

third, a not inconsiderable criminal class of low mental age and with unbalanced endocrines who in the past have succeeded in destroying every civilization. Since the World War we have seen such a truly magnificent display of the social and antisocial behavior of males of the second and third classes, especially in Continental Europe, China, Japan and the United States, that further comment is superfluous."

Yet this boiling of the social kettle kept up by the irrepressibly troublesome male is not a net social loss, Dr. Wheeler indicates in closing his discussion. Wastefully perhaps, but no less effectively, this constant unrest makes for progress. Ants, bees, wasps and termites have been as they are for fifty or sixty million years—absolute communisms world without end amen. In far less than that time the mammals have arisen, evolved their diverse forms, seized dominance of the world and finally produced the most restless, most troublesome, most pugnacious and most intelligent animal on earth—Man.

So Dr. Wheeler ends up by admitting that the "restlessly questing intellect, driven by the dominance of the mammalian male, furnishes the necessary stimulus to progress in human societies. Female societies, like those of the ants and bees, lower mammals, the matriarchal human clans and bisexual societies like those of the termites are indeed harmonious, but stationary and incapable of further development."

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Science News Letter, February 17, 1934

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SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

Mechanophobia, Merely a Futile Reaction to Depression

OUR LANGUAGE has long been in need of a pair of new words. The mass-psychology phenomena which they should express began at least as early as the opening of the Industrial Revolution, a century and a half ago, or some such matter. These phenomena are perfectly well known and understood, but so far as the dictionary shows, at least, they have never received distinctive names. Since they have come to the fore again during the present time, as they always come to the fore during times of economic stress, it would seem that a christening should be in order.

The first of the phenomena might appropriately be called mechanophobia, which englishes as a dread, or fear, or hatred of machines. Whenever a considerable advance in machinery takes place, it enables the owners of the machines to dispense with a certain number of human laborers hitherto employed. Under the laissez-faire doctrine which came in, unluckily, at the same time with labor-saving machinery, the owner of the machines is under no obligation to his dismissed "hands," and can let them starve if he likes. Indeed, if he does anything else, if he shares his new profits with them in any way, he is to that extent apostate to the pure doctrine of rugged individualism.

The machine-supplanted men, being human, resent their distress, and seek an object for their anger. The selfishness of the "boss," being an abstract quality, is invisible, intangible. Indeed, the whole person of the "boss" is often as not invisible and intangible, especially if the "boss" be that modern anomaly, a corporation which is nevertheless bodiless, as well as soulless. But the machines are visible and tangible and the men begin to hate them: they become mechanophobiacs. They are often joined in their mechanophobia by humanitarians in higher social brackets, who commonly vent their hostility to the machines in magazine articles.

Most of the highbrow mechanophobiacs, as well as many of the more helpless-minded of the dispossessed workers, progress no further. Their attitude remains an attitude only; it does

not emerge into action. But there may be some of them, especially those of the lower level driven by want to desperation, who are of a more activist bent. They want to destroy the machines that have destroyed them, and occasionally some of them do destroy the machines, as the angry English weavers did when textile mills first began to wipe out home weaving.

In such men, mechanophobia, or hatred of machines, has passed over into mechanoclasm, or smashing of machines. The mechanophobiacs have become mechanoclasts.

Of course, mechanophobiacs gain nothing by their inactive hatred. Neither do mechanoclasts gain anything by their smashing, as Sampson gained nothing by pulling down the Philistine temple—save, perhaps, the suicide's grim satisfaction in dragging his tormentor with him over the precipice. More reasonable persons see that the machines are potentially highly useful to society and that the thing to be attacked is the greed of the men who pervert them to anti-social uses. They realize that the logical program will be either to bring the machine-owners to a more social ethic, whether by persuasion or coercion, or, failing that, to take the machines away from the owners and hand them over to the workers. The former method is now being tried in the United States of the New Deal, the latter in the U.S.S.R.

Either program, or both, may fail of perfect realization. But in neither is there place for the weak and illogical philosophies of mechanophobia and mechanoclasm.

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Scientists studying collections of animal bones in the U. S. National Museum recently discovered seven new kinds of jaguars to be added to the nine known species.

The Public Works Administration has allotted \$150,000 to the Geological Survey for installation of gauging stations to measure stream flow and silt movement as they relate to flood control and land losses on soil erosion projects.