

RAIM GLOBAL DIGEST

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1,013 Afghan Civilians Killed in First Half of 2009

A U.N. mission has reported that 1,013 civilians have been killed in combat in Afghanistan during the first half of the year, up 24% from the same period in 2008. Civilian deaths have not



been restricted to Afghanistan. On January 23rd, less than three days after his inauguration, President Barack Obama ordered a drone attack into Pakistan which locals say killed three civilians. Much of the world has been bamboozled by the Obama

presidency. However, the people of Afghanistan and Pakistan are finding out that Obama is just another imperialist butcher. They likely won't be the last as the Obama administration continues to redirect the "War on Terror." The people of the Third World will not take such aggression lying down. This past July was the the bloodiest month for occupation forces in Afghanistan since the start of the October 2001 invasion.

1. <http://www.azstarnet.com/sn/related/303214>
2. http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/news/world/us_and_americas/article5575883.ece
[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/08/22/1013-afghan-civilians-killed-in-first-half-of-2009/>]

9.21.2009
Issue 5

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Pigs Deny Ward Churchill Job and Damages

In a recent ruling Chief Denver District Judge Larry Naves ruled against Ward Churchill's request to be reinstated to Colorado University and against financial damages. This ruling is a contrast to the jury verdict in April that concluded that Churchill was illegally removed from his position for his political beliefs. The ruling gives regents of the University a free hand to fire whomever they want for their political beliefs. Churchill's attorney David Lane stated:

"It's an extremely rare thing for a judge to throw out a jury verdict — that's big, that doesn't happen... Here it's being done at the expense of the Constitution of the United States of America, and it's really a tragedy. It sends the message to the public of, 'Oh, jury verdicts. Who cares?'"

Churchill lost his job after attention was drawn to an essay that he had written following the

9/11 attacks. In his essay, Churchill called those who died in the twin towers "little Eichmanns." Thus Churchill compared the technocrats who worked in the Trade Center



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maintaining the US empire with technocrats in Nazi Germany. Churchill's point is hardly radical. Churchill's point comes from the work of Hannah Arendt's account of the trial of Adolph Eichmann. The Nazi bureaucrat Eichmann, according to Arendt, was a banal individual whose evil was not motivated by strong ideological beliefs, but rather by conformism and careerism. The evil of empire is made possible by a large strata of ordinary people who contribute to the evil of the system by staffing its bureaucracy. Like the verdicts at Nuremberg, Churchill's point is that "I was just doing my job, just following orders" is not an acceptable defense for evil. Like the leaders of empire, the functionaries of empire are also responsible for its crimes. There is collective

responsibility for the crimes of empire that go beyond the small circle of ideologists and figureheads who make policy.

The ruling is an unhappy ending to a long witch hunt. The ruling is a blow to academic freedom.

Source:

1. <http://www.dailycamera.com/news/2009/jul/07/ward-churchill-job-university-colorado-boulder/>

[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/07/11/msh-pigs-deny-ward-churchill-job-and-damages/>]

Movie Review: G.I. Joe

G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra is a Hollywood action movie packed with CGI-enhanced martial arts; explosions; sci-fi hi-tech weapons; chase scenes and topped off with near superhuman 'good' and 'bad guys.' Typical of Hollywood-type action movies, the plot centers around preventing the bad guys from attaining global dominance. G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra, like another summer blockbuster, Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen, is one of many movies that promotes militarism and by extension imperialism.

The story opens with a weapons dealer, McCullen (later revealed as bad guy, Destro), showing off a new high-tech weapon, the Nanomite warhead. The weapon, loosely based on emerging technologies, is said to be able to destroy "any and all material in its path." The first to procure this new weapon is the United States. The main protagonist, Duke, is charged with leading a NATO force to deliver four of the warheads. The audience is never challenged to ask why the U.S. wants or gets this weapon, let alone four of them, nor what would happen once it gets them. Instead the plot predictably begins when the warheads are stolen by the 'bad guy' Cobra force.

Unlike the G.I. Joe toys and cartoons, the new live-action G.I. Joe force is multinational, consisting of the "top men and

women of the best military units of the world." Prior to the theft of the Nanomite warheads, it is unclear what purpose such an elite military force might serve. The two male protagonists who join the G.I. Joe force after the start of the movie, Duke and Ripchord, seem more

interested in running around in suits which give them superhuman strength and speed than serving any humanitarian or even patriotic ends. At the beginning of the movie, Ripchord expresses interest in joining the U.S. Airforce simply so he can pilot military jets.

As the movie develops, the G.I. Joe force must stop the Cobra from destroying

Washington D.C., Beijing and Moscow. The leader of the Cobra force is the Cobra Commander, a former friend of Duke's who wants to use the Nanomite technology to attain global power. The Cobra Commander is aided by Destro the weapons dealer, a small army of mind-controlled fearless soldiers, and the Baroness, a former love interest of Duke's who is also mind-controlled throughout most of the movie.

In the real world, where both high-tech weapons capable of small and vast destruction and various elite, multinational, sometimes private military units exist, bad guys like the Cobras don't. In the real world, millions of



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Obama: More troops, More Imperialism, More of the Same

The election of Barack Obama as president was promised as bringing a different direction to U.S. foreign policy. But as recent news shows, Obama will continue U.S. imperialist policies, for one by increasing the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan. In the beginning of his term this year he kept on Bush family crony Robert M. Gates as Secretary of "Defense." Gates announced recently the American military will increase the number of overall troops in service for these new imperialist wars. Contributing to this increase are the American people, looking for jobs in the faltering economy, taking on military positions.

On Monday July 20 "Defense" Secretary Gates announced a "temporary" increase of the size of the army up to 22,000 troops. This increase is to meet the "persistent pace" of operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, according to Gates (1).

The increase is to occur over three years. In the end, the size of the army will increase to 569,000 active duty soldiers. Previously, in 2007, Gates had given a goal of an expansion to 547,000 soldiers. This previous target was reached in May.

There are currently 130,000 American troops in Iraq, not including mercenaries and contractors. Also, by the end of 2009, there will be 68,000 troops in Afghanistan. Obama's promised removal of troops from Iraq has been carried out at a snail's pace, at best. This removal is really a shift, or "phased redeployment," of more troops from Iraq into Afghanistan. Obama is not pulling back American Empire, so much as shifting its focus. In fact, only combat forces will be withdrawn from Iraq by August 2010, and other troops will be scheduled to remain at least until December 2011 (2). Most withdrawals are not even scheduled until March 2010. In fact there have been no troop withdrawals since Obama came into office. In addition, Gates expressed concern that future U.S. operations in Iraq and Afghanistan would not have enough boots on the ground. Military advisors and senators are advocating more troops be sent to Afghanistan than originally planned (3).

Some have pointed to some of Obama's policies, like the defunding of the F-22 fighter

program, as a sign of Obama's dovish credentials. However, the defunding of this single program happened in the larger context of increasing the size of the military, including increasing funding for other fighter jets (4).

Despite what American pseudo-leftists say, to the world's majority it does not matter who would have become U.S. president. The United States continues its tradition of militaristic policies. All Obama changed was perception. American public opinion tired of the war in Iraq not for any principled anti-imperialist reasons but because the war was becoming too costly; in American money, American lives, and to America's global image. This last one was a key, for under Bush world opinion of the U.S. was lower than at any point in history. The jingoistic superpatriotism represented by McCain-Palin carried less appeal as the U.S. was being wound down



in the resistance in Iraq. Obama came along to shift world opinion of America to a more positive view. Americans also felt better in their relationship to the world under Obama, even though there has been no change to the foreign policies that enrich all Americans. With a more positive world opinion, Americans are more willing now to embrace American imperialism, even joining its military to defend it.

The New York Times also notes that the Pentagon, without the aid of conscription, will increase the size of its army by traditional means of recruiting and retention. Since the advent of the all-volunteer armed forces over 30 years ago the military has relied on recruiting to fill its ranks. Most have to be actively recruited.

The Iraq War made military service during a sustained military conflict unpopular. The military could no longer count on those enlisting for easy college money or signing bonuses, obtained without leaving their bases and incurring risk (5). Even the National Guard, with less commitment, suffered unmet recruiting goals (6). Recruiters talked about having "rolled doughnuts," slang for going an entire month without recruiting anyone.

Also, antiwar activists, dealing with an all-volunteer army, took on the strategy of counter-recruitment to symbolically hurt the war effort. It met with mixed success in deterring some young people from the military (7), with many

students removing their names from military recruiting lists that schools are required to give (8). Military recruiters became more aggressive in their efforts. But the recent recession has helped enlistment and re-enlistment.

In mentioning Gates' proposed increase of troops this year, the New York Times also mentions that recruitment has been aided by those looking for a job in the recession, and troops reenlisting beyond their scheduled terms due to the job market. Another source says military recruitment was up 9 percent from 2008, and potential soldiers are including not only those out of high school but those with bachelors and master degrees, looking for a steady paycheck without fears of layoffs (9).

Overall, the opposition to the Iraq War in the U.S. increased not because of any principled opposition to its military committing atrocities for profit, but because it was seen as too costly and unwinnable for Americans. Even with the global recession Americans are still better off than the great majority of the world. They still willingly join its military to further imperialist aggression in order to objectively keep their privileged position in the world.

The U.S. is the principal global empire. It must assert itself militarily around the globe. To do this, it needs warm bodies for its never ending military adventures. Since 1900 the U.S. has continuously engaged in military confrontations of some kind or other nearly every year since. This will continue to be the case for the next hundred years, or until U.S. imperialism is defeated.

Domestic opposition will not stop aggression against the Third World. The liberal anti-war movement came to a halt with the end of the Bush administration. Most in the anti-war movement swallowed Obama's lies. Progressives in the U.S. are deluding themselves if they still think the Obama administration will initiate major changes in U.S. foreign policy.

The masses of the Third World are also deluded, if they buy into Obama's reinvention of Amerika. After all, recent polls show that Obama has improved the image of the U.S. in the Third World. The reality is that Obama and Bush are just two sides of the same imperialist coin. Given the promise of a paycheck Americans in their self-interest will help in the effort to expand the war machine. Americans have a material interest in maintaining imperialism. They are the ones who benefit, after all. The masses of the world should not rely on opposition inside Amerika to stop

imperialist wars. If imperialism is to be smashed, then it will be the Third World masses who wield the hammer. If First-Worlders support humanity they will side with the Third World masses in this endeavor.

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(3) Bumiller, Elizabeth. "With Boots in Iraq, Minds Drift to Afghanistan." New York Times. July 31, 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/01/world/middleeast/01memo.html>

(4). Drew, Christopher. "Obama Wins Crucial Senate Vote on F-22." New York Times. July 21, 2009. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/07/22/business/22defense.html>

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(6). Moniz, Dave. "For Guard Recruiter, a Tough Sell." USA Today. www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2005-03-07-recruits-cover-x.htm. Accessed 3/8/2005.

(7). Some examples of earlier counter-recruitment strategies are here: Weill-Greenberg, Elizabeth. "Calling All Soldiers: Military Recruiters Face Resistance From Young Anti-War Activists." New York Amsterdam News. February 24, 2005. Accessed from www.commondreams.org 3/8/2005; and Hampson, Rick. "'Counter-recruiters' Shadowing the Military." USA Today. www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2005-03-07-counter-recruiters.x.htm. Accessed 3/8/2005.

(8). "Students Want Off Recruiting Lists." Toward Freedom. November 16, 2005. <http://towardfreedom.com/home/content/view/667/78/> Accessed 11/21/2005.

(9). "Slumping Economy Helping With Military Recruitment." <http://www.wjactv.com/news/20277281/detail.html>

[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/08/22/obama-more-troops-more-imperialism-more-of-the-same/>]

people die from starvation and malnutrition, not violent conspiracies to usurp global power. The system responsible for these deaths, imperialism, also creates conditions whereby oppressors join the military for the 'thrill' of using destructive weapons, flying fast and

Transformers 2: Revenge of the Fallen create ridiculous fictional stories in which imperialist militaries are portrayed not as the protectors of global class structure, but as playing a positive role for humanity. 'Ordinary,' relatable characters such as Duke and Ripchord, who, in real life would play a mundane role in a profoundly awful system, are seen as both more significant and depoliticized: they're "in the middle of the action" and supposedly saving the world. Amerikan and First World audiences, who are not routinely subjected to imperialist threats and aggression, might find themselves envious of such adventures and abilities. And whereas First World movie-goers, people who economically benefit from imperialist militarism, can't join or cheer for the G.I. Joe force in real life, they conveniently can the U.S. military, NATO, Blackwater (now called Xe), the IDF and various other imperialist military organizations.

[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/08/15/movie-review-g-i-joe-the-rise-of-cobra/>]

The RAIM Global Digest is the newsletter of the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement. Sent out bi-monthly to quaterly, it features our reporting and analysis of global, national and local events and public announcements. For now, the RAIM Global Digest is the guardianship of RAIM-Denver. Comments, requests for more info, submissions and announcements can be sent to raim-d@hush.com. For more info, check out www.AntiImperialism.wordpress.com.

blowing things up. However, these people are not heroes.

Today, in the real world, most state militaries and elite multinational forces serve to maintain the imperialist system which starves millions. Taken out of the context of imperialism and global class systems, there is no need for elite military units. Action movies such as G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra and

Amerika's Fierce Appetite

The U.S.-based organization Feeding America claims that 1 in 8 Americans "suffer from hunger." The First Worldist advocacy group warns, "You may know someone who is hungry and not even realize it." By contrast, in the Third World, hunger is easy to spot: malnourished, boney bodies, and swollen bellies. In Amerika, it is understandably difficult to pick out the hungry amidst the crush of fleshy figures.

Hunger, like every other social indicator, is defined differently by First Worldists. An Amerikan "suffers" from hunger, according to the USDA, if they feel "hungry but did not eat" or "cut [the] size of meal or skipped meal." In other words, one eighth of all Americans may have experienced a grumbly tummy in the last month or so — perhaps that sensation is gas

produced by the many meals not skipped, or the Big Mac without fries. Such is the "science" of the First Worldist.

Amerika is "hungry" indeed. So hungry in fact that 66% of Americans are overweight or obese. More than half the population has a medical condition due to "hunger." However, it isn't malnutrition, it's increased risk of heart disease, diabetes, and stroke, conditions often associated with overeating. The vast majority of Americans prefer potato chips and television to any sort of physical activity. So is it any surprise that there is a conspicuous lack of Amerikan children with distended bellies and exposed ribcages? Hunger, according to First Worldists, is a psychological state: "I didn't eat as much as I wanted today!" "I had to skip lunch once last week!" "I just ate but I'm still

hungry!" Such is the song and dance for advocates of First Worlders. By contrast, hunger in the Third World is a matter of life and death.

The World Health Organization recommends a minimum intake of 2600 calories a day. Those in the Third World consume, on average, 2100 calories; First World peoples approximately 3700. Thus, by a more objective standard of measure, hunger is virtually non-existent in the First World. And, by contrast, most Third World people experience hunger as a way of life.

The distribution of hunger in the world is yet more confirmation that the principal contradiction is between the First and the Third World. Capitalism-imperialism is a world system that generates vast inequalities between countries. Under the current world system a few wealthy countries live comfortable lives at the expense of the vast majority in the poor countries. To end hunger

It's Right to Rebel Against Amerika's Education

In Amerika 'education' means social programming. It means you must learn to conform to Amerika's fucked up values and norms. It means instead of learning to think critically or independently, you are taught to be another Amerikan. This is the 'education' in store for you.

According to Amerika, your job is to fall in line and accept your 'education.' Your job is to become an Amerikan. Everything Amerika teaches you is part of this demand. For example, you are not taught the history of those trampled by Amerika. You are not taught about the nations exterminated, enslaved, attacked and exploited by Amerika. Instead you are taught history from the perspective of the oppressor. You are taught from the perspective of Amerika.

If you see through this rotten system, if you want to be more than another mindless Amerikan oppressor, if you want to build a new, fundamentally better world, you need more than the 'education' forced on you. You need a real education. You need an education which embraces the best aspirations of humanity and is rooted in the cause of the oppressed. You need a revolutionary education. Amerika's prison schools cannot give you a revolutionary education. They can only make you a reactionary Amerikan, complacent in the tyranny Amerika projects on the people of the

for the vast majority of humanity in the Third World means turning the tables, including the diner table, on the fat, lazy First World.

Smash the obese empire that feeds on the world's hungry!

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<http://www.ers.usda.gov/briefing/foodsecurity/labels.htm>

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/fastats/overwt.htm>

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<http://wilderdom.com/games/descriptions/WorldMeal.html>

<http://www.newint.org/issue225/facts.htm>

[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/08/31/amerika-as-fierce-appetite/>]

world.

If you want a revolutionary education, you must take up this task yourself. You must arm yourself intellectually. You must gain critical knowledge to counter the dominant thinking forced upon you. It means looking into and learning things outside of school, forming your own thoughts independent of what Amerika expects you to become.

Fortunately, the Revolutionary Anti-Imperialist Movement is here to help. Our constantly growing body of revolutionary texts (covering topics such as political economy, culture, current events, reports on actions) makes RAIM a great resource for rebellious youth. Additionally, the core group operating in Denver provides a group-model in which others can participate in and continue their revolutionary, intellectual development. Quit waiting around for Amerika to program you, start educating yourself!

It's Right to Rebel Against Amerika and its Bullshit 'Education!'

Stand up with the oppressed, get with RAIM!

[<http://raimd.wordpress.com/2009/01/28/its-right-to-rebel-against-amerikas-education/>]

Movie Review: District 9 (MSH)

District 9 is a faux documentary that follows the arrival of an alien ship and its, eventual, departure decades later. The film opens with a huge alien ship that hovers above Johannesburg, South Africa. When humans board the ship, they find aliens living in squalor who do not know how to operate the ship. Some humans speculate that the aliens who knew how to control the ship died from a disease. Only “worker bee” aliens remain. The aliens are brought to an “aliens-only” camp outside of Johannesburg, “District 9.” The camp is managed by Multinational United (MNU), which is also a defense contractor that uses its position to acquire and back engineer alien technology. Due to a general hostility to the aliens by the humans, MNU embarks on the project of relocating the aliens to a more remote, worse location. During the process of relocation, head bureaucrat Wikus van der Merwe (Sharlto Copley) is exposed to an alien chemical that begins to transform him into an alien-human hybrid. As he is transformed, Wikus is forced to experience the oppression that aliens face everyday. He becomes hunted by both MNU and by Nigerian gangs because exposure to the alien chemical has allowed him to be able to use alien technology, especially weaponry that humans are normally unable to use. MNU and the gangs want to unlock the secret of how Wikus is able to use the alien technology. Wikus is forced to leave human society and flees to District 9. He eventually becomes allied with Christopher, one of the last remaining intelligent aliens who has engineering knowledge enough to fix and fly the alien ship. Christopher offers to turn Wikus back into a human, a process that will take three years, if Wikus helps him recover technology that MNU has confiscated. Christopher needs the confiscated technology in order to fix the ship, fly home, and bring help to rescue the other aliens.

District 9 is a conscious attempt at a moral critique of racism. It is no accident that the background for the film is Johannesburg, a former center of the South African apartheid state. The title of the film is a play on “District 6,” which was an inner-city residential area of Cape Town that was declared “whites-only” in 1966. 60,000 resident Africans were forced out of District 6 and relocated 25 kilometers away to Cape Flats. The film draws the viewer’s attention to “no alien” and “human only” signs posted throughout the fictional cityscape — an obvious reference to legal, codified white supremacy of apartheid and Jim Crow.

The film’s depiction of life in the refugee camp, even though it is populated by aliens, has a realism that draws on experience of oppression faced by real peoples such as African or Palestinian refugees. The camp could be any camp in the Third World, the only difference is that it is populated by aliens. It is a shanty town where the residents are imprisoned, discriminated against, and lead cruel lives without a future. The camp authorities are shown invading the camp with a military force, busting heads, tearing down homes, punishing the residents. The military force is referred to by the MNU bureaucrats as the “cowboys,” making the aliens “Indians” and making the camp, District 9, an “Indian” reservations.

The phony legalism that imperialism uses to justify itself is depicted in the film. In the conquest of the North American West, treaty after treaty was signed and broken by the White settler state. Similarly, in the world of District 9, the MNU insists on gathering signatures in the form of alien hand prints on eviction notices prior to sending in the military. The film makes the point that the aliens do not know what they are signing, since they do not read English. Or, in other cases, MNU gets the aliens to sign their evictions by bribing them with cat food, which the aliens are addicted to. The film’s fictional account reflects the real practice of imperialism’s use of drugs against populations: opium against the Chinese, alcohol against the Indigenous in North America, etc.

Frantz Fanon discussed the oppressor’s need to characterize the oppressed as animalistic. However, it is not enough to just characterize the other’s behavior as bestial. Rather, the characterization extends to sensation itself. According to the colonizer, the colonized smell bad, the colonized sound and appear as animals. Expressions like “the smell of the Latin quarter” and portrayals of the colonized, be they Irish, African, or Indian, as monkeys document this dimension of oppression. Similarly, the fictional aliens smell bad, look like bugs, etc. The aliens are despairingly called “prawns.” This animality also extends to sexuality. The cover-story the media presents to the public to explain Wikus’ strange transformation into a hybrid is that he has had sex with an alien. Thus, to violate taboos, miscegenation, makes one an animal, literally. Thus, for the oppressor, to have sex with the oppressed is to become an animal.

Even though the film attempts to

advance a criticism of racism, nonetheless, the film's depiction of the Nigerians is one of crude stereotypes. The Nigerian mafias that run the illegal operations inside the camp are portrayed in comically racist ways. They are portrayed as stupid, crazed, superstitious megalomaniacs. For example, an African shaman tells the Nigerian gang leader that in order to gain the power to access alien technology, to use the alien weapons, he must eat the aliens. So, he chops off alien arms in order to consume them. When he sees that Wikus can use alien technology, he becomes obsessed with hunting him down in order to eat him. Thus, the film portrays Nigerians, a real, oppressed people, as a nation of cannibals.

The representation of Wikus, before his transformation, is a representation of what Hannah Arendt called the banality evil. Wikus wears a sweater vest, carries a clipboard, and loves his wife. He is an ordinary MNU bureaucrat carrying out his job. He is a cog in an evil machine. He is what Ward Churchill refers to as a "a little Eichmann." Wikus is the ordinary imperialist, the ordinary "good German" or "good Amerikan." Wikus is not a Hitler figure, obsessed with conquering the world or exterminating aliens. He is caught up in his own provincial and consumerist world, his job and suburban life, the consequences of which happen to be the oppression of others. Wikus' banality extends throughout the film, even through his transformation from villain to hero.

Wikus is a reluctant hero. After being transformed into an alien-hybrid, Wikus is forced into an alliance with the aliens to help them fix their ship. Even after experiencing the prejudice and oppression of the aliens, his motives are never really anything other than opportunist: he helps the aliens in order to be changed back into a human. Wikus never has a cathartic or decisively redeeming moment where he comes to morally stand with the oppressed against the oppressor. Thus, Wikus is not a nation traitor by choice. He is not a John Brown who has consciously bound his own future to that of the oppressed. Rather, he is motivated by his desire to return to the safe, comfortable world of the oppressor, his suburban life and his attractive wife.

In the end, the film's solutions to oppression remain individualistic. The aliens do

not end their oppression through collective action. The fate of tens of thousands of alien refugees hinge on only two protagonists: Wikus and Christopher. In this respect, the film is a story about individual heroics, not a film about collective action. The masses do not make history, heroes do. In this respect, the film does not go beyond the limits of bourgeois individualism.

Is the depiction of oppression in District 9 beneficial or not? On one level, District 9 asks and answers the question: How would

humanity treat alien refugees? The film's answer: They would be treated as human refugees often are, very badly. However, it is important to ask why it is that an audience of Americans can feel sympathy for a fictional, oppressed people in a fictional setting, but care very little about the actual oppression of real peoples. Americans care very much that fictional aliens are oppressed but care very little that real Palestinians are, for example. Even though District 9 is inspired by the real world oppression of



Africans, Blacks, Palestinians, Indigenous peoples, even Jews (there is a scene where the aliens are put through Dr. Mengele-type experiments), Americans who watch the film, on the whole, care very little about real oppressed groups. The American viewer cares more about fictional oppressed groups than real ones, even when the fiction is an allegory of real oppression. Material interest may play a role here. Declaring oneself in solidarity with an oppressed group that is fictional gives one a feeling of moral superiority without having any real world consequences. By contrast, recognizing the oppression of real peoples, Third World peoples, does have the consequence of threatening the imperial privilege of the moviegoer. Does a film like District 9 heighten sympathies toward the oppression of peoples in the real world or does it merely provide an escapist space where the imperialist, First World, viewer can feel good about himself without actually challenging real-world imperialism?

[<http://monkeysmashesheaven.wordpress.com/2009/08/22/review-district-9-directed-by-neill-blomkamp-2009/>]