

Cereal Doesn't Cause Inequality

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This week a group of anti-gentrification protesters vandalised Cereal Killer cafe in Shoreditch. Presumably because if you set up a small business in a trendy area you're furthering the worst elements of capitalism, or something like that.

Personally, I wouldn't pay £5 for a bowl of cereal. Then again, there's lots of things I wouldn't pay £5 for, I resent paying £8.20 for prescription medicine, but I don't think that's a symptom of a bourgeois conspiracy. There's one thing for certain, the people who run Cereal Killers cafe aren't responsible for capitalism, they aren't even responsible for the mechanisms that fuel capitalism (bankers, stock brokers etc.) they are just two people who realised they could make money by selling cereal to people who are willing to pay for it. That's all, two people who run a small business, for me these are working class people who run a business in the community, today pointing out the added tourist benefits they have brought to the area.

Attacking something because it is expensive makes no sense. Cereal Killer Cafe can't control or change house prices in Shoreditch, they can't transform the economy, they can't really even affect how much people are willing to pay for food in their cafe (to an extent), or else they could charge an unlimited amount of money. The only thing they can do is charge an amount of money people are willing to pay for a service,

There is just something so tiring about being lectured on the class struggle. The people who vandalised Cereal Killer cafe are not part of a struggle I want to be involved in. It's patronising and takes away from the real causes of inequalities. Mismanaged housing policies, lack of support and available finance for small businesses (how ironic,) and an incredibly unbalanced economy across the country, are much bigger factors that are forcing people out of area like Shoreditch (and London for that matter,) not a bloody cafe that sells cereal.

So, in reality let's look at what the protest has achieved. The protest will do nothing to halt the rise of venues like Cereal Killer Cafe. It caused them no loss of earnings as they were able to open first thing this morning. If anything, all the protest has done is turn people who were previously apathetic to Cereal Killer cafe on their side, and best of all, provided free advertising for the cafe in media outlets up and down the country. For Cereal Killer Cafe it will almost certainly be a really good day for business.

The class struggle is not about stunts that harm small businesses, posturing about the ills of capitalism, and feigning an interest in the lives of people you have no experience of. For me, the class struggle will always be about working toward a society that is more equal, where your life chances are no different if your parents are bankers, stock brokers, factory workers, or cereal cafe owners. Gentrification and creeping capitalism won't be overthrown by attacking the small business owners who want to make a better life for themselves.

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