



Written by [Selwyn Duke](#) on April 25, 2026

Wealthy Leftists: Stealing Is OK for Us — and Sometimes Murder, Too

What happens when you raise generations not with virtue but with “situational values”? What’s the result when kids are pandered to, coddled, never told “No!” and get participation trophies? One result just may be wealthy, spoiled adults who believe it’s okay for *them* to steal and even, sometimes, murder.

Oh, they have their rationalizations all assembled. The theft may be euphemized as “microlooting” and framed as an ethical statement or form of political protest. (Isn’t it admirable when people will sacrifice for their principles?!) As for the “justifiable” homicide, don’t worry, you won’t be targeted.

That is, as long as you’re not guilty of “social murder” yourself.

It gets complicated, though, because, as you might’ve guessed, you don’t actually have to kill anybody to be a social murderer.

All this is front and center now after a recent [discussion](#) on *The Opinions* podcast, a *New York Times* production. Hosted by *Times* culture editor Nadja Spiegelman and featuring journalist Jia Tolentino and socialist podcaster Hasan Piker, the show gave stealing and murder a fresh look — and an endorsement. (And, silly me, I thought these were settled issues.)

Commentator Olivia Murray [reports](#) on the story, introducing us to Tolentino’s hardscrabble life. Imagine you’re her, she states, and then continues:

You’re a child of Filipino immigrants [born in Canada], presumably coming from very humble beginnings, but by some stroke of grace, you find yourself growing up in the great United States in the 90s. You’re able to attend a private Christian school, either because of the generosity of local conservatives, or because your parents can afford it now that [they] live in a nation where hard work can actually produce meaningful wealth. You’re then even able to attend an elite university, join a sorority, and upon graduation, you’re blessed enough to be able to afford to spend a year as a Peace Corps volunteer.

You then return home, and because of your progressive academic accolades and your feminist opinions on race, marriage, abortion, and “female empowerment,” you land a job in media, and are quickly snatched up by *The New Yorker*. By another stroke of grace, you’re able to buy a beautiful Brooklyn brownstone, roughly worth \$2.5 million, from where you can live out your hipster, leftist Carrie Bradshaw dreams. You buy designer goods, you indulge in expensive balayage hair appointments, you podcast from glamorous luxury



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apartments, *and you shoplift low-cost items from high end grocery stores....* You and your comrades call it “microlooting.” You’re only taking things that are small so it’s not that bad, and you’re only taking from the luxury giants, not the small bodegas. The “rich” need to pay, and “food is a human right.”

For the record, Tolentino actually was asked on the podcast if she’d steal from Whole Foods. “Yes,” she [replied](#). “And I have, under very specific circumstances.”

Further explaining herself, the wealthy journalist stated:

I think that stealing from a big box store — I’ll just state my platform — it’s neither very significant as a moral wrong, nor is it significant in any way as protest or direct action.

Do note here that, aligning with grocery business norms, Whole Foods’ [net profit margin](#) is only 1.53 percent. Moreover, shoplifting raises costs, which are then handed down to consumers — including poor consumers. This means that wealthy leftist “microlooters” are making goods more expensive for the poor. They’re essentially *stealing from the downtrodden they claim to care about*.

When It Comes to Rationalization, He’s No Piker

The kicker here is that Tolentino actually authored a 2019 [book](#) titled *Trick Mirror: Reflections on Self-Delusion*. Well, they do say, “Write about what you know.”

Tolentino, however, has nothing on the aforementioned Piker. Writing about him Friday, pundit Douglas Murray [opens](#) with an interesting anecdote:

At the height of the 2020 riots, a book was published entitled “In Defense of Looting.” At the time I asked a bookshop in New York, which was prominently displaying the work, whether I could walk out with the book without paying. I was told not.

But a friend did download it and publish the work for free online before being served a copyright notice by the pro-looting book’s publisher.

Oh, question: What do you call a person who thinks it’s okay to steal from others, but not from him?

“Criminal” comes to mind.

This brings us to Piker, a podcaster darling of the radical Left. “For anyone unfamiliar with him,” writes Murray,

Piker is a nasty piece of work. He has claimed that this city [New York City] deserved 9/11, has praised the terrorist group Hamas and happily describes himself as a Marxist.

In the 21st century it can safely be said that anyone who still calls themselves [sic] a “Marxist” is what we used to call “a slow learner.”

Not surprisingly, Piker (net worth approximately \$8 million) is on board with Tolentino’s shoplifting philosophy. But the podcast conversation really got interesting when the sticky-fingered duo and Spiegelman began discussing Luigi Mangione. He’s the man charged with murdering United Healthcare



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executive Brian Thompson in cold blood in NYC in 2024. When reading what follows, too, note what actually does make the podcast trio feel guilty. Getting coffee in plastic cups was one transgression mentioned, taking a commercial flight another. Murder, though? That's tricky. As Murray also relates:

The host, Spiegelman, said that the killing of Brian Thompson felt to some people that "finally, someone can actually do something about health care."

Though she did admit that it feels "scary" to be in a society where people can just kill each other.

Piker seemed to have no such quandaries. "Friedrich Engels," he started, unpromisingly, "wrote about the concept of social murder." He went on to claim that Brian Thompson "was engaging in a tremendous amount of social murder. The systematized forms of violence, the structural violence of poverty." And so on.

The Bell Tolls for Thee

As you might've gathered, "social murder" involves deaths allegedly caused by public policy, economic austerity, and all life's manifold inequalities. So, watch out. If you've in any way supported our current system (by not being fanatically Marxist), you may be guilty of it.

Even so, does this warrant the death penalty? I'm old enough to remember when a major leftist cause was capital-punishment abolishment. Then again, 18th-century, left-wing French Revolution author Maximilien Robespierre opposed the death penalty, too — until he gained power. Then he helped orchestrate the Reign of Terror mass executions.

And there you go with those situational values again. It's one situation when you're not in power (and could be executed). It's a totally different situation when you are in power and can execute your agenda and anyone opposing it.

That's a point to ponder, too, with [Democrats now talking about their plan to seize permanent power](#). Because that would really, truly create a situation to end all situations and values to supplant all virtues.

For those interested (or masochistic), the relevant *Opinions* podcast segment is below.



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