice, and confrontation are excluded as manifest concerns of the interaction process.

### A CRITICAL INTERPRETATION OF CARNEGIE'S PRESENTATION COACHING.

Once one understands that Carnegieism (1) elevates making money above all other values and (2) legitimates the orientation of all interaction toward that end, the illusion that the ideology is about self-improvement, making friends and influencing people becomes apparent. It may be useful to translate some of Carnegie's rules on the basis of these points. What follows is an attempt to do this by listing Carnegie's rules and interpreting the rules from the standpoint of a critical dramaturgical analysis.

What Carnegie Says:	Critical Interpretations:
A. Six Ways to Make People Like You	You can affect the impressions others have of you if you master these six rules. Remember, you want to succeed, others control the things that determine your success, so act strategically, not openly.
1. Become genuinely interested in other people.	This has value because it can enable you to make money. Do not bother with genuine interest in persons who cannot help your career, who cannot buy your product, or who demand equity or advantage in negotiations.
2. Smile	This is a ploy. It is not intended to express a state of happiness nor is it an attempt to create a social bond. It is an expression which disarms others. Take advantage of aathis. Smile even when you do not feel like it. You'll make more money.
3. Remember that a person's name is	If you are going to impress someone positively, you must attempt to create the im-

to him/her the sweetest and most important sound in any language.

4. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.

5. Talk in terms of the other person's interest.

6. Make the person feel important and do it sincerely.

pression that the other really exists as a significant entity. They do not count for much to you but saying their names makes them believe that.

The more you learn about the other, the better you'll be able to interact strategically. Encouraging them to talk about themselves will cause them to believe that they are the center of your concern. Moreover, it will enable them to massage their own egos and, thus, it will disarm them further.

Vocabulary is very important in strategic interaction. In capitalist civil society, other's motives tend to be of a crude, pecuniary sort. You can appeal to these by carefully selecting how you will say things. If other believes s/he will benefit by the ensuing relationship, s/he will be very likely to endorse it. Remember, the other's interest do not have to be served, they only have to appear to be served. Thus, although the other might be inconvenienced, exploited, or ruined by the ensuing action, they will agree to the script if you are clever enough in your presentation of it to create an impression that their interests are being served.

In capitalist civil society people are measured by power and money and the prestige which results from these. Your own pecuniary interest will be served by conveying to others that you believe them to be important. Others will be more likely to see their interests being served if you do so. Oh, yes, the concomitant presentation of sincerity is crucial in this effort.

B. Twelve Ways of Winning People to Your Way of Thinking.

Your success is dependent upon what others think. By following these guides you can have considerable control over what others think. If you are clever, you can control the definition of the situation and thereby control the interactional encounter.

1. The only way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it.

Capitalism is full of the best of contradictions and conflicts of interests. Arguments are bad because they indicate and clarify conflicts of interests. You will benefit if you act as if your interests are in harmony with those of others.

2. Show respect for the other person's opinions. Never tell a person s/he is wrong.

This is a ploy. If you tell a person s/he is wrong you will appear to dominate the situation and the other will be uncomfortable in your presence. You can avoid this and still dominate the situation by always appearing to be respectful. Your craft will determine how successfully you appear to find merit in other's ideas and still have your dominate.

3. If you are wrong, admit it quickly and emphatically.

Another ploy here. When you admit error you create the impression of honesty and some people respect honesty and are disarmed by it. Others will feel comfortable in your presence if you do this. Remember, you are doing this not out of any love of truth, but because appearing to be honest will get you farther.

4. Begin in a friendly way.

Recall the importance of the symbolic environment in controlling the social definition of the situation. You are out to control minds. If you begin in an impersonal way, others will realize that you are not really interested in them in human terms. If you

begin in a friendly way, others will be disarmed. Although their needs may be opposed to yours, you can win them over through this type of spurious disarmament.

5. Get the other saying "yes, yes" immediately.

The more successful you are at establishing the appearance of agreement, intersubjectivity and common ground, the harder it will be for your adversary to separate his/her interests from yours. Thus, the easier it will be for your definition of the situation to dominate in the interactional encounter.

6. Let the other person do a great deal of talking.

You can quickly learn their vulnerabilities and avoid revealing yours.

7. Let the other person feel the idea is his/hers.

You are out to make money. Under capitalist processes of accumulation you have to turn other people into instruments of your will in order to accomplish this. Just think how much easier the problems of control and domination are when the subordinates not only accept their domination but feel that it was their own idea!

8. Try honestly to see things from the other person's point of view.

This form of honesty is an important means to making money. If you try honestly to see things from the other's viewpoint, numerous benefits will accrue. You will have an accurate idea whether they will be of use to you. You don't want to waste time on others if they aren't useful. Further, the information will better enable you to interact strategically. Inaccurate understanding of another's needs and weaknesses foils one's own goals.

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9. Be sympathetic with the other person's ideas and desires.

This ploy has a number of justifications. Sympathy creates the appearance of common ground and intersubjectivity. In any event, your sympathy is purposive-rational, it is a means toward making money. Sympathy will elicit sympathy from the other for your own needs.
10. Appeal to the nobler motives.

Few like to think of self as an immoral opportunist whose primary value is money. Thus, the goal of making money can often be furthered better by appealing to personal growth, human development, community, freedom, and justice than by avarice and competition. So, legitimate your business deals by appealing to more human, personal, and social vocabularies. Chances will be better in getting others to accept that your motives are commendable. To the extent that they accept these, they will not complain about unequal exchange. In Goffman's terms, the mark will be "cooled out."
11. Dramatize your ideas.

Here we are speaking of a particular type of drama. In order to be successful you must be in control of the situation. To be completely on top of the situation you must stage it effectively. The better you can construct the environment, both physically and symbolically, the better your chances of positively influencing those who are useful to your purposes.
12. Throw down a challenge.

In capitalist civil society, people are motivated not only by vocabularies of self and nobility, they are also motivated by vocabularies of competition, victory, and conquest. They like to think of self as "rugged individualists." Your strategy for success,

getting others to do what you want, can be enhanced if you make others imbue the task with "real" meaning. "Successful" individuals in capitalist civil society learn to dominate, whether it involves persons, situations, or nature. If you can verbalize the task as one demanding superior skill, endurance, or brains, the other will be likely to accept the challenge. Note that you do not have to think that the task is worthwhile or involving meaning or accomplishment, except that it helps to achieve your interests, you only have to get the other to define it as such.

### CARNEGIEISM AS PUPPET THEATER

As with all ideologies, Carnegieism makes certain assumptions about human nature and further assumes that these are valid throughout all time and space. Paramount among these assumptions is that the aim of all human activity is profit or making money. Carnegieism thus assumes that capitalist civil society encompasses the totality of all possible human relations. It is significant that *How to Win Friends and Influence People* was originally a textbook or manual for one of Carnegie's courses for business people. Originally, its title was *Public Speaking and Influencing Men in Business*. Carnegie assumes that all human interaction boils down to attempts to profit at the expense of others; if he did not assume that the capitalist format of entrepreneurial relations informed every social occasion, he would not have attempted to generalize his guide—intended for influencing people in business—to every domain of life (1964:227-55).

Once the universality of the relations of the clearly capitalistic civil society is assumed, the goal of private, personal profit is reified into the fixed and absolute end of human activity without any thought of its dereification. Thus, although Carnegie says that we should be genuinely interested in others and sincere in our approach, it must be emphasized that these become empty invocations as the moral rules are eternally contingent on profit and financial success. One does not take Carnegie's course in order to make friends and influence people for the sake of friendship and human community. One takes the course to learn principles of human relations in capitalist civil society in order to make money or maximize profit. It is clear

that Carnegie's false sermons depend upon and are oriented toward profit. He does not tell us to do as we feel. He does not tell us to smile if we feel like smiling and frown if we feel like frowning. Instead, he tells us to smile even if we do not want to smile because smiling is a more certain avenue to success than is frowning. Carnegieism does not value authenticity, genuineness, and sincerity because these are ultimately good or because they are part of an unalienated human situation or because they are necessary for the formation of social bonds and the creation of culture. Instead, he tells us that these have an instrumental value, they are instrumentally rational, they can lead to money, profit, and success.

The fact that Carnegieism elevates this instrumental value above all other possible human values changes the form of human drama that will be performed in such interactional encounters. Because Carnegieism externalizes and reifies money, profit, and financial success, human drama loses its autonomous and social character and is reduced to puppet theater. In puppet theater, the reified object pulls the strings and persons lose the ability to create their social life-worlds and, therefore, their ability to constitute themselves as specific beings. The entire corpus of Marx's work can be interpreted as a protest against the externalization and reification of cultural objects such as profit and financial success.

From the critical standpoint, this process inevitably results in the inversion of subjects and objects and the mystification of the relations between humans, and between humans and their environment (Marx, 1964, 1970, 1972). Similarly, Castoriadis (1980) has maintained that the heteronomy or rule by external laws, principles, objects, and so on must be overthrown if the fully human condition of autonomous society is to be realized. From this perspective, the motto of the full human, full autonomous society is: "We are those whose law is to give ourselves our own laws" (Castoriadis, 1980:98). Under conditions in which laws, principles, or cultural objects have become externalized and reified, humans lose control of their world and become mere puppets acting out a ritualistic drama in a puppet theater. Shutz comments on the human losses encountered by those who have been reduced to puppets:

the puppet is not born, s/he does not grow up, and s/he will not die; s/he has no hopes and no fears; s/he does not know anxiety as a chief motive of all his/her deeds. S/he is not free in the sense that his/her acting could transgress the limits of his/her creator. ...[The puppet] is never a subject or a center of spontaneous activity. S/he does not have the task of mastering the world, and, strictly speaking, s/he has no

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world at all. His/her destiny is regulated and determined beforehand by his/her creator... (1970:107-8).

When human behavior is organized under conditions of puppet theater, that is, when "social action" is externally controlled with the concomitant reification of cultural objects, the inversion of subject and object, and the mystification of social relations, people develop strategies to meet their needs, to cope with the situation, and to maintain the pretense of the existence of a socially created paradigm. The value of the sociologies of everyday life, especially dramaturgy and ethnomethodology, is that they give us conceptual tools which clarify the strategies people use in everyday life in order to survive under alienated conditions. One such tool, which is particularly helpful in understanding the puppet theater of Carnegieism, is the notion of "mutual pretense" (Glaser and Strauss, 1975). Mutual pretense refers to situations in which all participants in alienated interactional encounters do not mean what they say, or they do not attach subjective meaning to their objective gestures. An easy Carnegiesque example here might be the case of an officer and an enlisted person saluting each other and neither really meaning the respect implied by the salute. Both say to self, "I am merely going through the motions of saluting. I am doing this because I have to, not because I want to or because I believe in it." By now, the social and human problems involved in such processes must be apparent. Note, however, that this is not a fully human and social interactional frame precisely because both are denying meaning. Rather than being genuinely reciprocal, the behavior of both is manipulated and controlled by the externalized and reified rule structure of the military hierarchy. The basic assumptions of symbolic interactional theory and phenomenology are not in a situation where intention is masked and meaning is not shared. It is an exercise in mystified research to treat such occasions as social.

Carnegieism involves a reduction of human drama to puppet theater. All of the actors, who have become cheerful deceivers, behave not because their overt act has meaning to them but because it is required by the externalized and reified cultural object: the directive to make money. Carnegieism is puppet theater because all interactional encounters are preempted by the eternal and absolute value of profit in capitalist civil society. Interaction inevitably is nothing more than the ritualistic mimesis of the externally prepared script. Under conditions of puppet theater, dramaturgy is abased and reduced to mere instrument or technique; Carnegieism is a fetishism of technique which annihilates the intentional character of human activity.

Following the lead of Marx, Castoriadis and Shutz, as well as all others who protest against the reduction of persons and social relations to the status of mere things, an authentic human drama negates the externalization and reification of cultural objects. An authentic human drama would allow for the questioning by persons of profit, making money, and financial success as human values and would insist on the absolute ability to change these. Further, it would allow for persons to improvise and create new norms and values should the old be demonstrated to not meet human needs. Carnegieism, as evidenced by its exhortations to smile, even when you do not want to smile and to demonstrate respect for the other's opinions even when you do not have such respect in order to make money, is a scheme that essentially functions to alienate humans from each other and to dehumanize the social and cultural world. Carnegie's adherents are not authentic human actors, they are puppets in a puppet theater in as much as they have relinquished their abilities and prerogatives to author their own behavior and construct their own social world. To the extent that Carnegieism permeates the consciousness of the populace, it is a repressive ideology which keeps people in the condition of mere things while the reified objects continue to pull the actors here, there, and everywhere in pursuit of money.

### THE SOCIAL ORIGINS OF CARNEGIE'S PRESENTATION COACHING

The critical dramaturgical perspective attempts to maintain the connection between the legitimations and strategies of the sociology of fraud and their social origins. It must be emphasized that Carnegieism emerged from a peculiar social base and functions to reproduce the social base by providing guides for social action. I suggest that Carnegieism has emerged from and legitimates three interrelated processes of capitalist civil society: alienation, reification, and commodity fetishism.

The Marxist understanding of capitalism maintains that the individual is forced to sell his/her labor power on the job market as a commodity in order to exist materially. The Marxist critique of the alienation and dehumanization which ensues from this process is certainly sufficient to condemn it. However, Carnegie's legitimation of puppet theater points to still fewer dimensions of alienation and dehumanization. Carnegieism instructs that not only does the capitalist own the labor power of the person, the capitalist owns the individual's integrity as well, since the person is forced

to further dramatize this labor power to the capitalist or those who control access to the conditions of material survival. The one theme which runs through the entirety of Marx's work is the argument that under conditions of capitalist commodity production humans lack control over the social forces they create everyday. This lack of control is called alienation and the basis of alienation is the private ownership of the means of production. Private property enables the corporate and bureaucratic masters to appropriate the surplus value of the workers. There is nothing mysterious about the social origins of alienation in class society. It comes about as a consequence of the separation of the producers from the conditions of production, and the separation of the producers from what they produce. When people lose control of the means of production, when they are made dependent upon a market, they lose control over their lives, their activity, their products, their personal characters, and their presentations of self. These by-products of social relations come to confront people as hostile, alien objects rather than being their fulfillment or their authentic self-expressions. Carnegieism is both a reflection of and a legitimation for the alienation of capitalist society as it is a strategy instructing persons in how to turn others into mere instruments and how to be successful according to and under the rules of capitalist social relations.

Alienation accompanies two other processes which abase human drama: reification and commodity fetishism. When people experience their social products, their activities, and their personal characters as not their own, reality becomes something which is essentially nonhuman. Reification is a dehumanizing process in which inert, nonliving objects control people rather than the other way around. What was once a subject becomes an object and what was once an object becomes a subject. Under capitalism the market is a process which is not controlled by human intervention and is not oriented toward human need satisfaction, but is the stage on which the objects exercise their control over people. This process, which reduces social relationships to commodity relationships, is called commodity fetishism and it occurs because the human use of objects is no longer important; it is superseded by the use of money as a goal and as a medium of exchange. Reification and the fetishism of commodities indicate a transformation of the nature of human action. When these are present, human drama becomes puppet theater since the actors are not autonomous but are controlled externally. Carnegieism is an important element in the perpetuation of puppet theater as it assumes that the external controls on human behavior, such as the profit motive, are good, just, necessary, and/or absolute. At

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best, Carnegieism offers a badly disfigured form of human drama. Human intentionality, creativity, and rationality are everywhere subordinated to the externalized and reified cultural constructs governing the inverted form of human drama found in capitalist civil society. It remains the task of a critical dramaturgy to dereify the constructs and to aid in the transformation of the commodity relations into fully social relations. The alienation of capitalist society, which results inevitably from the capitalist mode of commodity production, forces upon persons a character, a set of roles, and masks that are not of their own making. It is the critical project to uncover the origins of the social relations of puppet theater under which people are forced to live and the obstacles to people living the lives of authentic human actors. The critical dramaturgical problematic is to expedite the social transition of humans from unconscious puppets to the conscious actors and authors of their own social drama.

The emancipated individual is an actor whose character is not imposed by the external forces of nature or of commodity fetishism. The autonomous society is one which is self-directed and not controlled by external directives from God, nature, or the laws of supply and demand. To the extent that the process of alienation obtains in any given socio-historical situation, the bearers of false roles and false characters wear masks with which to cover their authentic faces and thus present mystifying selves to the external world. Furthermore, those who exist under such conditions live by externally prepared and imposed scripts. At the present phase of the capitalist form of commodity production, Carnegieism is a veritable manual for masking faces for mystifying social relations. Carnegieism thus aids in the literal covering of society with a tissue of lies. And it does so with very good reasons. A society which masks selves and mystifies social relations is one that has something to hide; from the critical Marxist standpoint, the exploitation of labor, or the fraudulent reciprocity of labor and capital, is the hidden principle, the origin of the dramaturgical society reflected in Carnegieism.

A society based upon the usurpation and alienation of social power must disguise itself through the creation of fraudulent and mystifying scripts. Carnegieism, a false script, an externally prepared ideology, functions to occlude and perpetuate the existence of the alienated social relations by legitimating inauthenticity, subordinating all human values to profit and externalizing the guides for human action. The critique of Carnegieism, that puppet drama which precludes persons from authentically creating their own scripts, roles, and characters and which insists that they bear false roles and

masks, is part of the theoretical means for overcoming the processes which impose an alienated character upon the individual and society. A socialist revolution is the practical means by which the false drama is replaced by an authentic drama.

By instructing us to alienate our subjective meanings from our objective gestures, to interact strategically for the sole end of profit, and to falsely adopt vocabularies of motives, Carnegieism ensures that the heroic qualities of the oppressed will continue to be masked by the grotesque and that the mediocre personages of the corporate and bureaucratic stage managers will continue to falsely play heroic roles and wear heroic masks. The puppet theater of capitalist civil society is not damaged, it is strengthened by the absorption of the principles of Carnegieism into the collective consciousness.

What can and will overthrow the false dramaturgy to which Carnegieism speaks is the demand on the part of the oppressed for authentic, disalienated, and unmystified social relations. The clown, the fool, and the child have played this part in theater history. However, this demand is necessarily also a demand for a qualitative change in social relations at the level of everyday life. Carnegieism is an ideology that mystifies friendship and legitimates only unearned social influence. However, capitalism remains the basic problem and until it is overthrown and replaced by a more humane form of social relationships, ideologies such as Carnegieism will continue to mask selves and mystify social bonds. In critical theater, the Falstaffs, the Totos, and the Marx brothers can demystify pretense and mutual deception. For society as a whole, collective action toward a praxis society is necessary.

### DRAMATURGY AND THE REVOLT OF THE PUPPETS.

The possibility of the puppet coming to realize his/her own estrangement from the human condition, to reject the false solidarity and community offered by Carnegieism and to seek a more authentically social life-world is found in the objective consequences of the puppet's life. The drama of puppet theater is one characterized by misery, disappointment, and despair. The alienation and commodity fetishism of capitalist society which permeate social relations at the level of everyday life guarantee that attempts at human social, mutual endeavor always fail. As with other forms of magic, failure can be explained away. The explanation of failure is one of the functions of the power of positive thinking presented by Carnegieism. But year after year of false promise, false hope, false ambition, and false realization creates the epistemological break which enables the puppet to resist and transcend

such a destructive social life-world.

Against the insincere world of Carnegieism, against management science and the mass jockeying of each against all, there stand as beacons the real satisfaction of authenticity, the intersubjectivity, and mutual aid in those precious fragments of social life still insulated from the privatized, interpersonal dramaturgy offered by Carnegieism. Young people, newly approaching their full sociality, can see in great clarity the meaninglessness and falsehood of such lives. Often this clarity of perception is apprehended and expressed in the popular expletive, "bullshit." However, some young people become cynical and seek to fulfill self only through personal accumulation and power. For these, Carnegieism becomes a *modus operandi* for everyday interactions. The falsity and meaninglessness is legitimized by the accumulation or hope of accumulation of commodities and power. Most young people, upon appreciating the dilemma, learn to play the game in quite despair. Others attempt to repair mutilated selves through religions which promise better formats for social living. Many become rebels and, in the right circumstances, revolutionaries.

For the puppet, emancipation and the recapture of social life is prefigured in the story of Pinocchio. Created as a puppet by Geppeto, Pinocchio has all of the self-centered characterizations of a Carnegie pupil. Frustrated by life with Geppeto, Pinocchio ran away. The reunification of Geppeto and Pinocchio rendered both more congenial to the human condition albeit within the structure of parent-dominated family life. In the Collodi original, the emancipatory project is to become a good boy, the path is through love and the result is the denial of self, the very opposite of a well-trained Carnegie pupil (Wunderlich, 1979). While the reciprocity between self and other is always problematic to the situation, neither the privatized self of capitalist civil society masked by the cheap dramaturgy of Carnegieism, nor the collapsed self of Collodi speaking for all the anguished parents in the deteriorated world of childish greed bespeak an adequate resolution of the issues. Each points clearly to the need for emancipatory social change, but both offer only the safer politics of privatize change.

There exists a third response, that of revolt, which leads to a more human, more productive, more satisfying social life-world than either that legitimated by Carnegie or that envisioned by Collodi. The third response must be that of the pursuit of authentically socialist social relations. Human use, community, and a competent self system rather than accumulation, profit, and private disparity provide the new logic of an authentically socialist life-world. It is toward that social life-world and against the fraudulent,

privatized use of dramaturgy that this analysis and critique are aimed.

Dramaturgy is central to the human project. However, its use to mask interpersonal politics as in Carnegieism, or societal level politics, destroys its human character and potential. Ideally dramaturgy is used to celebrate life, community, and to renew cherished human relationships. Surprise, spectacle, staging, and awe do have the capacity to elevate humans from the mundane routine of everyday life, to separate the ordinary from the sacred, to refresh our collective memories of ancient wrongs righted and glorious deeds done in human service. To use this wondrous capacity for profit and private greed, to elevate Carnegieism and the world which it defends is a pathetic sight. That such a privatized dramaturgy joins with other forms of ugliness to subvert the human condition is all the more repugnant. Dramaturgy must be put to services more important than that of selling cars, beers, politicians, or false friendships.

It is clear that dramaturgy can contribute to alienation and human oppression. It is also clear that dramaturgy can be oriented to the human project of opening new possibilities, new insights on the present, and new ways to create and enjoy life and society. These uses of dramaturgy are not foreclosed by capitalism and its linkage of dramaturgy to profit concerns. This linkage, as expressed in Carnegieism, does cheapen, trivialize, and degrade dramaturgy to a huckster's craft. This degeneration of dramaturgy points to the original meaning of the word, "profane." To reduce something to the everyday routine of capitalist civil society and to use it for private purposes is a profanity. Carnegieism profanes dramaturgy and, thus, cheapens human life.

It creates a puppet theater false to the promise and delight of friendship, sympathy, sincerity, and honesty. It is a facsimile of social life and a cartoon of success. Such a theater cries out for rebellion. Such a theater is a symptom of a pathological society. Such a dramaturgy is a warning, not an invitation.

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