

*The Rancher, the Fence, and the Rippling Image*  
Juxtaposed with *The Suit, the Chart, and the Abstraction*  
An excerpt from the *Crisis Image Archives*



*(Suits, Charts, and Abstractions, 20x30" Photograph, 2013)*

The Herd, the Rancher, the Fence, and the Rippling Image  
By Daniel Tucker

The herd of buffalo came together at dusk to decide how to become free. One young bison put himself forward with a proposal saying, "The rancher from the federal park system is our clear enemy, he has enclosed us and turned us into farm animals and tourist attractions. I vote that after our second grazing tomorrow we stampede the rancher." The herd concluded that this was a good thing to do and they began imagining their freedom while they chewed the grass.

The next afternoon the rancher appeared on his horse at the top of a small rock ledge just above them and exclaimed, "It's moving time, time is moving, so its time you move!"

Stricken with anxiety, the members of the herd tried to think about the times the rancher had abused

them and how that was about to change. Without signal or clear leadership, they charged the rancher and toppled him from the horse. And when the dust cleared they turned around and saw his lifeless body broken and flattened.

The young bison who had originally proposed the attack proclaimed, “We are free! Let’s roam and wander and drift over yonder!” The herd rejoiced and when they were finished they drifted towards the outer edges of the lowland prairie in which they had been recently grazing. Approaching a large rocky barrier, an elder herd member who knew the terrain investigated the area and announced, “Friends, the good news is on the other side of this rocky slope is an upland prairie which is ungrazed and has full lakes to nourish us as long as we care to settle. The bad news is that there appears to be bison-proof fencing at all of the logical entrances. IT appears we have ridden ourselves of one enemy only to find a new one in this fence!”

The herd bowed their heads in despair and hopelessness. This is not the taste of freedom and this fence was not anticipated. The grumbles were unintelligible but the elder bison knew he needed to say more to relieve the tension.

“The fence is human-made. If we study it I am sure we can find its flaws and get through it eventually,” said the elder.

A very young calf, gifted at problem solving, chimed in and said, “The fence is electric and I can train you all in the basics of electricity and we can all try to come up with solutions to this problem we are facing.”

The herd grumbled and the young bison who proposed the killing of the rancher shouted, “It will take forever to learn the human sciences and since it is my fault we are here, I will sacrifice my self and you can cross the fence by galloping across my back to avoid the current.” With that he ran towards the fence and leapt, draping his front hooves across the wires, spasming at the initial shock, and then falling limp - a buffalo carpet leading to where the buffalo roam.

Shocked by the sudden death of their friend and honored by the sacrifice, the herd gathered together and walked single-file across the young bison’s back and over the fence. Staying quiet as they climbed the path up the slope, they contemplated the sacrifices of buffalo and human life, their desire for freedom and the impact the despair and recurring obstacles had made on their hearts.

Tired of marching, hungry and thirsty, the herd was slowing their climb. The calf who knew electricity raced ahead to see if the top was near. When she arrived she exclaimed to those below, “It’s what we

wanted. It's here, only a few feet away, Hurry Hurry, the taste of freedom is sweet and near and here!"

The herd mustered energy and galloped the final steps to see it for themselves. The upland prairie was marvelous, just as the elder promised. Again they rejoiced, again feeling the obstacles were gone.

When roaming buffalo reach a new area, it is customary for the elder herd member to drink from the largest body of water and share a formal statement with the others. This was customary, though none of these buffalo knew it in experience, because they had been domesticated by the rancher since birth with no exception except the elder. This put extra pressure on his words.

He led the herd towards the lake. With them behind him he bowed his head to get a drink. His snout touched the water and ripples appeared revealing himself in reflection alongside the herd, rancher, and the electric fence. His tongue slurped the water and he slowly turned to the herd. The rippling image would not leave his mind and he could not speak.

-Daniel Tucker (9/15/12)

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About *The People, the Suit, the Chart, and the Abstraction*

We experience what we call "crisis" materially and emotionally and try to place blame on the image of the personified suit. Then, to logically represent the abstraction of money and finances we produce the chart, which gradually becomes more abstract and transforms into a data-aesthetic. Eventually the chart explodes or falls off the page and we are left with scattered pieces of enemies in the form of the wealthy, the data, and our material and emotional crisis is still with us. This leads to a turn towards abstraction to represent all those pieces simultaneously and possibly unlock new doors of understanding and overcoming.

This excerpt from the Crisis Image Archives include images from the pages of: Political Affairs, Red Pepper, The Progressive, Dollars and Sense, Echanges, Alternatives Economiques, In These Times, Chartist, The Chicago Reporter, Labor Notes, Claridad en el Mundo, Green Left Weekly, Rethinking Schools, Utne Reader, The Independent, Amass, The Industrial Worker, Left Turn, New Politics, The Nation, Briarpatch, Left Business Observer, Extra!, Z Magazine, New Labor Forum, New Internationalist, N+1, Adbusters, Arena, and others.

About the Crisis Image Archives

In the Summer of 2012, Daniel Tucker instigated a residency at the Alternative Press Centre in Chicago in collaboration with Dakota Brown, Jerome Grand, and Eric Triantafillou. They researched the last five years of the 300 publications the APC archives and identified every visual representation of "the crisis"

appearing on covers or internal spreads within the publication pages. 750 images (ranging from photos to illustrations and cartoons) were identified, photographed and indexed as the “Crisis Image Archives” and are now providing fodder for the four researchers individual artistic and scholarly work. The resulting projects will eventually be reunited in an exhibition and publication published in 2013. This fable and presentation is the first work derived from the archive.

#### About the Alternative Press Centre

The APC is a periodicals library and nonprofit collective that promotes access to independent and critical sources of news and information. The APC Library is located in Chicago, Illinois after more than 30 years in Baltimore, Maryland. The most recent five years of the collection is held at the APC Library. The collection dating back to 1969 is maintained in Special Collections at the A.O.Kuhn Library of the University of Maryland. In addition to the periodical collection, the APC Library has more than 1,800 books. These are classics of the Left with emphasis on the 1960s and 1970s. The APC publishes the Alternative Press Index (API), a unique and comprehensive guide to the alternative press in English, French and Spanish. The API provides access to articles from 300 magazines, newspapers and academic journals. Since 1969, the API has indexed 948 periodical titles.

<http://www.altpress.org>

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