

ON THE DISSEMINATION OF LIBERTARIAN CONCEPTS: REFLECTIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

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AND PROPERTY



**DAVID
MARSLAND**



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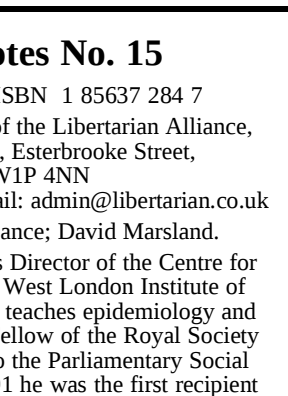
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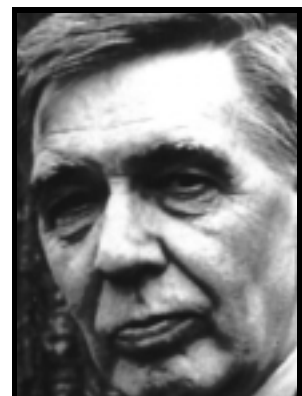
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ON THE DISSEMINATION OF LIBERTARIAN CONCEPTS: REFLECTIONS AND PROPOSALS FOR ACTION

DAVID MARSLAND

Axel Davies' recent Tactical Note (*Why I Give Libertarian Books to Libraries*, Tactical Notes No 14, Libertarian Alliance, 1995) struck me as a very valuable contribution to the practical literature of liberty. If his advice is followed even by a small number of his readers, the availability of honest, challenging ideas and arguments to the British people will be increased significantly.

His paper may also serve a further useful purpose by stimulating elaborations and extensions of his analysis. This note has grown out of my immediate reflections on his interesting paper. It is intended to lay a basis for systematic analysis of the dissemination of libertarian ideas in modern Britain. This in its turn might after due discussion be used in the development of a concerted practical strategy (if this is not an anti-libertarian notion!) for strengthening the impact of libertarian concepts on social policy and social life more generally over the next ten years.

The collapse, save alas in China, of "actually existing socialism", and the radically revisionist transformation of most socialist parties in the Free World which the death of socialism has produced, should have inaugurated a confident efflorescence of libertarian ideas in the nineteen nineties. We have so far been sadly disappointed.

Thus, the market is under attack from all sides, with best-seller status for Will Hutton's shoddy book *The State We're In* just the most sickening example. The Labour Party is high in the opinion polls despite promises of authoritarian communitarianism and threats of political correction all round. Eco-collectivists get stronger by the day. And neither of the major parties will allow genuinely open debate about the threats to liberty posed by the new Bismarckian Europe. The need for libertarian ideas could not be more urgent (Lerner, 1991).

THE MARKET IN IDEAS

As Axel Davies has shown, access to libertarian books is crucial, but this is only one small part of the story. We need to consider the whole structure of the market in ideas.

This involves analysis of the product, the production process, the supply-demand-price matrix, the distribution sys-

tem, the consumption process, and the ideological underpinnings of the whole system (Machlup, 1984). In the following pages I sketch out some preliminary reflections on each of these elements of the ideas market.

THE PRODUCT

Books are certainly crucial. They have a status and a permanence which entirely justifies — provided we include fiction along with documentary — Davies' emphasis on their role in the dissemination of ideas. But we must also attend to other ideological products, including journals, magazines, and newspapers; radio and television; conferences and other meetings; and the new electronic network media.

Each of these products may transmit an exclusively libertarian message, a wholly socialist, collectivist, and statist message, or some mix of the two. We need to know — in relation to each product category (for example books or television), in relation to each brand of each product category (for example Open University books or BBC television), in relation to major genres within each product category (for example sociology textbooks or television newscasting), and in relation to key instances of each (such as Abercrombie and Warde's much used introduction to sociology (1994) or the 9.00 News — just what the balance of ideology is, and the extent of openness to alternative and dissident ideas evinced by each of them. We need a running, annotated catalogue of all relevant ideological products and their libertarian/authoritarian inclinations.

This is manifestly a massive undertaking, but it is fortunately available in part already (for example Tame, 1980; Marsland, 1988, 1992, 1994), and libertarians should seek to continue it and to extend it into uncharted areas. We ought by now to have available — just by way of egregious example — analyses of the biased ideological freight carried by the *Late Show*, *Panorama*, and BBC2's *Money Programme*, by the health and social affairs correspondents of the broadsheets, by the publications of the Open University, Routledge, and Avebury. We ought to know why Channel 4 decided to show in 1995 a film glorifying Rosa Luxemburg, and why books and television programmes about the British

Empire all appear to have been produced by people who apparently imagine that the only “progressive” imperial forces are either Soviet or Chinese.

THE PRODUCTION PROCESS

None of these products is unproblematically “available” as such for distribution. Each of them has to be produced if it is to be available at all, and its production is conditioned by many factors besides the essential creative ingredient provided by the author or the director. Thus in socialist societies, the production of libertarian ideas has usually been tightly controlled, whereas in liberal democratic societies collectivist material is largely uncensored. Short of direct political control, the production process is nonetheless powerfully shaped by social arrangements, including in particular the nature and extent of research funding, institutional support, and ideological facilitation available.

Given the dominance of the university system in the production of ideas in Britain (and to a lesser extent in most other liberal democratic societies), and the state’s monopoly control of the universities, it would be surprising if the extent of each of these three types of support for libertarian ideas were better than grossly inadequate. Thus the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) is dominated by collectivists and ensures that little more than token funding is allowed to scholars of a libertarian tendency.

A similar hegemonic orthodoxy prevails — to an extent that demands public investigation — in the Foundations and other major sources of research funding. As a result, the production of new collectivist material is continually multiplied, while new libertarian material is largely restricted to what can be managed without significant research funding support.

Even on this more modest front there are difficulties for would-be producers of libertarian material. For even work which does not require research funding as such presupposes the availability of time and liberty to write. Much important writing is done out of sheer determination in the precious spare moments of lives taken up with wearying labour. Most, however, is accomplished in the privileged institutional protection of the universities, where time and resources are made available at the taxpayer’s expense.

Increasingly since the war, such institutional support has been reserved for conformist employees who can be relied on to produce collectivist material to the taste of politically correct vice chancellors, deans, and heads of departments (Ladd and Lipset, 1975). Conservative-supporting academics represent no more than 10% of university staff (Halsey, 1992). Dissident academics who might increase the stock of libertarian literature are deliberately loaded with excessive teaching, held back from promotion, side-lined away from prestigious departments, hog-tied with bureaucratic impediments, or driven out of academe altogether into independent think-tanks where energies have to be expended largely in fund-raising. A similar pattern is apparent in the media, particularly television, where anything short of the full panoply of left-liberal attitudes is calculated to cripple even the most promising career.

A further impediment to the production of new libertarian material, over and above the scarcity of research funding and institutional support, is provided by the ideological climate of the universities and the media. Of course one does

not need continuous positive feed-back, as the apostles of socially induced self-esteem would have us believe, to accomplish difficult tasks such as research and writing. Indeed, a little negative grit in the oyster of one’s intellectual environment is probably essential.

On the other hand, I am continually amazed at what the few dissident libertarian sociologists, to take just one example, manage, given the unrelenting negativity of their colleagues and senior staff towards their work. This predominantly collectivist cultural atmospherics also powerfully influences, as I shall indicate shortly, the distribution of libertarian ideas.

It should not be forgotten, however, that its first line of impact is on their production. Without a climate of some degree of reliable ideological support in the immediate work environment of intellectuals, the production of new libertarian material is as unlikely as successful cultivation of flora — excepting a rare cactus or two — in the desert.

Axel Davies has shown us how we can get more impact out of the existing libertarian literature. This is a useful tactic, especially given the high quality of much of that literature and the extent to which it is ignored and neglected because of its carefully engineered inaccessibility. But the literature of liberty must be continually replenished with new books, articles, films, and so on, including not least interpretative commentaries on the classic literature and celebrations of its significance. It is therefore essential to attend to the production of libertarian material in the contemporary situation, and to challenge the several barriers to the process erected and manned by the enemies of liberty.

THE DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

In totalitarian societies such as communist China, the prelapsarian Soviet Union, and National Socialist Germany, ideas are disseminated by means of a simple, state-owned system which is easily controlled. The scope for distributing libertarian material is ruthlessly policed, and tightly restricted, with infractions savagely punished and dissident ideas driven into the perilous underground world of an ideological black-market (Scruton, 1990).

In the liberal democracies, control of dissenting libertarian material is of necessity less total and more sophisticated — although scarcely less effective — because the distribution system is itself more differentiated and more complex. On this account I can manage no more here than to touch on the key elements of the system: publishing, libraries, and booksellers. The education system ought also to figure here, but I deal with it later in a section on the consumer and — because of its comprehensive role in the ideological system in its totality — passim throughout this paper.

DISTRIBUTION: THE PUBLISHERS

Samizdat publication — publishing without a publisher necessarily has a severely limited impact except in situations of foreign occupation or extreme oppression. Publishers therefore have a very powerful influence on the dissemination of ideas in the currently relatively free conditions of liberal democracy. They stand as a necessary bridge between the producers of libertarian ideas and their potential consumers.

We might reasonably find reassurance in the competitive complexity which prevails in British publishing even after the recent wave of mergers and takeovers. There are countless publishing houses, large and small, many journals and magazines, many newspapers, and an increasing number of radio and television channels and programmes. However, for creators of libertarian material falling outside the politically correct parameters of the collectivist orthodoxy, this reassurance is deceptive. For almost all the channels of publication are interconnected by a web of relationships shaped by shared collectivist inclinations, and in each of them separately the dominant culture is actively antithetical to libertarian ideas (Horowitz, 1992).

There are notable — and glorious — exceptions in mainstream publishing, such as Transaction Publishers, and even in the worst publishing houses a few heroically dissident editors, mostly left over from an earlier era, are to be found. For the most part, however, genuinely libertarian material can be published only in the rare and small-scale houses, such as Claridge Press, which devotedly struggle against the ideological and financial grain of the big-time, or under the auspices of libertarian think-tanks such as the Institute of Economic Affairs, the Social Affairs Unit, and the Adam Smith Institute.

There are, moreover, limitations and even penalties attached to such publication. Their resources are slender compared with mainstream publishers, and marketing is therefore generally less effective. Their publications are deliberately rubbished by the collectivist academic mafia in a sadly successful bid to limit their impact. The media mostly fall into cowardly line, and either ignore them or arrange for reliably negative reviews.

The situation is even worse in the world of journals and magazines than in the sphere of books. The editorial boards and reviewing pools of avowedly “refereed” journals are packed with friends of the state and enemies of freedom almost as unashamedly as under Comrade Zhdanov.

There are problems in radio and television too. They make elaborate gestures in the direction of impartiality, but even in the carefully “balanced” world of news and current affairs, the partizanship is like the emperor’s in the Colosseum — he’s with the lions unless the Christians are unusually handsome or improbably brave. The BBC’s record of antipathy to reform of education and health care is about on a par with attitudes in the southern States to the liberation of the slaves. The likelihood of anyone establishing in Britain the kind of conservative-oriented radio station which is proving so influential in the United States is negligible.

Nor, despite the carefully cultivated reputation of much of the press as supporters of the government, and therefore presumptively of enterprise and freedom, are the newspapers much better. The *Daily Telegraph* is as likely as the *Guardian* to reproduce — entirely uncritically — fairy stories about the increasing incidence of poverty, or the fearful impact of “cuts” in education or health care budgets. Nowhere outside of the business sections of some of the broadsheets, and not even reliably there, can we find confident justifications of profit, property, or enterprise as essential sources of liberty. The *Murdock* press is as nervously defensive about privatization of the railways and the post office as the *Independent*.

DISTRIBUTION: THE LIBRARIES

Libraries comprise a second key element in the system of ideological distribution. Except for occasional weeding they at least provide a protected sanctuary for older libertarian material produced and bought in less politically correct times. This advantage does not extend, however, to more recently established public and educational libraries, of which there are many, or to recently produced material. On both fronts there is reason for concern.

A study I am currently undertaking seems to suggest that both in public and in university libraries (and I am confident the case is no better with college or school libraries), coverage of well established libertarian material is very substantially less adequate than coverage of equivalent socialist, collectivist, statist, and generally anti-libertarian material. Even where copies of the libertarian texts are held, there are likely to be more copies of the authoritarian equivalents. Publications by libertarian think-tanks are patchily represented, while every latest pamphlet from “Church Action on Starvation in Burnley”, “Feminists against the Family”, and the “Campaign for Augmenting State Control Across the Board” (the real equivalents are even sillier) seems to be bought in multiple copies on publication day.

As far as educational libraries are concerned, we should perhaps not be too surprised, since purchasing is largely in the hands of academics and teachers. Their tendency to buy their authoritarian friends’ “deeply scholarly studies” and to ignore their enemies’ “shoddy libertarian tracts” is predictable. In relation to the derelictions of the public libraries, however, I am a little surprised. One would have thought that professional librarians might manage to do better. (However, see Marsland, 1994 [2].)

At least with libraries, we have some effective power at our disposal. We can donate libertarian books, as Axel Davies suggests. If we are teachers we can order as hard and persistently as the collectivists. If we are students and members of public libraries we can keep on making requests until the wretched librarian simply *has* to order an Oakeshott, a Hayek, a Friedman, or a Rothbard even if he positively hates it. (Incidentally, it’s amazing how many Trotskyists seem to work in libraries and bookshops. Perhaps they are modern parallels of the legendary radical cobblers of earlier centuries.)

DISTRIBUTION: BOOKSELLERS

Some bookshops are better than others of course, and some are even worse, and they all pretend to be governed by the market. If only more of them really were, there might be less bankruptcies.

One of my most enjoyable pastimes is shifting communist and other collectivist publications from the eye-catching locations invariably chosen for them by unionized book-shop assistants and managers, and replacing them with the libertarian material which they invariably hide — if they hold it in stock at all — at the bottom, round the back, and in any case out of sight. Of course, the status quo ante has always been dutifully restored by the revolutionaries by the time of my next visit. But the struggle for liberty is permanent — and satisfying.

Admittedly the bookseller’s role in the distribution system is relatively secondary and passive. Their stock is mass-

ively influenced on the one side by the editorial and marketing policies of the publishers, and on the other by the impact of reading lists concocted by left-wing teachers and academics. Even so, they do have a duty to pursue profit, to answer customers' needs, and — if they are to be more than mere warehouses — to show a little pro-active spunk. Even under Mrs Thatcher, when the collectivist hegemony was temporarily and partially challenged, they signally failed to seize the opportunity of developing new markets on the right and among libertarians.

We should press the book trade, directly and through our MPs and Councillors, to improve their coverage and the balance of their stock. Otherwise we shall have an equivalent to the collapse of communism. Instead of the Soviet Union in one place, we have socialism everywhere. Instead of Colletts, we have bookshops all over the place selling nothing but authoritarian pap.

In the meantime, we need to encourage the development in Britain of an equivalent to Laissez Faire Books, which provides for libertarians in the United States efficient mail-order access to ideas which the supposedly free market denies them. On top of this, we should work, with all the concerted energy of Militant Labour zealots or New Age fanatics, to re-establish an Alternative Bookshop in London with branches in Glasgow, Cardiff, Belfast, Bristol, Manchester, Leeds, Newcastle, Birmingham, Oxford, and Cambridge.

THE CONSUMPTION PROCESS: EXTERNAL BARRIERS

Even if the production of libertarian ideas and material was more efficient, and their distribution less tightly controlled, optimization of their impact would remain difficult because of problems about the condition of the actual and potential consumer.

In particular, there are *gatekeepers* whose mission in life is to limit access to the truth; there are *book reviewers* whose primary aim is to rubbish any material which challenges their own collectivist prejudices; and there are *habits of mind* which prevent even committed libertarians from buying and reading libertarian material to which they have ready access.

The most powerful and the most dangerous gatekeepers of liberty, the intellectual Gestapo who patrol the boundaries of knowledge, are the academics and teachers in our universities, colleges, and schools who draw up reading lists. Their one-sided prescriptions shape the curriculum of education, limit the allowable understandings of their students, determine who among their students will succeed and fail, and massively influence the media and the agenda of public debate.

This is not just a problem in sociology and social policy — a hopeless case which I have examined myself, in detail and definitively but with sadly little effect (Marsland, 1988 and 1992; Horowitz, 1993). The problem extends much more widely: to other social sciences such as economics, anthropology, and political science; to history, English, and other humanities subjects; to professional disciplines such as education, social work, nursing studies, business, and management; and even to the natural sciences, where the statist predilections of anti-libertarians are having an in-

creasing influence in genetics, medicine, health policy, energy policy, and research funding.

As a member at different times of the Council for National Academic Awards, the Schools Examination and Assessment Council, and other such bodies responsible for the oversight of education, and as an External Examiner over the years of many higher education courses, I have made two discoveries. First, the problem is real and substantial. Reading lists are massively biased and they shape students' learning experiences much more than is commonly admitted. Secondly, it is extraordinarily difficult to change the situation. Even unanswerable demonstrations of bias, set out in detail and in writing by token non-collectivists, are strenuously resisted in committees packed with friends of the state and proponents of socialism. At best a few token alternative sources are included, and even these, we can be confident, are carefully rubbished by teachers in their lectures.

The recent debacle over the National Curriculum indicates the difficulty of addressing this problem from the centre and top-down — even where the centre and the top represent the electorally demonstrated will of the people. The collectivists ran rings round the Government, Ministers, and properly constituted official committees (Marsland and Seaton, 1993).

Instead, we should encourage further systematic study of the problem, and seek to disseminate objective findings about academic bias through the media and into public debate. We should support movements among students for more consumer information about their teachers and their courses. We should provide support services for the thousands of students who are oppressed by the established collectivist hegemony.

Book reviewers are heirs to a proud British tradition. Honest, intelligent, expert reviews of books in every field have contributed positively to the advance of knowledge from the eighteenth century onwards. They have served to refine and improve work by biologists, theologians, historians, philosophers, sociologists, and others.

Alas, in recent decades book reviewing has, along with most other spheres of social activity, been first politicized, and then monopolized by the enemies of freedom. A vulgar hatchet-job on Murray or Hayek is a guarantee of more opportunities for more of the same. A carefully considered, honest analysis along lines which are less than politically correct or based on more than a sketchy reading is likely to be spiked.

While journals, magazines, newspapers, and broadcasting are dominated by pseudo-liberal orthodoxy, this circumstance is unlikely to be fundamentally changed. At the very least, however, libertarians should write a short, clear, firm letter to the editor *every time* a professional collectivist writes yet another mendacious piece about the supposed value of the latest example of authoritarian propaganda, or about the alleged inadequacies of some important new libertarian analysis. If twelve of us wrote in, one letter would be published, and thousands of readers would say to themselves "Thank God", and be strengthened for the struggle.

Nor should such resistance activity be restricted to the leading monthlies and the "quality" radio and television pro-

grammes. Local newspapers (not excluding the London Evening Standard or the provincial dailies) are consistent and influential purveyors of mistaken understandings of books and films. Their down-market, left-wing reviewers should be answered. The trade papers of the intelligentsia and of professions such as nursing, social work, and management comprise another protected arena for biased reviewing, the *Times Educational Supplement* and the *Times Higher Educational Supplement* perhaps foremost among them in their pliant statism. “Eternal vigilance” means at least reading the wretched stuff and setting off a counter-blast.

THE CONSUMPTION PROCESS: INTRINSIC BARRIERS

Imagine the potential consumer of libertarian ideas, an individual man or woman dissatisfied with the accounts of reality thrust at him or her daily, and seeking some more truthful alternative.

The ideological production process does not help. For every new libertarian book or film being created, there are scores or even hundreds of collectivist items being generated by the enemies of freedom, busily shaping ignorance, in Herbert Spencer’s graphic phrase, into the semblance of knowledge. Even the vast treasure-house of established libertarian material is kept out of the potential consumer’s reach as far as possible by an ideological distribution system which sustains a near-monopoly flow of collectivist and authoritarian ideas through the rubbish-clogged channels of publishing, the libraries, the universities, and the booksellers.

On top of this, yet a third level of interference with communicative transparency is provided by academic gatekeepers and collectivist book reviewers, both of them busily protecting our hypothetical consumer from the slightest contamination by libertarian ideas.

Engulfed in consequence by what that forgotten sociologist William Graham Sumner neatly called “the snarl of half ideas and muddled facts”, libertarian consumers are typically hindered still further by their own ingrained habits of mind. These have sometimes served the British people well in the past, but almost as often they deliver us helplessly into the hands of knaves and fools among the collectivist intelligentsia.

First, we tend to be sceptical of the intellectual, and especially the theoretical, domain of ideas — and thus to avoid the effort of actively seeking out alternatives to manifest nonsense, even if it is influential. Second, we tend, as a result of our fortunate history, to be naively trusting of experts, professionals, and officials — and thus to make reluctant rebels against even the most pernicious of ideas, provided they are served up by duly appointed and properly qualified persons. And third, we tend in our insular, privatized way to keep our ideas to ourselves and to fight shy of public disputation — and thus to avoid rushing, as the American or the French equivalent might, to seek out intellectual material to arm us for contention. These inclinations conspire, independently of the other difficulties I have described earlier, to paralyze the would-be consumer of libertarian ideas, and to cripple active search for alternatives to the prevailing orthodoxy.

In all, then, the consumption phase of the ideological market system is as hemmed about with impediments as is production and distribution. Little wonder if it is securely and increasingly monopolized by a farrago of mischievous anti-libertarian material. From politically correct nonsense about patriarchy, multi-culturalism, and sexual orientations, through fanciful exaggerations of poverty and misunderstandings of inequality, to outright demands for augmented regulation of social life by the state, a choking fog of authoritarian ideas, which even Thatcherite government has failed to dissipate, has swept down over Britain.

THE SUPPLY/DEMAND/PRICE MATRIX

In relation to any other market, an analyst discovering inefficiencies of this order would certainly enquire about the pricing system. With demand for libertarian ideas potentially at least as high in Britain as in the United States, and with supply as grossly inadequate as anywhere in the Free World, one is bound to ask whether the price of ideological products is being deliberately set too high.

In a sense, it certainly is. With all the impediments to efficient production, distribution, and unimpeded consumption of libertarian material described in earlier sections, both the costs and the prices involved are such that actual demand is bound to be reduced. By the same token, artificially swollen demand for collectivist material created by the same interferences with the market, combined with the gross subsidies to production, distribution, and consumption of collectivist material by the dominant role of the universities, reduces the cost and, even more steeply the price, of counter-libertarian ideas to vanishing point. If you can give it away — you can give it away.

On an alternative analysis, the whole matrix of supply, demand, and prices in ideological products is so much controlled by state agencies, so tightly managed, and so grossly over-protected against competition, that it does not qualify as a market at all. Like the Welfare State as a whole (of which it is a crucial component), ideological transmission defies economic or socioeconomic analysis. Within its sectarian boundaries, concern about consumer preferences and real demand is scant. Attention to costs — let alone profits — is negligible. Determination to maintain supply of collectivist material at whatever cost and entirely regardless of demand is total. This is not a market of any sort. It is a planned, totalitarian system which is beyond any remedy save the salvation of the Russian steel industry. Close it down and start again.

CONCLUSION: A BIGGER IMPACT FOR LIBERTARIAN IDEAS

However, until the economy gets into even worse difficulties under a new Labour government than it did in 1976, with savage cuts to the education budget and to state subsidization of the media, this apocalyptic outcome is unlikely. In the meantime we have to consider the modest steps which libertarians might take to improve matters at the margin (Veljanowski, 1988).

I have touched on some of these in the course of my analysis. I augment and summarize them here under the major heads of my argument as a programme which all those concerned to prevent the complete monopolization of thought

by collectivist, authoritarian, and statist ideas might consider, improve, and adopt as a basis for concerted action.

Production

1. If you are considering producing libertarian material, go ahead. It is — we know — a competitive world, so have a go. If you are rejected, try again. Persist. Few of the great libertarian writers had an easy ride.
2. Do not restrict yourself to the written word. Radio, television, and meetings may be more effective.
3. Don't work in solitary. All appearances to the contrary, there are fellow-spirits by the thousand who will help. If you don't know anyone else, write to me.
4. Apply for research and other funding, whoever you are, to support your work. Even "failed" applications affect the climate of judgment in the longer run.
5. If you have a choice, seek and get jobs in the protected production arena of academe. This can facilitate your work, provide support for isolated fellow spirits, and at least keep one more of the enemy out!
6. Register for research degrees. Currently fools get Masters Degrees and Doctorates via the collectivist bandwagon while anxious libertarians hold back for fear of failure. The Universities are supposed to be free, and help is available if you choose carefully.
7. Write to Ministers, MPs, and officials to challenge and question dubious allocations of research and other funding and suspect appointments.
8. If you work in academe, fight hard against the prevailing orthodoxy, in other Departments and disciplines as well as your own.
9. Seize every opportunity to challenge by letter and more directly the cogency and validity of new collectivist, authoritarian, and statist material. Let nothing — even in the *Guardian*, even on *Panorama* — pass unchallenged.
10. Always support other libertarians in their productive work, even if you do not fully agree. There is too much theoretical nit-picking on the libertarian front, and this is ideological war.
11. Always consider whether the proceedings of a meeting or conference might not usefully be published.

Distribution

1. When you are talking or writing, cite colleagues' work actively in order to increase its impact.
2. If you are writing or publishing a paper or a pamphlet or a book make it at least known to, and preferably available to, other colleagues who might assist in its dissemination.
3. Talk about your reading to at least some people outside your usual network. If they turn out to be unreceptive, at least it will constructively annoy them. Imagine the pleasure of explaining Mises or Hayek to Tony Blair, or of pinning down Michael Meacher with an account of Ayn Rand, or of nailing Jeremy Paxman with Peter Bauer's analysis of underdevelopment!

4. Establish libertarian clubs and societies (under whatever name) in your work place, college, school, and neighbourhood to provide an arena for discussion and as a base for other activities in this programme. Network to other such clubs and societies by computer.
5. Write letters of complaint to MPs and Councillors, to the press, and not least to the perpetrators about biased publishing — in relation to specific books, articles, and programmes and their whole output. This should include publishing houses, journals, magazines, newspapers, and radio and television channels and programmes.
6. Copy all such letters to me so that a systematic dossier can be built up.
7. Buy — and order for and from libraries — books produced by honest and reliable publishers and other libertarian material.
8. Make a special effort to draw the attention of others to such material.
9. Donate such material to libraries.
10. Seek ways of joining the editorial boards of journals of all sorts, and behave knowledgeably and assertively once you are on.
11. Vet your public, work place, local college, and local school libraries closely. Complain about biased coverage. Order and press for libertarian material.
12. Demand proper coverage and fair display of libertarian material by booksellers. Complain via MPs, Councillors, letters to the press, and especially letters to the Directors of the company in the event of being fobbed off.
13. Write to the Libertarian Alliance with support (which means money and/or time) and ideas for a British *Laissez Faire* and new Alternative Bookshops throughout the Kingdom.

Consumption

1. Discuss with your friends and your children the reading lists they are prescribed at school and college. Report and challenge bias. Academic freedom means the opposite of "anything goes". Send information to me for collation and concerted deployment.
2. Become a governor of a school or a college. Use your legitimate authority as a governor to examine reading lists and visit classes. They are using tax payers' money, and these are our children's minds.
3. Always write letters challenging biased book reviews and positively supporting intelligent reviews of libertarian material.
4. Get 11 friends to write in simultaneously with brief, clear, different letters to the same effect.
5. Write direct to libertarian authors, directors, etcetera to congratulate them and to support them against biased criticism by the enemy.
6. Don't forget to answer puffs for left wing material in the local press toughly.

7. Encourage and assist local student societies to improve their access to consumer information about their courses.
8. Provide local support networks for dissident students subject to biased teaching and victimization.
9. Psych yourself to be more active on every front of this programme, and support your friends and colleagues to do similarly. Use your Libertarian Clubs and Societies as a regular arena for this crucial work. Confident, critical, demanding consumers are essential in all spheres in a free society — but in the market for ideas especially.

The Market in Ideas

1. Support at every opportunity the privatization, or at least the commercialization, of education, the media, and libraries.
2. Resist monopoly and encourage competition in all three spheres.
3. Write to challenge the abuse of sinecures by collectivists.
4. Challenge each and every instance of waste of public funding in all three spheres.
5. Encourage MPs to ask questions about the full production and distribution costs of specific books, research reports, and television programmes.

UNLOCKING THE FLOODGATES OF LIBERTARIAN IDEAS

Seizing control of the commanding heights of the economy has proved unnecessary. Socialists and other collectivists, and anti-libertarians in general, have won all the recent battles simply by taking over entirely, and entirely unresisted, the whole ideological system — which is much more powerfully commanding than *any* part of the economy. The terms of public debate and the framework of everyday discussion are in consequence theirs, and not ours.

It is as if we were foreigners in a strange land where the natives comprehend neither our language nor our habits. We are reduced to dumb-show, gesticulation, and futile muttering. Yet this is our land, this Britain, the source and seedbed of modern liberty. We must wrest back control of the ideological system, and speak freely again about freedom to each other and to others among our fellow citizens.

Our enemies do not understand freedom, let alone believe in it. They do not comprehend the power and sacred value of the individual, or trust the individual in themselves or in others. They trust only the treacherous state, dismissing the family, the local community, and voluntary associations — the whole terrain of civil society where the individual thrives — as impediments to rational progress. They see in property only a source of division, and deny its role as a key foundation of liberty. They tolerate the market grudgingly, while looking to limit its scope and strangle its natural dynamic in a web of bureaucratic regulation. They misread the history of this British people, and forget that our nation is the fountainhead of liberty, of individual freedom, of parliament, and of democracy. Can they imagine that we will not defend our inheritance?

The first and essential step in the battle to secure our liberty against its impudent enemies is to free-up the market in truth, to unlock the floodgates of libertarian ideas, and to win back the chance for the narrative and imagery of liberty to be heard and to be seen again in Britain without hindrance or malicious distortion. It is for us to make this possible.

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