

The Rights of Squatters

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Sample of Content:

A treatise on behalf of those without the wealth of the world or the custom of the higher class.

Content:

"The finder of something which the owner was probably sorry to lose, cannot take it up with the intention of withholding it from the owner when he comes to inquire. But when the owner does not appear, the finder has a right to retain it for himself."

-- Samuel Von Pufendorf, "The Rights and Duties of Man and Citizen," Book 1, Chapter 13

I had always believed, before I was adoringly acquainted with the philosophy of Humanitarianism, Rationalism, and justice, that squatting ought to be a right, and not a privilege. To see so many vacant houses, standing side by side like disease, and to hear of so many unemployed and so many houseless as though they were the worst lot of humanity -- to see the present state of conditions as they exist, I had always believed that squatting is a right. On the one hand, there is an army of unemployed, houseless, starving, cold, freezing, without even the least sympathetic touch of humanity, not reaching out because of their pride, and they exist in the multitudes. And nobody can be blamed other than megacorporations, whose assets exist in the trillions. Trillions of dollars, I say! As a close friend of mine tells me, in New York City, they can invest to have enormous television sets sitting on the sidewalk, yet every apartment is infested with vermin and cockroaches. We have delapidated buildings, beggars on the street, homeless children without even enough clothing to pass the decency laws. All this misery, this poverty, and this crime! Oh, and of crime! What shall I say of it! When men are grown up in an environment where everyone around gathers their paycheck in the form of a possessed wallet or a confiscated purse, where their fathers are robbers and members of thieves guilds. Should we expect the children to grow up any differently? Should you take a child from the ghetto, and honestly ask him that he will grow up to be the CEO of a megacorporation, only that the megacorporation will be one that exploits and does nothing but destroy the environment and violate the rights of indigenous peoples!?

Oh, what destructive, foul, cruel world has been wrought by that thing which we have called greed, that interest of a few to generate wealth!

Our children are raised in this environment, our adolescents grow up in these schools, drugs become a common part of life. Crime, drugs, poverty, misery, these are not things that are common parts of just life. These are common parts of OUR LIFE. It is something that we must deal with EVERYDAY. It is not something that we can escape.

Let us speak of crime. No man, who has held virtue as a great thing, who has described justice as the most blessed of all things, no man will ever condone theft. I agree. There is nothing more unjust theft. That is to say, there is nothing more cruel, thoughtless, and heartless than to take from one man what he has earned through his hard, sweating labors. I admit all of this. We are all in agreement here. But, there is something that must be considered beyond this.

Then, consider a child who is born in the ghetto. Imagine that he has no father, imagine that his mother is a crack-cocaine addict. Imagine that his only education is avoiding truancy officers and breaking into cars to steal CDs and coins. Imagine that he turns fourteen years old. At this age, he starts selling crack-cocaine. He starts selling reefer in the halls of a school that he never attended for education. Imagine that he falls in love with a beautiful girl, but she's of a different color. He takes her dinner, and his enemies decide to deliver a surprise. He is left there crying, holding her bleeding body, thinking of what it was like for his mother to read his stories in bed before she became addicted, thinking of the beautiful color of her eyes before she was lying lifeless in his arms. At the same time that he feels the death of her body, he feels the life of her memory, and he refuses to let go. The drivebay was enough to break everything he thought he knew about life.

Now let's consider another child. Consider someone who is born in the wealthiest of families. He goes to school. He meets friends. And among the students, he takes a particular liking to a beautiful girl. He believes, in the sincerity of his heart, that the mascara, the jewelry, the genetics that placed certain features at certain places, was enough to make her beautiful in his light. He decides "to go steady" with her. He falls in love with her, and decides one day, in his college years, that he will marry her. She throws her arms around him, and tells him in all sincerity, that this is one of the most beautiful moments of her. They spend hours together, spending time and going through catalogues of marriage ceremonies. At the same time, the earlier pair is preparing their funeral. The ghetto boy never had a chance to propose to the one that he loved. All that he was allowed was to look at a face that an undertaker did his best to resurrect.

The ghetto child will continue his life, selling dope, and trying to get on welfare. All his life, he will be wearing a ring he obtained from a claw machine, and telling everyone that he got it from his lover. Disagree with him, and he will be incited to violence. He's walking down the street, selling crack and marijuana to everyone who has the green for it. The sidewalk is his turf. He feels the concrete underneath his feet as he goes further in his life, and almost for a moment, he feels that this will lead to the end of his life. A driveby comes by and he ducks. His crew his hit. Big G, Master Tar, Mister Kill, all of them go down. But with a keen eye, this one student of life ducks. All of his best friends are hit in the most fatal wounds, while he suffers a mere shot in the arm. Ambulance arrives. Not something that is at all odd in this neighborhood. He is patched up, while one of his friends is pronounced dead on the scene. By the time they all arrive at the hospital, he is the only one alive. On one sad rooftop watching some story, still scarred with a hospital patch, and drowned in tears, he puts a gun to the side of his head and pulls the trigger. He felt that, without friends who have helped him in every way, there is no point in life. With no family, there can be no life. This was his creed. He lived by it. He died by it.

Take the child whose home was a towering skyscraper. Imagine what he had to do. Imagine his life. He had to read the works that his father put to him. He had to put to studies that his tutor gave to him. He spent his time with useless physical exercises. All day, he was trained. He was turned into something. He was not an individual. He was turned into something by his superiors. As much as it pains my heart, I must say this: he was not much different than the ghetto child. No, he did not search for dinner in garbage can. No, he did not hold up liquor stores when he was drunk enough. No, he did none of that. For all of his life, he was trained that everything he does must have his father's consent. His life was very opposite of the ghetto child. No, no, no.... While the ghetto child had no father, the father of the corporate to-be CEO was overimposive. He does not demand that his son does all that he can, that he admire justice, that he gives some time to the moment of tranquility. No, the CEO father demands more than that. He demands that his son agrees to hate, that he looks the other way at injustice, that he has no remand for the goodness of mankind. Trying to console his position with friends, he finds that they all must suffer the same distress, that every parent who can will force his child to be the greatest that they can be. A doctor, an accountant, a lawyer, a banker, all these positions are forced on us, without our consent. All because adults have this ideal that they can mold the world in their own reflection.

So we find both of these children, the ghetto child and the CEO child, homeless, on the streets of the United States of America. It seems that the land of the free is also the land of the poverty and the land of the cruelty. We, as free and independent agents, have recognized our own rights, not by some old document, not by some sacred scrolls, not by some absurd and ridiculous religiion, but by the fact that WE ARE HUMAN, and as such, we deserve the right to be in control of our own lives.

There are empty buildings occupied by no person.

There are people with no place to live.

This is not a liberal or conservative matter. It is matter of justice.

Legalize squatting. And legalize it now.

THIS MATTERS TO US ALL

<http://www.punkerslut.com>

For Life,

Punkerslut (or Andy Carloff) has been writing essays and poetry on social issues which have caught his attention for several years. His website <http://www.punkerslut.com> provides a complete list of all of these writings. His life experience includes homelessness, squatting in New Orleans and LA, dropping out of high school, getting expelled from college for "subversive activities," and a myriad of other revolutionary actions.

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