

It's not your fault

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New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo may be forced to resign. Several women have come forward to say he's a serial sexual harasser and all around creep.

Meanwhile 15,000 people have died of Covid-19 [in New York nursing homes](#). Many were [warehoused there](#) to free up space in hospitals.

New York State Attorney General Letitia James estimates that [nursing home deaths were deliberately undercounted](#) by much as 50 percent. Cuomo's aides started to [fudge the figures](#) last June.

Before Cuomo went into free fall, the capitalist media treated him as a superhero for his supposed leadership during the pandemic. He was even awarded an Emmy for his news conferences.

During one of these presentations last November, the governor and moral philosopher [offered these words](#) of wisdom: "If you socially distance and you wore a mask and you were smart, none of this would be a problem. It's all self-imposed. ... If you didn't eat the cheesecake, you wouldn't have a weight problem. It's all self-imposed."

It's obscene for Cuomo to talk about cheesecake when hungry people line up at food banks.

Was it "self-imposed" for 151 New York City transit workers to die of the coronavirus? These absolutely essential workers who keep the buses and subways running were initially told by the Metropolitan Transportation Authority not to wear masks.

The safety measure was [considered a violation](#) of the MTA's dress code. Cuomo runs the MTA.

How are poor and working people supposed to socially distance themselves in

overcrowded housing? Death rates for Black and Latinx people from COVID-19 are double the U.S. average.

It was Andrew Cuomo's daddy — Gov. Mario Cuomo — who stole \$8 billion that was supposed to be used to build affordable housing and spent it to build 30 prisons instead.

The myth of “free to choose”

There's nothing new about Cuomo's awful remarks. For centuries, the ruling class has told poor people that their misery was their own fault.

The economists Milton Friedman and Rose Friedman wrote “Free to Choose” in 1980. The book and television series claim that under capitalism people are free to choose their life.

The peoples of Africa and the Americas didn't choose enslavement and genocide. The capitalist world market was jump-started by the enslavement of African peoples and the genocide of Indigenous peoples throughout the Americas.

The peoples of Asia didn't choose to be pillaged for centuries by European and U.S. imperialists.

Even during periods of capitalist “prosperity” millions are jobless. People didn't choose to be fired when thousands of factories and other workplaces shut down.

The army of people who collect bottles and cans for the deposit don't choose to go through garbage bags. They do it in order to eat.

Apologists for capitalism tell the unemployed to start their own business. Millions of street merchants have done so only to be harassed by cops.

Trump wanted veterans who were selling merchandise in front of Trump Tower to be

arrested. New York City police shot 41 times at Amadou Diallo, killing the street merchant in front of his home on Feb. 4, 1999.

It was in order to start a career that [45 million people in the United States own \\$1.71 trillion](#) in student loans. That's an average debt of \$38,000 they owe to legal loan sharks.

What the Friedmans really meant by "freedom to choose" can be seen in Chile. On September 11, 1973, the CIA and Chilean Gen. Augusto Pinochet overthrew the democratically elected president Salvador Allende.

Thousands were murdered and tens of thousands were tortured. Milton Friedman visited his pal Pinochet twice and called his bloody regime the "Miracle of Chile."

Choose socialism

Revolutionaries want people to make choices, too. We want Amazon workers in Bessemer, Ala., to vote for union wages and protection.

We want poor and working people to choose to make a socialist revolution. That's the only answer to a decaying capitalist that's cooking the earth.

Socialists want our class to read more and in many cases to learn to read. A growing socialist movement will open up its own schools.

We want people to better themselves. That includes personal struggles, like losing weight. That's why we call our newspaper Struggle-La Lucha.

Only after capitalist exploitation is swept away can billions of people can really choose to control their own lives.

