

# counterfutures

LEFT THOUGHT AND PRACTICE AOTEAROA

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ISSUE 15 2024

*The Left after the 2023 Election*

*Sex Work against Work*

*The Rise of the Religious Right*

*Debt Abolition*

*Franco 'Bifo' Berardi*

*The Left TEU Network*

*Contesting Treaty Histories*

*The South Island Myth*

*On Gaza*

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# Contents Overview

## **A Punitive Turn**

SUE BRADFORD, JACK FOSTER & METIRIA TUREI

A reflection on the implications of the 2023 General Election for the Left.

## **'You Know What, It Is the Money': Sex Work and Anti-reproductivist Critique**

PEYTON BOND

An anti-reproductivist critique of the institution of work that brings the ideas of theorists such as Heather Berg and Kathi Weeks into conversation with the lived experience of sex workers in Aotearoa New Zealand.

## **The 'Religious Right' in the 2020 Aotearoa New Zealand General Election**

ISABELLA GREGORY

An analysis of the rise of the 'religious right', and the complicated relationship between religion and politics in Aotearoa New Zealand, during the 2020 General Election through a close reading of the policy platforms of the New Conservatives, One Party, Vision New Zealand, and Advance New Zealand.

## **Debt Abolition after the Crash**

WARWICK TIE

An outlining of the possibilities for a national movement on debt abolition that recognises both household debt and the socio-historical debt accrued to Indigenous, working-class, and other peoples.

## **Futurism without a Future**

FRANCO 'BIFO' BERARDI

An interview with the renowned Italian autonomist Marxist philosopher, who discusses his role in the *operaismo* movement, his intellectual and personal relationships with Félix Guattari and Jean Baudrillard, and how psychoanalytic theory might help us examine political events today.

## **Austerity, Precarity, and Tertiary Union Strategy: Notes from The Left TEU Network**

THE LEFT TEU NETWORK

A critique of the Tertiary Education Union (TEU) prior to, during, and beyond the 2023 'Stop the Cuts' campaign across the tertiary education sector in Aotearoa New Zealand, and a call to build a more politically active and coordinated national union movement.

## **A Nation Still in Search of a New History**

EMMA GATTEY

A review essay on Bain Attwood's *'A Bloody Difficult Subject': Ruth Ross, te Tiriti o Waitangi and the Making of History*, presenting a detailed overview of historiographical debates about Treaty histories in Aotearoa New Zealand and the possible directions these histories might take in the future.

## **Selling Out in the High Country**

JENNIFER LAWN

A review of Eleanor Catton's latest novel *Birnam Wood*, which situates it within a revision of the South Island myth that has occupied a privileged place in settler aesthetic traditions.

## **The Eclipse**

NEIL VALLELLY

A theoretical intervention, in discussion with the ideas of Achille Mbembe and Judith Butler, on the intertwined relationship between democracy and violence that is currently playing out in Israel's siege on Gaza.

# Author Biographies

## FRANCO 'BIFO' BERARDI

Lives in Bologna, Italy. His books include *And: Phenomenology of the End* (Semiotext(e), 2014), *Heroes* (Verso, 2015), and *Futurability* (Verso, 2017). *Quit Everything* (Repeater Books) will be published in August 2024.

## PEYTON BOND

Teaching Fellow at the University of Otago, where she completed her PhD in Gender Studies in 2023. Her primary research focuses on gendered labour, post-work imaginaries, and feminist abolitionist politics, particularly around work, prisons, and 'the family'.

## SUE BRADFORD

Community-based activist, educator and researcher. Currently working as Coordinator for Kōtare Research and Education for Social Change in Aotearoa. Former Green MP (1999–2009). Completed a public policy PhD at AUT (2014).

## JACK FOSTER

Completed a PhD in sociology from Victoria University of Wellington. He works in the trade union movement and is the former editor of *Counterfutures*.

## EMMA GATTEY

(Pākehā) A PhD candidate in History at the University of Cambridge and a Research Fellow for Te Takarangi. Her research focuses on publishing collaborations between Pākehā feminists and wāhine Māori in late twentieth-century Aotearoa New Zealand.

## ISABELLA GREGORY

Completed degrees in religious studies and classical performance at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington. A former Fulbright Scholar to the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University, and she is currently pursuing an MSt in the Study of Religions at Oxford University on an Ertegun Scholarship.

#### JENNIFER LAWN

Associate Professor in English at Massey University, Auckland. Her research interests focus on narrative genres studied within social contexts, including settler studies and Gothic. She is the author of *Neoliberalism and Cultural Transition in New Zealand Literature, 1984–2008* (Lexington 2016).

#### THE LEFT TEU NETWORK

A group of Tertiary Education Union members dedicated to fostering a struggle-based model of unionism. The authors of the article in this issue are Matt Russell, Leon Salter, Ani White, Warwick Tie, Amal Samaha, Tom Smith, Toby Boraman, and Joshua Zepke.

#### WARWICK TIE

Teaches sociology at Massey University, exploring how a range of disorienting features in individual and collective identity both sustains capitalist social relations and supplies resources for their subversion.

#### METIRIA TUREI

Former Co-Leader of the Green Party and Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the University of Otago.

#### NEIL VALLELLY

Lecturer in sociology at the University of Otago. He is author of *Futilitarianism: Neoliberalism and the Production of Uselessness* (2021) and co-author of the forthcoming *Governing Migration at the Edge of Empire*.