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Kim A Wagner

### **Amritsar 1919. An Empire of Fear and the Making of a Massacre**

Reviewed by Eamonn McCann

■ April 13th 1919 was the day the decline and fall of the British Empire became obvious and undeniable. This was the day of the Amritsar massacre when British troops shot and killed between 350 and 1,200 (nobody was counting) peaceful, unarmed Indians in the Punjabi city. The event was so shocking that even Winston Churchill back in London was dismayed – or at least felt called upon to say that he was dismayed.

Rage erupted across India. Support for independence surged. The moderate politics and peaceful methods associated with Gandhi's Indian National Congress no longer matched the mood.

Kim A. Wagner's "Amritsar 1919: An Empire of Fear and the Making of a Massacre," published last year, provides a meticulous examination of how and why the atrocity came about and of the shuddering effect it had on India. Wagner paints an ugly, angering picture from which it is virtually impossible to drag your eyes.

April 13th was a Sunday. Around 15,000



gatherings. For local British army chief Brigadier-General Reginald Dyer, this was a challenge which had to be faced down if British authority was to be preserved.

Dyer led a detachment of 50 soldiers through the narrow streets of Amritsar to take up positions around the square patch of parkland and ordered them to open fire. According to army records, 1,650 shots were pumped into the jam-packed crowd. Panic-stricken thousands running pell-mell for shelter or escape found themselves funnelled and wedged into the narrow openings. Many were crushed to death in the compression, even as the bullets scythed through their ranks and spurted blood in all directions.

The Amritsar massacre didn't come out of the blue. At least six people had been killed over the previous week in fierce

women, men and children converged on the Jallianwala Bagh, a park near the Sikh Golden Temple, to celebrate the festival of Baisakhi, in defiance of a ban on public

protests against the imprisonment and exile of their political leaders. British army officers saw these protests as the beginning of a re-run of the uprising of 1857, when Indian troops had turned their guns on their white officers. That event had put a scare across the Raj, not just because it represented an insult to the British sense of entitlement to rule, but because India was of tremendous importance to the Empire, by far its most populous country, producing most of the Empire's tea, spices, fabrics etc.

Lose India, and other components of Empire would surely slip away...

The massacre, then, wasn't a mindless aberration but the latest in a long line of major crimes against the people of India, going back to the 18<sup>th</sup> century and freebooter days of the East India Company. Insofar as Amritsar represented an escalation of British violence against Indians, this was a measure of the rising fear of the ruling class that its imperial role was beginning to come under unprecedented challenge.

Dyer may have been dismissed as a madman by British liberals and even some conservative commentators. But he had merely been following a well-established colonial practice of using "exemplary" violence to subdue the

natives.

It was on this basis that Empire loyalists stood by Dyer. The Daily Express dubbed him “the man who saved India” and launched a “defence fund” which raised today’s equivalent of almost a million pounds.

Ex-soldiers and uber-patriots marching in Whitehall to the tune of the Express and Mail in protest against any of the Bloody Sunday killers being put in the dock are today’s expression of the same colonial mind-set.

The end of the First World War had triggered a wave of anger across the world, particularly in colonised countries which had contributed mightily to Britain’s war effort and lost tens of thousands of their people at the Somme, in the Dardanelles, etc., only to be “rewarded” when war was over with continued occupation, oppression and contempt. The surge in anti-



Reginald Dyer

colonial feeling engendered as a result affected Ireland, Egypt, South Africa, the West Indies etc. Thus the stakes were high when Dyer ordered his troops to open rapid fire into the jam-packed

square of Jallianwala Bagh. But this, Dyer quickly learned, was an atrocity too far for his political bosses back in Britain – not because of tender-heartedness towards Indian people but because the slaughter didn’t resonate with a population already wearied of war and useless political violence and longing for peace at home and abroad. The event also contradicted the image which, increasingly, the ruling class wanted to promote about its supposedly benign role in India and, by extension, in every far-flung country coloured red on the world map.

Bloody Sunday, again, provides the closest contemporary parallel. In 2010, then prime minister David Cameron was able to endorse the damning finding of an official inquiry that the 1998 Bloody Sunday killings in Derry had been “unjustified and unjustifiable” – while

maintaining that the blood-letting had been an anomaly, out of character, unrepresentative of the role of British forces in the North generally.

What this meant in practice was that a handful of privates and corporals were made to shoulder all of the blame while the army itself and the State it represented were adjudged entirely innocent.

At Amritsar, one allegedly deranged officer was fingered for the killings, the State itself let off the hook.

Wagner’s meticulously researched “Amritsar 1919” not only provides a detailed pitiful picture of the mass murder at Jallianwala Bagh, but maps out the historical and political terrain on which the outrage unfolded.

On May 18<sup>th</sup> 1918, the socialist leader John Maclean, speaking from the dock in Glasgow at his trial for urging young men to refuse to “take the king’s shilling,” declared: “I am not here as the accused but as the accuser of capitalism dripping with blood from head to foot.” A year later, 10,000 miles away, his point was made, the holy ground of Jallianwala Bagh drenched in the gore of Empire.

The book is a huge contribution to our understanding of British colonialism in India and of colonialism elsewhere and in other times, including in Ireland, even now.

Sam McBride

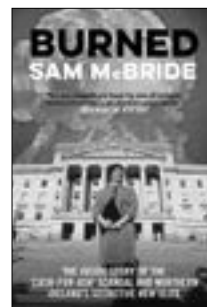
### **Burned: The Inside Story of the ‘Cash-for-Ash’ Scandal and Northern Ireland’s Secretive New Elite**

Reviewed by Brian Kelly

■ There are occasionally times when the onset of political crisis can cut through the aura of invincibility by which ruling elites exercise their authority, bringing into sharp and concentrated relief everything that is wrong in a particular society. Even before the details were widely known, the stench arising out of Northern Ireland’s Renewable Heating Incentive (RHI) scandal was enough to disperse the power-sharing Assembly at Stormont.

Despite occasional pleading from sections of the Irish and British establishments, more than two years later the absence of any sense of popular despondency over Stormont’s demise is striking.

While the urgency of ‘restoring the institutions’ figures prominently in almost every statement emanating from London, Dublin and Washington, Stormont’s reputation is in tatters at home. The simple truth is that almost no one misses it. The widespread sense that we are in many ways better off without them – or at the very least no worse off – will be powerfully reinforced by the publication of Sam McBride’s blow-by-blow account of the story behind the RHI scandal. In his restrained but comprehensive exposé which, a week after hitting the shelves, is already in its third printing, the political editor of the staunchly unionist Belfast News



Letter delivers a devastating indictment of the astonishing dysfunction at the heart of the Northern Ireland Assembly. The scandal so meticulously reconstructed by McBride

leaves almost no corner of Stormont’s reputation untarnished. There is endemic, swaggering corruption on display at its highest levels, but that is not all. There is the deliberate subversion of a scheme aimed at repairing the environment into its opposite – a calculated, no-holds-barred assault on our ecology – but even that is but a small part of the story. There is the complete lack of democratic accountability among politicians and their untouchable ‘spads’ (special advisors) who seem to regard public funds as play money to be handed out among friends and relatives, but nauseating as that is it does not quite get to the heart of the matter.

### **Neoliberal Foundations**

The most damning revelations expose the neoliberal foundations upon which

Stormont rests, in which an elected and unelected political elite have trampled democracy and bent government to satisfy the greed of a rapacious private sector. To be sure the DUP is at the heart of the debacle, with Arlene Foster culpable for the scandal happening on her watch; but in broad terms this was a cross-party affair, and their partners in government, Sinn Féin, will be just as keen to bury the story forensically reassembled by McBride. The massive theft of public funds at the root of the scandal happened, of course, over a protracted period in which every plea to curb the excesses of austerity has been swatted away with the excuse that the money just wasn't there. Of course it was.

Consider this: in July of 2018, disabled mother-of-four Anne Smith, from Belfast's Poleglass estate, was sentenced to six days in Hydebank Prison at the age of 59 for failure to pay a TV license. It matters not in the slightest that Smith hails from (nationalist) Poleglass, and could just as easily have happened in a majority Protestant estate elsewhere in the city. Nor is hers the most appalling example of the callous treatment that working-class people are routinely subjected to in the 'new' Northern Ireland: we have record waiting lists across our health service and people literally dying on hospital trolleys, after all, and an epidemic of suicide among young people that does not discriminate along sectarian lines. We have had 20,000 public sector workers made redundant, with those spared seeing their real pay falling year on year. There are long lines for social housing, and while it lasted Stormont presided over the implementation of vicious welfare cuts that are driving our most vulnerable to panic and desperation. What does matter – or what should matter urgently after the revelations in *Burned* – is the vast, obscene disparity in the state's ostentatiously punitive approach toward people who, like Anne Smith, are struggling to get by, and the casual impunity it has extended toward those responsible for disappearing up to £800m in public funds through RHI. To date not a single

individual among those in government or the private sector who gloated about 'filling their boots' in the RHI scandal has spent an hour in jail; nor are we likely to see this. Arlene Foster – who presided over the scandal as DETI<sup>1</sup> minister in charge of RHI – walks free in the confidence that she will never face jail time, courted – until recently – by the Tory 'law and order' gang as a powerbroker who might help deliver Brexit. She struts about the world stage wearing power suits rather than prison stripes, feted by the BBC and others as a clever stateswoman rather than someone whose ministry abetted the massive theft of public funds.

### The Scheme in Action

McBride's careful rendering – compiled in the face of an outrageous campaign of legal threats and intimidation from the DUP – is exhaustive, and difficult to distil in a limited review. But the essentials are as follows: Stormont's RHI program developed from 2012 as an extension of an environmental scheme applied across the water, where financial incentives were offered to entice domestic and commercial users to move toward renewable energy sources, most prominently biomass boilers. Two factors shaped its rollout in the North: the DUP's assumption that full costs would be borne by the British Treasury, and Stormont's abject subordination to the demands of agri-business interests, and especially the Tyrone-based multinational poultry giant, Moy Park. Ever wrapped in the Union Jack and hyper-vigilant in guarding their 'British identity', the DUP never missed an opportunity to gouge HM Treasury to dole out among party supporters, and in this respect RHI was perhaps their finest hour.

McBride is at pains to stay within range of the evidence available to him, and the secretive political culture at Stormont makes this especially challenging. The DUP operation was based on an elaborate regime of deliberate concealment and obstruction: the highest ranking government officials and their spads restricted communication mainly to personal e-mail and texts that (they assumed) could not be retrieved

by investigators; Foster famously used 'post-its' to go back and forth with spad Andrew Crawford, who was extremely close to Moy Park and the main co-culprit at the heart of the RHI scandal. Behind the scenes much of the DUP's day-to-day operation was driven by unelected spads, often paid more than MLAs and with names mostly unknown to the public. The key feature in the cosy 'chuckle brothers' partnership that developed between the DUP and Sinn Féin before RHI began to come crashing down was backroom wheeling and dealing, and early on both parties seem to have agreed that no formal notes would be taken at meetings. Crawford served seven years as Foster's spad at DETI, and could not recall ever seeing formal notes from a single meeting. Stormont's RHI went off the rails mainly because it became clear early on that its generous subsidy meant that anyone availing of the scheme would profit from converting to biomass boilers: installers copped on early enough, openly advertising that there was 'cash for ash' available. Indeed the more one burnt the higher the return. Over and over again the same flaw was made clear to Crawford and others; but over a period of more than three years spads and high-ranking civil servants bent every effort to ensuring not only that the scheme would not be shut down, but that subsidies would not be reduced as they had been in England. When the scale of the disaster was finally acknowledged and cuts were at last contemplated, some among them worked energetically to keep the gates open as long as possible, liaising with Moy Park, the DUP-friendly Ulster Farmers' Union, family members and others to pack the scheme before it ended.

The DUP was happy to encourage this as long as they assumed the British Treasury was picking up the bill, and panic only set in late in the day when



Arlene Foster

it became clear that the huge losses to public funds would come out of NI's Westminster 'block grant'. Some of the take up at the bottom end was legitimate, McBride insists, but there were many cases where boilers were being run 24/7 all year round in empty sheds. The advantages were quickly noted by Moy Park, the Brazilian-owed multinational that is Northern Ireland's largest private sector employer, and which draws upon hundreds of local suppliers and kills some six million chickens every week. McBride notes correctly that Moy Park 'knew that it had [Stormont] at its mercy,' and relied on its position in the local economy to help get around environmental regulations and demand publicly-funded infrastructure that would enhance its profitability. No one at DETI or Invest NI seems ever to have questioned this: following Foster's 2013 trade mission to Brazil, Invest NI set aside £9.5 million for Moy Park's expansion, a top-up on £5m it had donated toward an upgrade of its Ballymena plant just three years earlier.

Media accounts have focused on the way in which high-ranking spads and DUP officials gorged themselves. By the time the scheme was shut, Crawford's extended family had 11 boilers installed, having been provided with confidential government information throughout; prominent spad Stephen Brimstone heated his home under the non-domestic scheme, claiming that he tended a flock of sheep, but when inspectors came to his home they found the boiler in a sheepless shed, with heat being funnelled into his adjacent home. The brazen trough-swilling of Stormont's untouchables makes for sensational reading, but it is in some ways a minor aside: the key to the scandal lies in the close liaison between Foster's office – through Crawford mainly – and the poultry industry and other private sector executives.

### Stormont Collapse

As the DUP's partner in a power-sharing government, Sinn Féin's role in all of this is a subordinate one, but for a party that goes before the electorate brandishing its commitment to 'an

Ireland of equals' it is no less damning. As McBride demonstrates, the system of unrecorded, closed door negotiations preferred by the DUP suited Sinn Féin as well, and particularly – one has to speculate – when accommodation was being sought around sensitive issues like policing, and where public scrutiny would likely reinforce the impression that they had bent too far to placate unionists and Westminster. At the moment RHI broke, McBride points out, the Stormont executive was 'more united than any power-sharing administration [that] preceded it'. In September the two parties had taken advantage of an obscure prerogative belonging to the Queen to hire a 'joint spokesman' for the executive – essentially a spin doctor paid handsomely out of public funds. Their deep investment in making Stormont work meant that Sinn Féin

Sam McBride



were all over the map in trying to agree a position on the breaking RHI scandal.

A week after BBC's Spotlight programme first alerted the public to the crisis underway, the DUP and

Sinn Féin held a joint meeting marked by a 'collective spirit', with sources insisting there had been "no ill will at all – far from it". Conor Murphy and Mairtín Ó Muilleor would both later claim credit for delaying the closing of RHI, contradicting Michelle O'Neill's claim in January 2017 the party had "shut it down straight away" when the problems became clear. In mid-December 2016 prominent Sinn Féin spokesmen went back and forth in a farcical scramble, one day calling for a full public inquiry, hours later retracting themselves, only to repeat the cycle days later. McBride rightly observes that this early chronology:

*"contradict[s] later unionist fears that Sinn Féin always wanted to pull down Stormont and did so at the first opportunity. But they also undermine SF's later claims of taking a principled*

*stand when it was made aware of RHI. Both parties' instinctive reaction was to keep Stormont together, even if that was at the expense of getting to the truth."*

Readers should work through McBride's explanation for the collapse of Stormont themselves, as it is a complicated trajectory, but one point is worth emphasising. Sinn Féin's room for manoeuvre in keeping the Assembly afloat was limited, in part, by the challenge it faced on the Left. This can be overplayed, but it certainly figured in the developing crisis. The crucial context is that in May 2016 People Before Profit had, with extremely meagre resources, taken two MLA seats in key nationalist wards in Derry's Foyle and West Belfast on an anti-austerity platform. Sammy Wilson's assertion some time back that the Assembly's collapse had little to do with RHI, but was down to Sinn Féin's unwillingness to take "hard decisions" around the budget "because it was looking over its shoulder at PBP" is bolstered by McBride's account. 'Within days of Spotlight, Sinn Féin's left-wing rival PBP was organising "Foster Must Go" street protests. It was obvious that Sinn Féin was not.' Without getting carried away with this, it should serve as a corrective for those who argue that the organised Left is eternally consigned to the margins in the North, and unable to shape events.

### An Alternative Politics

The bigger and more urgent lesson lies in what the RHI scandal can tell us about the way mainstream politics works in post-conflict Northern Ireland. McBride is aware, at some level, that there is a huge gap between the public theatre of endless antagonism and the reality that for a long time they worked together closely behind closed doors, driving through a programme of government that consolidated the status quo, implemented vicious austerity and effectively handed over the keys of Stormont to the region's most powerful private sector employers. What eludes him somewhat is how this arrangement combines with a deeply rooted legacy of sectarianism to generate a toxic mix,

so that society in the North seems to lurch repeatedly from one crisis to the next. Socialists have argued that, far from eradicating sectarianism, since its resurrection after the Belfast Agreement the regime at Stormont has had the effect of institutionalising division, and the fallout from RHI demonstrates vividly how that operates.

The general election now pending in the wake of the Tories' endless Brexit fiasco should, in any normal society, see the DUP driven out of political life and banished to the margins. If being up to their necks in the RHI scandal were not enough to bring this about, then their role in propping up the most vicious Tory government in recent history – whose policies will have pushed many of the DUP's working-class constituents to desperation, and who could not bring themselves to lifting a finger to help workers thrown on the heap at Wrightbus and elsewhere across the North – should see the DUP run out. As in the past, however, unionism has a trump card up its sleeve. Along comes Jamie Bryson to bang the drum, warning of the impending doom in store for northern Prods if they desert their standard just now. McBride acknowledges that in the wake of the Assembly collapse in early 2017, Arlene Foster deliberately built the electoral campaign that followed around 'the most tribal contest in years.' The DUP's reflexive tendency when faced with the prospect of fissures within unionism is to ramp up sectarianism to rally 'their side'. The message is clear, and by now familiar: close ranks around well-heeled unionist politicians, ignore the hardship their Tory allies have brought you, forget about the hundreds of millions in public funds they have squandered, and concentrate your fire on the Fenian bogeyman.

At some point we need to step away from this cycle of division and despair, and the only path pointing away from the precipice of renewed sectarian tension is class politics. The Left has made a modest start at building a fighting movement that will stand up against austerity and send a message to elites on both sides of the divide, but we are in a race against time to make a

politics of working class unity relevant across this society, and need to be more ambitious in our aims. Otherwise the rotten system that gave us RHI side-by-side with a crumbling NHS will come back for more, and always with the menace of a return to sectarian violence looming behind it.

1 *Stormont's Department for Enterprise, Trade and Investment, now known as Department for the Economy (DfE)*

Terry Sullivan & Donny Gluckstein

## Hegel and Revolution

Reviewed by Stuart Scully

■ *Hegel and Revolution* is a concise and accessible introduction to the philosophy of Hegel. All of the key concepts of Hegelian thought are explored in such a way that anyone familiar with Hegel's philosophy, as well as anyone coming to it as a complete beginner, will finish the book with a greater understanding of the famously obtuse philosophy. However, the main strengths of the book lie in the ability of the authors to expertly clarify the Marxist inversion of Hegel's writing, accentuating the need for both praxis and activism to become the end result of critical study

The book begins with a brief biography of Hegel and the historical events occurring during the time of his writing. Hegel was writing philosophy in the period after the French Revolution, a period of transition from feudalism to capitalism and the radical transformation of the social, economic and political worlds. The authors write that there are accounts of Hegel crossing the city of Jena to get *The Phenomenology of the Spirit* to the printers while the Napoleonic forces were fighting in the city.

The transition from feudalism to capitalism was not simply the transformation of the economic realm, as the growth of industry switched the power from the previously established aristocracy to the newly emerging bourgeois class. The social realm as

well as the social bonds which had solidified the rule of feudalism were broken. It is these social bonds that form the basis for Hegel's philosophy as the revolutionary creation of the state, a radical break from the previous mode of society, is where he begins to evolve his philosophy of the spirit and the progression of society.

The book next explores the three main areas of thought in Hegel's philosophy - alienation, the philosophy of history and dialectics. Hegel was one of the first thinkers to begin formulating a theory of alienation, the material basis for this being the movement of the workers from small towns to large cities, working in factories, transforming their perception of reality. Hegel writes that the spirit, which is the individual conscious being, experiences the external world as an object including their own actions within the external world. There is a separation



between the being themselves and the world around them as the being fails to witness their existence in reality due to viewing the external world as the object.

Hegel writes in *The Phenomenology of the Spirit*:

"...the spirit whose self is an absolutely discrete unit has its content confronting it as an equally hard unyielding reality, and here the world has the character of being something external, the negative of self-consciousness. This world is, however, a spiritual entity, it is in itself the interfusion of being and individuality; this its existence is the work of self-consciousness, but it is also an alien reality already present and given, a reality which has a being of its own and in which it does not recognize [sic] itself."

Here the authors recognise the difficult nature of Hegel's writing and brilliantly break down the theory of alienation with reference to Marx and the 20<sup>th</sup> century Marxist philosopher György

Lukács. They explain how materially, this alienation of the spirit is the inability of the worker to conceive of their labour as creating society due to their lack of ownership of the means of production. Rather than labour being the expression of the sense of self of an individual, labour under capitalism becomes an external activity wholly under the control of the external mechanisms of capital. Workers' labour is objectified and commodified and thus their sense of self cannot be witnessed in the external world. For the worker, reality becomes a wholly alien concept, there is nowhere in society that they can witness the labour of themselves or others. This is what causes the feelings of discomfort and unreality that are experienced under capitalism as, despite individuals inherently knowing that society is created by humans, the image of the society that is presented by capitalism is foreign and unknown. Next the authors examine Hegel's Philosophy of History and how it influenced Marx. For Hegel, the history of humanity is one of constant transformations, guided by the spirit, in order to reach the end of history. This for Hegel is when humanity reaches what he refers to as the Absolute, the moment in which all the contradictions of reality resolve themselves and in essence, humanity has peaked in terms of its development.

The authors take this understanding by Hegel of humanity's development as a species and examine how Marx took it to develop his own ideas about history. Hegel's understanding of reality is idealistic in that it is the ideas of humanity which have shaped the material world. Thus, Hegel's epochs of history are split not on the modes of production as Marx describes, but on the philosophy guiding these moments of time, the Oriental, the Greek and Roman and the Germanic. Marx takes this idea and changes it to formulate the history of the world shaped by the modes of production, Primitive Communism, Slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism and Communism. As the authors note in the chapter on alienation, as labour is the expression of the being within a worker, for Marx it is the changes in labour which create

society.

Dialectics is explored next by the authors. They write that dialectics describe the process that progress society and social relations. While more complex, the idea of dialectics follows the triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis. This follows that the thesis, an action taken in the external world, faces up to contradictions that need to be resolved. These contradictions as well as the initial action are negated in their original form, as neither could exist simultaneously in the world. This is the moment of antithesis, where the negation is occurring. Finally, in order to avoid their annihilation, the contradictions are and the action is transformed, radically changed, in order to survive, and it is here synthesis occurs. Dialectics form the foundation of Hegel's philosophy that the spirit is continually radically transforming as it encounters constant contradictions



in the world, changing itself and the world around it and thus progress is occurring, for Hegel, to reach the end point of the Absolute. This extremely complicated understanding

of reality is broken down expertly by the authors, framing it in reference to Hegel's own education of philosophy and finally illustrating the materialist angle through the lens of Marx.

In the final chapter, the authors reflect on the role of Hegel within Marxism for the 21st century. They conclude that that foundation of Hegel's thinking within Marx makes the study of Hegel important as we attempt to use Marxism to address the inequalities and destruction caused by capitalism today. The authors state that while a study of Hegel by himself may not be of much relevance today, framing him through Marx allows for a greater ability to analyse what is to be done today.

This book serves as both a brilliant introduction to anyone new to Hegel as well as a surprisingly detailed account for anyone more familiar with his phi-

losophy. It places his philosophy firmly within the material world, allowing for the abstract and difficult concepts of his writing to become easier to grasp. In addition, it is an excellent reference to understand the foundations of Marxist philosophy, clearly highlighting what aspects of Hegel Marx took and adapted to a material understanding of reality. There is a clear message for activism in the book, shaped and guided by theory. It is clear a great amount of effort went into carefully ensuring the explanation of alienation, the philosophy of history and dialectics were understandable while not losing the necessary depth and intensity of Hegel's writings. The concepts of Hegel's philosophy, in order to be truly understood, do require the reader to envelope themselves within the writing. This book, as both an introduction and a reference for further study, is an invaluable resource.

Laura Miles

### **Transgender Resistance: Socialism and the Fight for Trans Liberation**

Alex Day

■ Laura Miles' insightful new work offers a comprehensive analysis of the history of trans rights within a Marxist framework. Her book fills in a gap on socialist literature on trans rights, dealing with the past, present and future of the movement. Miles expertly analyses how trans rights are under fire today from an increasingly polarised political landscape, yet how we all have a role to play in this struggle against oppression. Ultimately, Miles' work demonstrates how we must radically change the system before we change ourselves. The fight against transphobia is essential for all socialists to prioritise in the struggle against oppression of all kinds, and Miles' writings is a great place to develop your understanding of the big issues today.

A supremely readable work, suitable for all interested in developing their understanding of the fight against transphobia and how it relates to the broader struggle against capitalism.