



The sigma male grindset as alienation and asceticism: A rejection of individual emancipation in the work of Karl Marx

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Abstract

While the applicability of Marxist thought to the present era can be contested, this paper argues that the Sigma Male Grindset, a subversive masculine persona conjured by the alt-right Manosphere, can be utilized as a case for the relevancy of Marx's theory of alienation. To begin, I describe the basics of Marx's outlook, and outline how Marx's theory can, but need not be understood as a form of class reductionism. Despite the multiplicity of axes of oppression, I argue that subjects make some significant conceptions of themselves under capitalist terms. With this abreast, I propose the Grindset presents an interesting counterexample to self-understanding in the late-stage capitalist age. Sigma Males seem to both circumnavigate the aspirations inscribed by traditional masculinity by rejecting external validation of one's self-worth as well as the capitalist mode of production, by resisting traditional labour as a means of sustenance. It might then be tempting to assume an individual attempt at emancipation from class oppression is possible. However, I demonstrate that Marx's theory alienation from one's species-being and from fellow humans positions the Sigma Male Grindset as an intensified form of already existing frustrations, culminating in a concentrated form of asceticism. I conclude by sketching what an unalienated life would look like for Marx, drawing on current events to demonstrate the lukewarm future of a successful communist revolution. From this observation, I will conclude with proposing more immediate responses in the form of rejecting collective asceticism.

Keywords

Sigma Male Grindset, Marx, alienation, asceticism, individual emancipation



While Wolff & Leopold (2021) are quick to point out the desire to study Marx's analysis of the capitalist state has changed in motivations over time, the extent to which Marx's thought is criticized for its lack of explanatory power in our contemporary political economy and culture cannot be understated. A quick search on Twitter for "Marx failed to consider" yields a vast and dizzying array of chronically online, and uniquely 21st-century phenomena that Marx certainly could not have predicted. In particular, certain internet cultural movements, such as the Sigma Male Grindset, seek to circumnavigate the prescribed ills of later-stage capitalism and the so-called "end of history", while not acknowledging the deeply theorized arms to which capitalism can reach. In turn, the communist project exhibits a tendency to reduce all oppression to that of class antagonisms. Presently situated in the midst of a historical labour movement, as well as a significant period in the battle for racial equity and reparations, it is questionable to what extent individual emancipation is viable, and, if Marx is a tenable source for answers.

Meditating on contemporary attempts at individual emancipation tease out important, long pondered queries: why one would wish escape capitalism, is such an escape possible, and how we might go about it. Directing these questions towards dissecting the Sigma Male Grindset, the project I will undertake here is to demonstrate that individual emancipation from oppression under capitalism only aggravates it, particular through alienation from *species-being* and resulting in a form of asceticism. To do so, I will provide a brief summary of Marx's critique of capitalist society, highlighting and responding to criticisms of class reductionism often waged against Marx. I will then describe the Sigma Male Grindset, addressing a present gap in digital masculinity literature, to map the Sigma Male Grindset into the digital "manosphere". This description illuminates the Sigma Male as a remediation from both class oppression and gender expectation, but ultimately an insufficient path to emancipation due to its emphasis of individuality. Finally, I will begin to sketch what an unalienated life would look like for Marx, drawing on current events to demonstrate the lukewarm future of a successful communist revolution. From this observation, I will conclude with proposing more immediate responses in the form of rejecting collective asceticism.

The salience of Marxist theory in developing 21st-century cultural understandings, especially those espoused online might seem mismatched. Karl Marx takes the unique feature of human beings to be that we create the furnishings of our world—so how did we create a world that is so repugnant to live in? Despite so-called advancements in the Industrial Revolution, Marx and

Engels (1998) argue we find ourselves in “too much civilization, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce.” (p. 9). They problematize many facets of society for this development but argue the underpinnings can be found in class antagonism that makes living a good, human life impossible (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 3). Class antagonisms are far from a newfound phenomenon, but rather have animated a large portion of history; whether it be between patricians and plebians, lords and serfs, or, as it is now, proletariat and bourgeoisie. On the contrary, Marx notes that “[our] epoch, the epoch of the bourgeoisie, possess, however, this distinctive feature: it has simplified the class antagonisms.” (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 3). In every opportunity, the bourgeoisie sought to remove other significant sources of differentiation in society, whether that be religious fervour, chivalrous enthusiasm, or philistine sentimentalism (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 5). In this newfound society, one can only think of themselves in capitalist terms, turning personal worth into what one can exchange for literal capital and stripping occupations of reverence in their inauguration as wage-labourers.

Yet, as has been criticized in the past, Marx’s class reductionism struggles to map effectively to our socially complex world. Gender, race, sexuality, ability, education, and other social identities should be considered when attempting to understand how one experiences oppression and marginalization in the world. One status as a member of the proletariat does not sublimate the various areas of their lives in which they are privileged and oppressed. A white man engaging in entry-level pencil-pushing is surely a member of the proletariat, alike with the South Asian woman garment worker, but by virtue of their identities and professions will experience varying levels of precarity, barriers, and marginalization. Marx and Engels admit that organizations of workers are “continually upset again by competition between workers themselves.” (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 12), tacitly indicating that workers are not a homogenous category. Therefore, hoping for an “ever-expanding union of workers” (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 12) would remain a far-off objective if the sole underpinning was the shared experience of being exploited under capitalism—one must consider the underpinnings of racism, misogyny, homophobia, etc. in order to facilitate a more powerful union.

Still, it is difficult discretely separate these categories—class touches each area on one’s life, the same way any other social identity does. The way these practices of oppression are upheld is undoubtedly the dominant ideologies of our time, which must be realized in order to form the

powerful union Marx and Engels describe. We could concede, then that considerations beyond class oppression could be considered within their framework, insofar as capitalism mutually animates iterations of other forms of social oppression, keeping abreast that “man’s consciousness, changes with every change in the conditions of his existence, in his social relations and in his social life” (Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, 1998, p. 24).

Seeing oppression under capitalism as a significant, albeit not the sole, engine for the degradation of human beings, the immediacy for finding how agents might escape accelerates. While there might be 21st-Century phenomena attempt to alleviate the pain of modern existence, perhaps by breaking down the institutions and dominant cultural forms, the Sigma Male Grindset does not fall into the category. Rather, it appears to circumnavigate the intersection of oppression that arise from capitalism and masculinity. The Sigma Male Grindset claims to have liberatory power from both patriarchal expectations of men, and capitalist expectations of human beings. Therefore, it is useful to understand Sigma Male Grindset in terms of doubly rejecting mainstream society. Although the Sigma Male Grindset poses as a novel iteration of masculinist individualism, it provides a cultural touchstone to a larger reaction to the longevity of neoliberal ideology.

The Sigma Male Grindset offers a unique cultural artifact to examine reactions to changes in the political economy and advances won by feminists in Western society, particularly in the last 20 years. Moreover, the Sigma Male Grindset emerges a significant cultural reaction to neoliberalism. Sigma Males find themselves well-situated in the digital “manosphere”, which has emerged as an amalgamation of antifeminist counter-discourse and hegemonic masculinist individualist discourses (Han & Yin, 2022, p. 3). The manosphere itself has become a salient cultural phenomenon in light of “the institutionalization and professionalization of feminism, the emergence of a widespread postfeminist cultural sensibility, and the development of a neoliberal economy.” (Messner, 2016, quoted in Ging, 2019, p. 639) within the last few decades.

Antifeminist counter-discourses tend to be the more prominent, public-facing movements within the manosphere, with aims to correct the crisis of masculinity resulting from the “feminization” of society (Han & Yin, 2022, p. 7) through advocacy and public policy. Particularly, this sect of the manosphere is concerned with the injustices men face within their socially instituted roles as spouses and fathers and rose to prominence in the 1970s Men’s Rights Movement. Although anti-feminist discourse proper has not been absent from online discourse in

the digital manosphere, paradigmatic Men's Rights Activists comprise a piecemeal segment of the manosphere.

Sigma Males, however, are situated in the hegemonic masculinist individualist wing of the manosphere, which encapsulates both philosophical and pragmatic individualist cultural struggles. Hegemonic Masculinist Individualists can be Red Pills, Men Going Their Own Way (MGTOW), Pick-Up Artists (PUAs), Incels, and NoFap. Each group within this diverse sect of the manosphere nonetheless shares a “total rejection of inclusive masculinity” and participates in the “cultivation of a personal lifestyle” (Han & Yin, 2022, p. 13, fig. 2).

Although perhaps lacking as many real-life adoptees as other sects, (Yalcinkaya (2022) speculates it might have next to none, due to its rapid transformation into parody), like other identities in the manosphere, the Sigma Male Grindset possesses “both the intention and the effect of reasserting male sexual and cultural dominance” (Ging, 2019, p. 648). The online prevalence of fringe masculine identities has bolstered the proliferation of anti-feminist harassment online within manosphere sect-specific message boards and other online forums (Ging, 2019, p. 646). In other words, the lack of any genuine adoptees of the Sigma Male Grindset need not detract from the value of investigating it—both Han and Yin (2022) and Ging (2019) have called for more academic research into the rapidly expanding list of manospheric identities. Moreover, the matrix of qualitative variables proposed by Han & Yin (2022) to describe other sects of the manosphere can be similarly used to describe Sigma Males and the Sigma Male Grindset. These variables include community organization, financing, ideological discourse and causal narratives, purpose and goals, and actions and performance of masculinity (Han & Yin, 2022, p. 6). In examining the characteristics of the Sigma Male Grindset through this framework, it is evident that far from a novel or fleeting cultural phenomenon, the Sigma Male Grindset shares many aspects with other manospheric identities.

Firstly, under Han & Yin's (2022) own description, Sigma Males would be considered a subset of Red Pill, since they adopt a vernacular contingent with Alpha and Beta male identities (p. 8). Red Pill is defined as a subset of the manosphere who have, in the spirit of *The Matrix*, have come to a fundamental realization that their world is structured to feminize and exploit them by forcing them into unjust relations with women. Mimicking Red Pill, Sigma Males share a fuzzy community organization, that lacks an organizational structure or a key figure. Sigma Males indeed

idolize certain masculine figures in popular media, whether that be fictional characters like Patrick Bateman or Jordan Belfort, or public figures like Gary Vaynerchuk (GaryVee). Nonetheless, the objects of Sigma Males' idolatry are not directly creating content for a Sigma Male audience, do not self-identify as Sigma Males, or directly teach the Sigma Male lifestyle. In this way, the Sigma Male community has a decentralized organization, which cultivates those it perceives to be worth emulating through their own curation, primarily Sigma Male Grindset edits and compilations on TikTok and YouTube.

Despite lacking a central figure or “guru”, Sigma Males share a similar financing structure to Pick-Up artists— “monetization of contents, selling digital books and courses, coaching sessions, seminars” (Han & Yin, 2022, p. 13, fig. 2). Yalcinkaya (2022) highlights the sale of branded supplements to achieve a god-like physique by an alt-right social media persona as a key example. Further, the founder of a popular Instagram page mentioned by Yalcinkaya (2022), @entrepreneurshipfacts, offers coaching and content editing services on his website to help users grow their businesses on Instagram, starting at 500\$/month (Dang, 2023). Monetized Sigma Male Grindset content is aimed towards rapid self-improvement and seeks to manifest in highly visible success. Yalcinkaya (2022) describes Sigma's aims: “perennial masculine ideals of success – defined loosely as financial and physical gains”. While the figures offering monetized services lack traditional credibility, they often utilize their personal successes in their respective pursuits to justify offering their services.

It is certain, then, that buff physiques, and financial success through non-traditional means comprise a significant piece of the Sigma Male Grindset. For Sigma Males, material goods and societally expected achievements cannot replace the value of self-worth that is realized through pursuit of one's passions (TopThink, 2021, 2:38-3:00). These pursuits are unified by a primacy of self-discipline and actualization, including some of the practices upheld by NoFap. Han and Yin (2022) remark that NoFap allows its participants to discover a “new meaning to their sexuality” by focussing on “aspects related to the health and personal benefits of avoiding masturbation and pornography consumption.” (p. 11) In this way, Sigma Males can be thought to be participating in a similar ideological discourse as NoFap, which Han and Yin (2022) describe as stoically self-disciplined (p. 11). As a result of being Red Pilled, Sigma Males recognize that the traditional organization of wage labour—working for a boss, being unable to do “what they want, when they

want to”, pursuing goals independently—are incompatible with their aims (Topthink, 2021). As a result, Sigma Males advocate for breaking off from the beaten path, rejecting authority and hierarchy, and the pursuit on one’s own aims.

The Sigma Male Grindset’s purposes and goals, however, stretch further than reigning in one’s sexual desires. Like other manospheric identities within the individualist masculinist sect, Sigma Males’ purposes and goals are directed towards individual lifestyle changes and aim to reject inclusive masculinity. In other words, the Sigma Male utilizes an individualist approach to reaffirm and intensify hegemonic masculinity. This hegemony is justified by both hegemonically dominant identities, including Alpha Males, Pick-up Artists, and subordinated identities like Beta Males and Incels. However, an instinctive drive for the Sigma Male is to differentiate themselves, foremost by rejecting external valuation, breaking off from the pack, and being a “lone wolf”. Being wholly reliant on oneself is possible for the Sigma Male because of the Grindset. Sigma Males seek to integrate a practice of intense and dedicated work, or grind, into the daily practices of their lives, resulting in a particular worldview, or mindset. Doing so involves a recognition of what pursuits are worthy of one’s focus and time, and a subsequent streamlining and “hacking” of one’s typical functioning. Since Sigma Males value a buff physique, utilizing steroids and workout supplements (Yalcinkaya, 2022) is a permissible manner to grind towards. Further, since Sigma Males reject hierarchy and subordination to one’s so-called superiors (TopThink, 2021), and frequently opt to engage in investments, crypto, and other forms of “passive income” (Yalcinkaya, 2022) instead of wage labour.

The actions and performance of the Sigma Male identity reflect the orientation towards self-improvement shared with NoFap. Whether it is either true that abstinence from pornography, masturbation, and orgasm yields to physical and mental health benefits, or mystic powers of attraction (Han & Yin, 2022) does not deter those adopting NoFap from adopting a high level of self-discipline. Moreover, like Red Pill and MGTOW, Sigma Males engage in some level of mockery of inclusive masculinity, highlighted in the proliferation of the *If You’re 20-30 and Your Main Circle Isn’t Discussing* meme among many Sigma Male motivational pages where men are criticized for not having friendships oriented towards financial prosperity, fitness, and committed [romantic] relationships (Know Your Meme, 2021). Nonetheless, the most salient form of Sigma Male performance is through the Grindset, described above.

Firstly, by resisting hierarchies and social expectations typically demanded of *men*—to climb the corporate ladder, attract many sexual partners (TopThink, 2021)—Sigma Males inch closer to a truer, rarer masculinity. Sigma Males sometimes practice NoFap, engaging in sexual practices such as semen retention and “edging” (Yalcinkaya, 2022) that directs his individual and sexual worth inward, rather than for the external validation of sexual partners. This masculinity not only transcends the Alpha-Beta Male binary but dictates that one does not desire to be understood. This moment in the Sigma Male’s thought process is significant—while Marx’s imagines his revolutionary subject to recognize their experiences among their peers and initiate a struggle, the Sigma Male disregards recognition altogether. Sigma Males similarly reject the capitalistic demands that seek to create docile workers, stating that “material goods are not a replacement for self-worth” (TopThink, 2021. 2:38-2:40), and actively resisting authority figures in the workplace (3:05-3:56).

However, the façade of the Grindset is easily toppled—the deeply restrictive, regimented, and rigorous lifestyle of the Sigma Male does not allow one to maximize their potential but makes its mission to systematically shrink one’s life into nothingness. The Grindset demonstrates how capitalism shrinks human needs “to the barest and most miserable level of physical subsistence, and by reducing his activity to the most abstract mechanical movement.” (Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, 1932, p. 50). This observation captures two dimensions key to the Grindset. Firstly, “stacking cash and self-actualizing” (Yalcinkaya, 2022), evidenced in the focus the Grindset places on “passive income” in the form on investment properties and crypto *abstracts* rather than abolishes the mechanical movement associated with labour. Indeed, the Sigma Male Grindset may not involve traditional wage labour but does still performs a form of abstract labour. That is, the Sigma Male expends a significant amount of their mental capacity and time overseeing and intervening on their passive investments. This makes the frequent comparisons of the Sigma Male Grindset to stoics of monks more apt, since they primarily utilize their minds, rather than bodies, to achieve their aims. Secondly, the emphasis on withholding orgasms and eating a strict manner in order to build up testosterone in increase “gains” at the gym (Yalcinkaya, 2022) demonstrates a shrinking life to the most miserable level of physical sustenance. This seems contradictory—Sigma Males frequently advocate for the pursuit of one’s passions, yet fail to identify any passion in particular, despite minimizing their other life’s pursuits for those aims. In both dimensions, it is observed that the Sigma Male takes an unconventional

and highly symbolic approach to what remains well-trodden paths in capitalism life. In short, the Sigma Male Grindset is merely a deeply modern approach an ascetic lifestyle which remains ultimately subservient to the typical pursuit of capital.

But simply reversing this ascetic lifestyle is not sufficient, since the root of the problem makes any attempt at individual emancipation from societal, capitalist pressure is ultimately untenable. This is revealed in Marx's theory of *alienation*. Alienation refers to a painful and arbitrary separation or estrangement from entities that ought to be united. These separations include alienation from the products of one's labour, the process of production, one's species-being, and one's connections to other people (Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts, 1932, p. 29-32). For the purposes of critiquing the Sigma Male Grindset, I will turn particular attention to alienation from species-being and alienation from one another.

Species-being is a term uniquely employed by Marx (1932) to be similar to human nature, but specifically concerned with a human beings' life activities that affirm they are a "universal and therefore free being." (p. 31). Therefore, alienation from one's species-being is two-fold. Firstly, in affirming one's universality, their activities ought to conform to a universal humanity to which all are in membership to. Secondly, to affirm that one is a free being, all beings ought to engage in free activity that formulates their species-life (Marx, 1932, p. 32). As the name would suggest, if our *species-life* is a location of alienation, then individual life cannot free us because we are a part of a universal species. Therefore, one's freedom cannot come at the expense of anyone else, and one is not free if their efforts only serve to assist themselves.

When one's species-life is transformed into solely a means for one to assert their individual ability to survive, one is necessarily separated, painfully and arbitrarily, from those who surround them. Since one's feelings towards others is a reflection of their feelings towards their labour, and towards themselves, under capitalism one sees the people around them as foreign, *alien*, and esoteric. Indeed, "contemporary economic relations socialise individuals to view others as merely means to their own particular ends." (Wolff & Leopold, 2021). In other words, through alienation, it becomes impossible to meaningfully connect and genuinely bond with those around us. For Wolff & Leopold (2021), this is a threat to human wellbeing, since:

[whether] or not we explicitly recognise it, human beings exist as a community, and what makes human life possible is our mutual dependence on the vast network of social and

economic relations which engulf us all, even though this is rarely acknowledged in our day-to-day life.

Such an experience is ever-present for the Sigma Male, who is described as a lone wolf, favouring instrumental relationships in the workplace, and hook-ups—if they're having sex at all—over long-term romantic connections (TopThink, 2021) (Yalcinkaya, 2022). When Sigma Males do prioritize long-term romantic commitments, as demonstrated in the *If You're 20-30* meme, it seems to be oriented towards the achievement of a statistically longer, healthier, more successful life, rather than any inherent quality of the relationship itself. Echoing Marx's early warnings, the Grindset “reflects our current neoliberal climate, where everyone is a commodity and products are catered to appeal to people's biggest anxieties and aspirations.” (Yalcinkaya, 2022).

Therefore, while the Sigma Male Grindset is an extreme example, its roots are situated in issues which all people under capitalism face. Marx and Engels, of course, sketch what an unalienated life could look like, and can give us some indication of what a transcendence from the Grindset might look like. An unalienated life for Marx and Engels must emerge from a radical overturn of our current societal arrangements. This revolution, much like the system it is attempting to break down, arises gradually, due to various issues within the proletariat. For instance, although capitalism is animated by class conflict between oppressor and oppressed, Marx and Engels (1998) note that due to the arrangement of wage labour, competition between labourers occurs frequently. However, as society becomes more industrialized, labour becomes precarious and proletarians increasingly devalued. And yet, this unifies them, and erodes the union of the bourgeoisie, who must constantly attempt to respond to the incoming crises capitalism enthralled them into. Far from being a work of fiction, this dynamic is playing out alongside the Sigma Male Grindset. Early in 2022, New York organizers waged a historic victory, establishing the first labour union at Amazon in the United States. Organizers note that their victory had in some part to do with Amazon making “critical mistakes ahead of the vote, such as pushing to reverse policies relaxed under Covid, including allowing workers to keep their [cellphones] with them while working.” (Sherman, 2022)

If the proletariat is able to come together effectively, form a popular political party, and usurp the state, Marx and Engels (1998) identify a few central aims of communism, and conversely, bringing about an unalienated life. Firstly, as previously mentioned, the abolition of classes into a single, unified class of proletarians is necessary to other aims occurring (Marx & Engels, 1998, p.

26). Secondly, communism aims to abolish (bourgeois) private property (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 18). It should be noted that private property is not the source of alienation, but rather reinforces and aggravates it (Marx, 1932, p. 33). Still, seeing as private property as the manifestation of “the antagonism of capital and wage labour.”, communism seeks to convert private property into the property of all members of society (Marx and Engels, 1998, p. 19). This would likely entail an end to excess production and overconsumption, ultimately conducive to each member of society getting what they need. Secondly, communism would demand an abolition of notions of nationality (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 23). Abolition of such would entail a rejoining of all working people rising to the power of a nation, and conversely breaking down the arbitrary distinctions between them that reinforce mutual competition and expropriation. While it could be argued that this would remove national character and culture along with it, it is important to recall that since the dominant ideologies of our time arise from the dominant class of people (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 24). This could mean that marginalized and oppressed cultures could begin to flourish.

While contemporary advances in labour unionization demonstrate the viability of a Marxist project, it is worth noting, as we have seen through the Sigma Male Grindset, that many people would sooner adapt themselves within the dominant ideologies of our time in order to survive, than to deconstruct the ideologies themselves. Instead, contemporary capitalism is observed to adapt and revolutionize itself in order to prevent its collapse. Marx and Engels (1998) list several policies which a communist party must install to ensure their success, including “centralization of transport in the hands of the state”, “free education for all children in public schools”, “abolition of children’s factory labour in its present form”, and “a heavy progressive tax” (p. 26). In some capacity, these policies have already existed in capitalist societies, demonstrating a frustrating permanency of capitalism and the bourgeoisie’s own revolutionary capacity (Marx & Engels, 1998, p. 6).

I have hitherto presented a variegated set of arguments. The Sigma Male Grindset demonstrates a dizzying combination of alienation, individualism, and asceticism, and yet, this is only symptomatic of an equally frustrating historical progression of which solution and culmination has effectively been staved by the very things that were thought to end it. Moreover, the Sigma Male Grindset may at best be a fleeting glimpse at a larger, more disastrous cultural intensification of hegemonic masculinity. What then, if anything, can one do to begin living an unalienated life

in the here-and-now? I see the answer in lying within the asceticism of the Sigma Male. If the condition of the Sigma Male Grindset, that is, individual asceticism, contributes to alienation from species-being, then perhaps we might enter into a collective rejection of asceticism. If the Sigma Male Grindset is, as Marx (1932) believes, “[the] science of marvelous industry is simultaneously the science of asceticism, and its true ideal is the ascetic but extortionate miser and the ascetic but productive slave.” (p. 51), then a reclamation of leisure and philistine sentimentalism becomes urgent. Indeed, Marx (1932) purports that:

The less you eat, drink and buy books; the less you go to the theater, the dance hall, the public house; the less you think, love, theorize, sing, paint, fence, etc., the more you save – the greater becomes your treasure which neither moths nor rust will devour – your capital. The less you are, the less you express your own life, the more you have, i.e., the greater is your alienated life, the greater is the store of your estranged being. (p. 51)

Therefore, if we wish to embark on the first waking of an unalienated life, it would be required that we shift focus away from capitalist forms of self-affirmation, and endeavour to pursuit amongst others, more creative human projects. These would have to still satisfy the conditions outlined by Marx (1932) on alienation from species-being: we must, in these processes, affirm a universal membership to the species, as free beings (p. 31).

It is clear then that an individual circumnavigation of the oppression of capitalism is untenable, but I leave open the possibility that an unalienated life could be possible, at least in terms of species-being, insofar as it satisfies the aforementioned conditions. Indeed, capitalism is worth escaping because class antagonisms play a key part in social oppression, tandem with other axes of marginalization, despite claims that Marx and Engel’s class reductionism to diminishes the potential of their liberatory frameworks. The viability of an escape from capitalism, is of course, is not present in the Sigma Male Grindset, as its emphasis on individualism, accumulation of capital gains, instrumental relationships, and social isolation alienate one from others, and from their species-being, resulting in a parasitic asceticism. And indeed, getting rid of the Grindset is not sufficient to end alienation, as Sigma Males embody an exaggerated form of a pervasive phenomenon. While Marx and Engel’s propose many policies in an attempt to bring about communism and an unalienated life, these policies have manifested in the contemporary world at

the hands of democratic capitalism, in an attempt to prevent its collapse. Knowing that individual emancipation from oppression under capitalism only aggravates it, we must begin carving a way to collectively create a universal, free being, in manners presently available.

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