

Noam Chomsky's legacy stained by Epstein

The Grayzone's Max Blumenthal and Kit Klarenberg take a look at Noam Chomsky's final stage, during which he undercut anti-imperialist positions on issues from Palestine to Syria to Latin America, while enjoying friendships with Jeffrey Epstein and Ehud Barak. ||| The Grayzone ||| Find more reporting at <https://thegrayzone.com> Support our original journalism at Patreon: <https://patreon.com/grayzone> Facebook: <https://facebook.com/thegrayzone> Twitter: <https://twitter.com/thegrayzonenews> Instagram: <https://instagram.com/thegrayzonenews> Minds: <https://minds.com/thegrayzone> Mastodon: <https://mastodon.social/@thegrayzone> #TheGrayzone

#Max

You know, Noam Chomsky helped me, in some ways, deprogram myself from conventional liberalism when I was much, much younger. Even though I look like the very model of youth right now, I was once much younger and more naive. Chomsky's work is very accessible. He's kind of the radical author you're introduced to when you start showing an interest in ideas outside the mainstream, to the left. In Los Angeles, his lectures were constantly on the local Pacifica network, KPFK. I kind of knew about Michael Parenti—his work was floating around—but it wasn't quite as heavily promoted as Chomsky's.

And Chomsky did some seminal work—published some seminal works. He wrote a great book on military humanism in the '90s, when very few others were questioning it—Michael Parenti being one—about the destruction of Yugoslavia. But Chomsky also celebrated, in his own kind of subdued way, the fall of the socialist bloc. He gave some great lectures for Haymarket on U.S. imperialism in Latin America. But then later in life, after he met his new wife, Valeria, he started to kind of sell a lot of those views out. He actually, effectively, called for regime change in Nicaragua after 2018. He was presenting a very Puebla Group, center-left analysis of Latin America late in his life.

I think he signed some letter on Syria, advancing regime change there. He might have withdrawn his name—I can't quite remember that one. He was writing articles in **The Nation**, undermining the BDS movement. And all along, he was having these meetings with Ehud Barak, which were brokered by Jeffrey Epstein. Now we learn, in this latest tranche of emails, that he was giving Epstein advice on how to beat the PR attacks over his sexual abuse charges and the reputation he'd earned. And Chomsky is just dismissing it all as some kind of fiction, which is really disturbing. I believe his wife, Valeria, referred to Epstein as a hero in another email.

#Guest

Both Chomsky and his wife were really excited about going to Epstein's properties. I think, at one point, Chomsky said he'd been thinking seriously about visiting one day.

#Max

Yeah. What are your thoughts on what happened? I think we can't overlook the fact that Chomsky, while he was a harsh critic of Israel's government—and also came in at a time when there were very few Jewish critics of Israel's government—still had some kind of latent sympathy for Zionism. That enabled him to form this friendship with Ehud Barak, where they were traveling together, and a friendship with Jeffrey Epstein. There was a certain kinship there. Also, Jeffrey Epstein was helping handle his finances when he was very old, and I believe, based on what I've seen—I don't have any inside knowledge—that his wife was a factor and played a kind of malign role here. But I mean, what... yeah, what are your thoughts on Chomsky and how this impacts his legacy?

#Guest

Well, I mean, there's part of me that's kind of glad it came out while he's still alive. Um, although he's obviously, you know, desperately ill. I do think some of his communications with Epstein are pretty bad. I mean, that's not to diminish his past work, but when he discusses media strategy with Epstein about how to respond to the very real allegations that he was a sexual predator—well, I might add, that's another interesting angle we didn't get into.

I won't spend too much time on it. I mean, there are some emails where it's clear that Epstein was paying people to completely game Google searches, so references to his arrest and imprisonment didn't come up. His Wikipedia page was completely cleansed of any mention of it as well. This was ongoing, and he spent a significant amount of money on it. But the point is, yeah, he seems to have consulted Noam in the last months of his life, interestingly. He was clearly obsessed with trying to redeem himself and clear his name, even though he was guilty as sin.

And then Chomsky says, well, you know, I mean, there's a hysteria that's developed about the abuse of women, which has reached the point where even questioning a charge is treated as a crime worse than murder—which is just some reactionary bullshit that sounds like something from Bill O'Reilly or some other far-right figure. But it's like, I mean, it strikes me that Chomsky is someone who really does enjoy speaking to as broad a range of people as possible. Epstein did assist him—it seems there was a family member who was ripping off Noam Chomsky, not giving him his money from his pension—and Epstein actually investigated this for him.

Chomsky is always keen on meeting people he disagrees with so he can talk. I mean, he's very controversial, although I respect the fact that he does this. He actually spoke up for Robert Faurisson, who was this vile French Holocaust denier. But Chomsky made the point that, well, he has a right to freedom of speech, and he has the right to use that freedom of speech to make himself look stupid and destroy his own credibility—which I think is a fair principle. I might add that across

Europe, it's illegal to do that. He caught a lot of flak for it, but it was brave. It was in defense of free speech. And so, you know, I can imagine how he probably got some kick out of meeting with Steve Bannon.

That doesn't mean he was necessarily working with Steve Bannon or for him. He probably just saw it as an opportunity to meet someone interesting and famous whose views he didn't agree with. And it's quite clear from some of the other communications that he was challenging some of the things Epstein said about the economy, finance, politics, and so on. So he wasn't—what's the word?—he wasn't submissive to Epstein at all. Although, I mean, the fact that the allegations or charges against Epstein were so well known and a matter of public record... I mean, this is odd. This is odd.

I think this may well be a result of Julie K. Brown's reporting for the **Miami Herald**, which apparently led the DOJ to reopen their case against him. And that, in turn, led to his arrest, imprisonment, and death. But yeah, it's still quite bad. And, you know, you'd think—or you'd hope—that he has some statement forthcoming, because it is quite strange. I also think that in one of his emails he mentioned—well, I think he might have mentioned—having investments in Israel. When they're talking about his kind of monthly, maybe it's some donation or something, I'm not sure. But I remember seeing a reference to Israel when he was discussing his finances.

And, you know, that might be another rabbit hole to go down at another point, Max. But I mean, I think this is still a developing, emerging story, and it's been quite wild watching it unfold in real time. I don't think it's actually over. Contrary to my earlier belief that this would blow over, I don't think it's going anywhere. I think there's a kind of before and after with the Epstein releases, because we've been confronted with the reality of who Western elites are—and it's worse than Alex Jones ever told us. They really are a bunch of, well, satanic people who have all sorts of cult-like obsessions with young children—not just for sex, though that's a big part of it.

#Max

Well, I think Valeria Chomsky has some explaining to do, and she can speak. Noam Chomsky is clinically unable to speak or write. He was taken out of hospice a few months ago and is still alive, but she's able to speak and isn't really saying anything. But what's more interesting to people who've been on the left and around the world of radical and dissident politics is that the fall from grace of Noam Chomsky is much more unpalatable than the emails from figures we already knew to be morally depraved, political slimebags, ardent defenders of the establishment, or icons of the financial elite.

Noam Chomsky is someone who attacked these elements throughout his career in a very articulate and methodical way. And also, as you mentioned, Kit, during the Faurisson affair, he put himself forward as an anarcho-syndicalist, free speech absolutist. It really upset me when, in his late 80s, I guess during the COVID pandemic, he called for the unvaccinated to be put in concentration camps. I joked in one of my stand-up bits that he's so old he actually saw **Fiddler on the Roof** performed

live on a roof, so it's kind of understandable. And I made the obvious "manufacturing consent" joke there—I was first to that. Go back and...

#Guest

I think you should start suing the people who are copying you, Max. I mean, I've seen that a lot with people manufacturing "consent."

#Max

But I mean, it was such a betrayal of his reputation as a real defender of human freedom. He wrote a book on anarcho-syndicalism as the ultimate means to the fulfillment of human freedom and rights. And then, you know, by the end, he was a branch Covidian fascist, a medical fascist. And, you know, so was much of the institutional left. I mean, they were celebrating the fulfillment of the pandemic plans that were put forward by Bill Gates and Epstein in the World Economic Forum years before. And I wonder if the left today, after all of this—viewing all these files—I think they might actually understand the lockdowns and the acceleration of the Great Reset differently, and wouldn't be so dismissive of criticism of it after this whole saga of just wall-to-wall Epstein files, which is all anyone's talking about until Trump bombs Iran on behalf of Israel, which might be coming soon.