

CLOSING THOUGHTS

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I actually will take just two minutes so that we can open it up to the floor, and in what little time is left, people can talk. The first thing is, if I knew so many nice things were going to be said about me, I would have never resisted this. Although, this stuff about big ears, Buffy, and messianic self-dramatization, I could have done without.

The second thing is, I am really delighted. I had hoped that this panel would be a little bit of rabble rousing, and would inspire people to do public interest work, by showing how happy people who do it are, and I think we have achieved that well in everyone who has spoken.

And finally, just to touch briefly upon two critical points. I agree with so much of what both Randy Kennedy and Leti Volpp said in criticism, but I would say this: As useful as our markets are, I think we have to come to the conclusion that capitalism, which requires us to commodify human labor—there is simply no other way around it—cannot be a long-term strategy for organizing human relations and we've got to figure out a way to modify it, to mitigate it, to somehow organize ourselves in a way that will give us greater stability.

And as far as what Leti said, there's so much to answer there, but I think I will say this: That I think all of the good things that anti-essentialism, that identity politics, that what might be broadly construed as post-modern critical theory have given us, can be found and gotten from a much more traditional ethos and ethical theory, one that stresses our common humanity, as in the end, the only ultimately reliable way to organize the struggle for justice. But that's really just an assertion, and I think it is best if we just open it up to the floor.