

Prometheus, Trojan Horse or Frankenstein?: The SSE as Community Creation, Market Wedge, or State Monster

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Outline

- * First, the definitional problem
- * Second, the architecture of liberalism at the base of the SSE
- * Third, the basis for conceptions of alternate value
- * Fourth, ethical value added and “case studies”

Defining the SSE

- * Old debate, often reflecting factionalism
- * “Neither state nor private” idea at its core
- * However practically and conceptually neither is true
- * What values does this idea express?
- * Question of values in economics – where do these come from?

Values

- * Tension between aspirational and practical values
- * Theorist often focus on former, practitioners on the latter
- * SSE highlights "radical" (Promethean) values
- * How are these Promethean values realized in practice and have they been internalized/expressed by practitioners?

The Ghost of Liberalism

- * Liberalism has established itself as the value framework for most social/economic realms
- * As self-conceptualized alternative, the SSE needs to be mindful of importing these values into its rationales and practice
- * Basic premises have been internalized, especially in economics

Neo-Liberal Philosophy

- * In terms of economic “justice” values of Liberalism have been imported into SSE
- * Specifically the idea of a “rule creating state” and an “actualizing individual”
- * Concepts such as democracy, community control, entrepreneurship, all fit BOTH with neo-liberal and SSE values

Problems of Hierarchy and Capitalism

- * The key issues is that the ***conditions within which rules and individual actualization occur*** determine their likelihood of success
- * SSE needs a clear alternative framework within which values and practices are developed
- * “Anti”-position is not sufficient

Economics, Values, and Capacity

- * Nowhere is the need for an alternative clearer than economics
- * The idea of the rationale self-interested market-driven individual dominant
- * In development, capacities and common pool economic theory the values of liberalism are an a priori assumption

Alternatives

- * There are some basic frameworks from which alternative economic and values based solutions can be built
- * Co-operatives – movement, values, practice
- * Microcredit – community, collective, capital
- * Alternative Energy – empowered democratic community ownership via state transfer

Ethical Value Added

- * Solutions must be flexible and rooted in (developing) community capacity
- * 1) What Social/Community value does our economic activity aim to create?
- * 2) How can we effectively measure this Social/Community value in ways that reflect our impacts on community needs?
- * 3) How do we plan to increase our impacts on community needs and how can community contribute to our strategic planning?

Conclusion

- * SSE is threatened by importation of Liberal Values in its:
 - * Definition
 - * Economic practice and assumptions
- * Developing an alternative value and practice frame requires rooting out these assumptions
- * Building on history and EVA

THANK YOU

Questions/Comments Welcome

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