



Now, I had a sociology professor, who was by some people's terms, a radical, but who was a radical in a very interesting way. His course was about alienation. And the basic theme of the course was that people who work basically don't like their work; that people in industrial society are doing jobs that are kind of meaningless. Because their jobs are meaningless, because they are ridiculous, they hate themselves and hate their work; they don't have any sense of being a whole person.

I said, "What a beautiful guy to say things like that. What a very sensitive person. He's really great. He really understands what's wrong with the country. He's gonna teach me a lot." Except for one problem. He didn't believe that alienation extended to his course. He didn't believe that his course was work. He couldn't believe that for me, reading his 19 books on alienation was very alienating. As a result, he thought the rest of society was terrible except for his course. You could rebel any way you wanted against the factories because they were evil. You could rebel all you wanted about the schools because they were evil. You could rebel all you wanted about politics because it was evil. But if you rebelled against his course, you were ungrateful.

So what I found out was that many radicals, or people who call themselves radicals, can't be judged radicals until you see what they do with their own lives, unless you see what they do when they have real power. Are they willing to relinquish the power? If they're not, then they're no different than anybody else.

—Eric Mann