



Noam Chomsky

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Avram Noam Chomsky (US ⁱ/æˈvrɑːm ˈnoʊm ˈtʃɒmski/ *a-**VRAHM** nohm **CHOM**-skee*; born December 7, 1928) is an American linguist, philosopher, cognitive scientist, historian, social critic, and political activist. Sometimes described as "the father of modern linguistics", Chomsky is also a major figure in analytic philosophy, and one of the founders of the field of cognitive science. He is Institute Professor Emeritus at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), where he has worked since 1955, and is the author of over 100 books on topics such as linguistics, war, politics, and mass media. Ideologically, he aligns with anarcho-syndicalism and libertarian socialism.

Born to middle-class Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants in Philadelphia, Chomsky developed an early interest in anarchism from alternative bookstores in New York City. At the age of sixteen he began studies at the University of Pennsylvania, taking courses in linguistics, mathematics, and philosophy. From 1951 to 1955 he was appointed to Harvard University's Society of Fellows, where he developed the theory of transformational grammar for which he was awarded his doctorate in 1955. That year he began teaching at MIT, in 1957 emerging as a significant figure in the field of linguistics for his landmark work *Syntactic Structures*, which remodeled the scientific study of language, while from 1958 to 1959 he was a National Science Foundation fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study. He is credited as the creator or co-creator of the universal grammar theory, the generative grammar theory, the Chomsky hierarchy, and the minimalist program. Chomsky also played a pivotal role in the decline of behaviorism, being particularly critical of the work of B. F. Skinner.

An outspoken opponent of U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War, which he saw as an act of American imperialism, in 1967 Chomsky attracted widespread public attention for his anti-war essay "The Responsibility of Intellectuals". Associated with the New Left, he was arrested multiple times for his activism and placed on President Richard Nixon's Enemies List. While expanding his work in linguistics over subsequent decades, he also became involved in the Linguistics Wars. In collaboration with Edward S. Herman, Chomsky later co-wrote an analysis articulating the propaganda model of media criticism, and worked to expose

Noam Chomsky



Chomsky in 2015

Born	Avram Noam Chomsky December 7, 1928 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.
Fields	Linguistics, analytic philosophy, cognitive science, political criticism
Institutions	MIT (1955–present) Institute for Advanced Study (1958–1959)
Alma mater	University of Pennsylvania Harvard Society of Fellows
Thesis	<i>Transformational Analysis</i> (http://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI0013380/) (1955)
Doctoral students	
Known for	
Influences	
Influenced	
Notable awards	

the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. However, his defense of unconditional freedom of speech—including for Holocaust deniers—generated significant controversy in the Faurisson affair of the early 1980s. Following his retirement from active teaching, he has continued his vocal political activism, including opposing the War on Terror and supporting the Occupy movement.

One of the most cited scholars in history, Chomsky has influenced a broad array of academic fields. He is widely recognized as a paradigm shifter who helped spark a major revolution in the human sciences, contributing to the development of a new cognitivist framework for the study of language and the mind. In addition to his continued scholarly research, he remains a leading critic of U.S. foreign policy, neoliberalism and contemporary state capitalism, the Israeli–Palestinian conflict, and mainstream news media. His ideas have proved highly significant within the anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movements, but have also drawn criticism, with some accusing Chomsky of anti-Americanism.

Spouse

Carol Doris Schatz (1949–2008;
her death)
Valeria Wasserman (2014–
present)

Children

Aviva (b. 1957)
Diane (b. 1960)
Harry (b. 1967)

Signature**Website**

chomsky.info (<https://chomsky.info/>)

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Early life

Childhood: 1928–45

Avram Noam Chomsky was born on December 7, 1928, in the East Oak Lane neighborhood of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.^[22] His father was William "Zev" Chomsky, an Ashkenazi Jew originally from Ukraine who had fled to the United States in 1913. Having studied at Johns Hopkins University, William went on to become school principal of the Congregation Mikveh Israel religious school, and in 1924 was appointed to the faculty at Gratz College in Philadelphia. Chomsky's mother was the Belarusian-born Elsie Simonofsky (1903–1972), a teacher and activist whom William had met while working at Mikveh Israel.^[23]

What motivated his [political] interests? A powerful curiosity, exposure to divergent opinions, and an unorthodox education have all been given as answers to this question. He was clearly struck by the obvious contradictions between his own readings and mainstream press reports. The measurement of the distance between the realities presented by these two sources, and the evaluation of why such a gap exists, remained a passion for Chomsky.

Biographer Robert F. Barsky, 1997^[24]

Noam was the Chomsky family's first child. His younger brother, David Eli Chomsky, was born five years later.^[25] The brothers were close, although David was more easygoing while Noam could be very competitive.^[26] Chomsky and his brother were raised Jewish, being taught Hebrew and regularly discussing the political theories of Zionism; the family was particularly influenced by the Left Zionist writings of Ahad Ha'am.^[25] As a Jew, Chomsky faced anti-semitism as a child, particularly from the Irish and German communities living in Philadelphia.^[27]

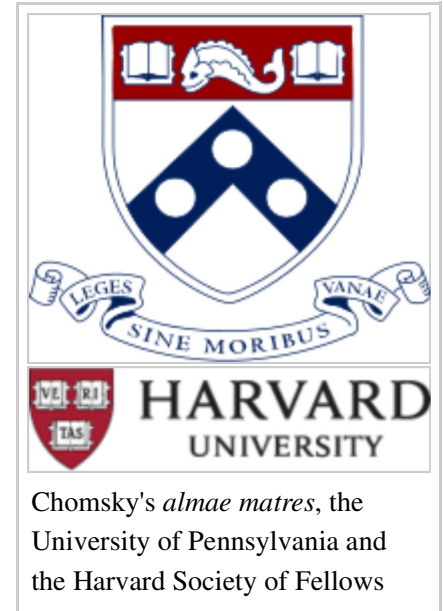
Chomsky described his parents as "normal Roosevelt Democrats" who had a center-left position on the political spectrum; however, he was exposed to far-left politics through other members of the family, a number of whom were socialists involved in the International

Ladies' Garment Workers' Union.^[28] He was substantially influenced by his uncle who owned a newspaper stand in New York City, where Jewish leftists came to debate the issues of the day.^[29] Whenever visiting his uncle, Chomsky frequented left-wing and anarchist bookstores in the city, voraciously reading political literature.^[30] He later described his discovery of anarchism as "a lucky accident",^[31] because it allowed him to become critical of other far-left ideologies, namely Stalinism and other forms of Marxism–Leninism.^[32]

Chomsky's primary education was at Oak Lane Country Day School, an independent Deweyite institution that focused on allowing its pupils to pursue their own interests in a non-competitive atmosphere.^[33] It was here, at age 10, that he wrote his first article, on the spread of fascism, following the fall of Barcelona to Francisco Franco's fascist army in the Spanish Civil War.^[34] At age 12, Chomsky moved on to secondary education at Central High School, where he joined various clubs and societies and excelled academically, but was troubled by the hierarchical and regimented method of teaching used there.^[35] From the age of 12 or 13, he identified more fully with anarchist politics.^[36]

University: 1945–55

In 1945, Chomsky, aged 16, embarked on a general program of study at the University of Pennsylvania, where he explored philosophy, logic, and languages and developed a primary interest in learning Arabic.^[37] Living at home, he funded his undergraduate degree by teaching Hebrew.^[38] However, he was frustrated with his experiences at the university, and considered dropping out and moving to a kibbutz in Mandatory Palestine.^[39] His intellectual curiosity was reawakened through conversations with the Russian-born linguist Zellig Harris, whom he first met in a political circle in 1947. Harris introduced Chomsky to the field of theoretical linguistics and convinced him to major in the subject.^[40] Chomsky's B.A. honors thesis was titled "Morphophonemics of Modern Hebrew", and involved him applying Harris's methods to the language.^[41] Chomsky revised this thesis for his M.A., which he received at Penn in 1951; it would subsequently be published as a book.^[42] He also developed his interest in philosophy while at university, in particular under the tutelage of his teacher Nelson Goodman.^[43]

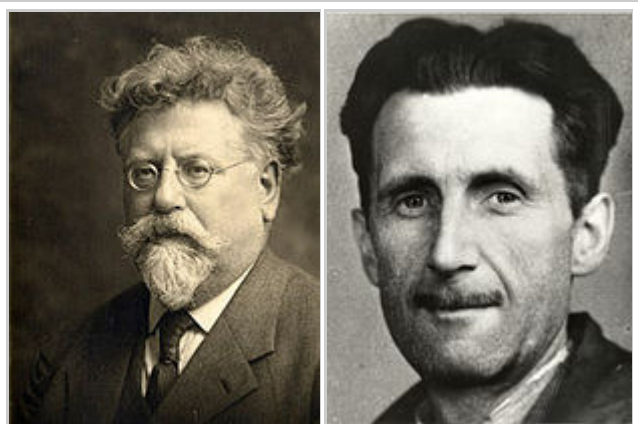


Chomsky's *almae matres*, the University of Pennsylvania and the Harvard Society of Fellows

From 1951 to 1955, Chomsky was named to the Society of Fellows at Harvard University, where he undertook research on what would become his doctoral dissertation.^[44] Having been encouraged by Goodman to apply,^[45] a significant factor in his decision to move to Harvard was that the philosopher W. V. Quine was based there. Both Quine and a visiting philosopher, J. L. Austin of the University of Oxford, would strongly influence Chomsky.^[46] In 1952, Chomsky published his first academic article, "Systems of Syntactic Analysis", which appeared not in a journal of linguistics, but in *The Journal of Symbolic Logic*.^[45] Being highly critical of the established behaviorist currents in linguistics, in 1954 he presented his ideas at lectures given at the University of Chicago and Yale University.^[47] Although he had not been registered as a student at Pennsylvania for four years, in 1955 he submitted a thesis to them setting out his ideas on transformational grammar; he was awarded his Ph.D. on the basis of it, and it would be privately distributed among specialists on microfilm before being published in 1975 as part of *The Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory*.^[48] Possession of this Ph.D. nullified his requirement to enter national service in the armed forces, which was otherwise due to begin in 1955.^[49] George Armitage Miller, a Professor at Harvard, read the Ph.D. and was impressed; together he and Chomsky published a number of technical papers in mathematical linguistics.^[50]

In 1947, Chomsky entered into a romantic relationship with Carol Doris Schatz, whom he had known since they were toddlers, and they married in 1949.^[51] After Chomsky was made a Fellow at Harvard, the couple moved to an apartment in the Allston area of Boston, remaining there until 1965, when they relocated to the city's Lexington area.^[52] In 1953 the couple took up a Harvard travel grant in order to visit Europe, traveling from England through France and Switzerland and into Italy.^[53] On that same trip they also spent six weeks at Hashomer Hatzair's HaZore'a kibbutz in the newly established Israel; although enjoying himself, Chomsky was appalled by the Jewish nationalism and anti-Arab racism that he encountered in the country, as well as the pro-Stalinist trend that he thought pervaded the kibbutz's leftist community.^[54]

On visits to New York City, Chomsky continued to frequent the office of Yiddish anarchist journal *Freie Arbeiter Stimme*, becoming enamored with the ideas of contributor Rudolf Rocker, whose work introduced him to the link between anarchism and classical liberalism.^[55] Other political thinkers whose work Chomsky read included the anarchist Diego Abad de Santillán, democratic socialists George Orwell, Bertrand Russell, and



The work of anarcho-syndicalist Rudolf Rocker (left) and democratic socialist George Orwell (right) significantly influenced the young Chomsky.

Dwight Macdonald, and works by Marxists Karl Liebknecht, Karl Korsch, and Rosa Luxemburg.^[56] His readings convinced him of the desirability of an anarcho-syndicalist society, and he became fascinated by the anarcho-syndicalist communes set up during the Spanish Civil War, which were documented in Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* (1938).^[57] He avidly read leftist journal *politics*, remarking that it "answered to and developed" his interest in anarchism,^[58] as well as the periodical *Living Marxism*, published by council communist Paul Mattick. Although rejecting its Marxist basis, Chomsky was heavily influenced by council communism, voraciously reading articles in *Living Marxism* written by Antonie Pannekoek.^[59] He was also greatly interested in the Marlenite ideas of the Leninist League, an anti-Stalinist Marxist–Leninist group, sharing their views

that the Second World War was orchestrated by Western capitalists and the Soviet Union's 'state capitalists' to crush Europe's proletariat.^[60]

Early career: 1955–1966

Chomsky had befriended two linguists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), Morris Halle and Roman Jakobson, the latter of whom secured him an assistant professor position at MIT in 1955. There Chomsky spent half his time on a mechanical translation project, and the other half teaching a course on linguistics and philosophy.^[61] He later described MIT as "a pretty free and open place, open to experimentation and without rigid requirements. It was just perfect for someone of my idiosyncratic interests and work."^[62] In 1957 MIT promoted him to the position of associate professor, and from 1957 to 1958 he was also employed by Columbia University as a visiting professor.^[63] That same year, Chomsky's first child, a daughter named Aviva, was born,^[64] and he published his first book on linguistics, *Syntactic Structures*, a work that radically opposed the dominant Harris–Bloomfield trend in the field.^[65] The response to Chomsky's ideas ranged from indifference to hostility, and his work proved divisive and caused "significant upheaval" in the discipline.^[66] Linguist John Lyons later asserted that it "revolutionized the scientific study of language".^[67] From 1958 to 1959 Chomsky was a National Science Foundation fellow at the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey.^[68]

In 1959 he published a review of B.F. Skinner's 1957 book *Verbal Behavior* in the journal *Language*, in which he argued against Skinner's view of language as learned behavior.^[69] Opining that Skinner ignored the role of human creativity in linguistics, his review helped him to become an "established intellectual",^[70] and he proceeded to found MIT's Graduate Program in linguistics with Halle. In 1961 he was awarded academic tenure, being made a full professor in the Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics.^[71] He went on to be appointed plenary speaker at the Ninth International Congress of Linguists, held in 1962 in Cambridge, Massachusetts, which established him as the *de facto* spokesperson of American linguistics.^[72] He continued to publish his linguistic ideas throughout the decade, including in *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1966), *Topics in the Theory of Generative Grammar* (1966), and *Cartesian Linguistics: A Chapter in the History of Rationalist Thought* (1966).^[73] Along with Halle, he also edited the *Studies in Language* series of books for Harper and Row,^[74] and extended the theory of generative grammar to phonology in *The Sound Pattern of English* (1968).^[75] He continued to receive academic recognition and honors for his work, in 1966 visiting a variety of

Californian institutions, first as the Linguistics Society of America Professor at the University of California, and then as the Beckman Professor at the University of California, Berkeley.^[76] His Beckman lectures would be assembled and published as *Language and Mind* in 1968.^[77] The ensuing debates between Chomsky and his critics came to be known as the 'Linguistics Wars', although they revolved largely around debating philosophical issues rather than linguistics proper.^[78]

Later life

Anti-Vietnam War activism and rise to prominence: 1967–1975

[I]t does not require very far-reaching, specialized knowledge to perceive that the United States was invading South Vietnam. And, in fact, to take apart the system of illusions and deception which functions to prevent understanding of contemporary reality [is] not a task that requires extraordinary skill or understanding. It requires the kind of normal skepticism and willingness to apply one's analytical skills that almost all people have and that they can exercise.

Chomsky on the Vietnam War^[79]

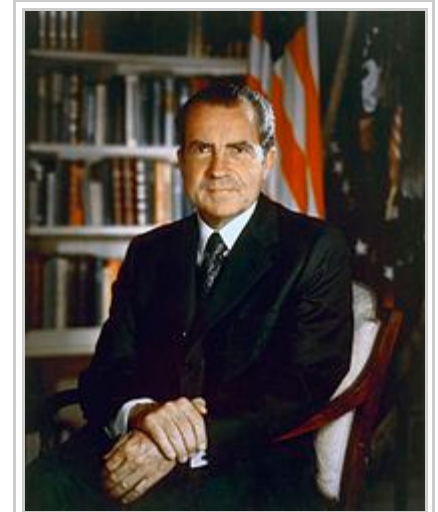
Chomsky first involved himself in active political protest against U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War in 1962, speaking on the subject at small gatherings in churches and homes.^[80] However, it was not until 1967 that he publicly entered the debate on United States foreign policy.^[81] In February he published a widely read essay in *The New York Review of Books* entitled "The Responsibility of Intellectuals", in which he criticized the country's involvement in the conflict; the essay was based on an earlier talk that he had given to Harvard's Foundation for Jewish Campus Life.^[82] He expanded on his argument to produce his first political book, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, which was published in 1969 and soon established him at the forefront of American dissent.^[83] His other political books of the time included *At War with Asia* (1971), *The Backroom Boys* (1973), *For Reasons of State* (1973), and *Peace in the Middle East?* (1975), published by Pantheon Books.^[84] Coming

to be associated with the American New Left movement,^[85] he nevertheless thought little of prominent New Left intellectuals Herbert Marcuse and Erich Fromm, and preferred the company of activists to intellectuals.^[86] Although *The New York Review of Books* did publish contributions from Chomsky and other leftists from 1967 to 1973, when an editorial change put a stop to it,^[87] he was virtually ignored by the rest of the mainstream press throughout the late 1960s and early 1970s.^[88]

Along with his writings, Chomsky also became actively involved in left-wing activism. Refusing to pay half his taxes, he publicly supported students who refused the draft, and was arrested for being part of an anti-war teach-in outside the Pentagon.^[89] During this time, Chomsky, along with Mitchell Goodman, Denise Levertov, William Sloane Coffin, and Dwight Macdonald, also founded the anti-war collective RESIST.^[90] Although he questioned the objectives of the 1968 student protests,^[91] he gave many lectures to student activist groups; furthermore, he and his colleague Louis Kampf began running undergraduate courses on politics at MIT, independently of the conservative-dominated political science department.^[92] During this period, MIT's various departments were researching helicopters, smart bombs and counterinsurgency techniques for the war in Vietnam and, as Chomsky says, "a good deal of [nuclear] missile guidance technology was developed right on the MIT campus".^[93] As Chomsky elaborates, "[MIT was] about 90% Pentagon funded at that time. And I personally was right in the middle of it. I was in a military lab ... the Research Laboratory for Electronics."^[94] By 1969, student activists were actively campaigning "to stop the war research" at MIT.^[95] Chomsky was sympathetic to the students but he also thought it best to keep such research on campus and he proposed that it should be restricted to what he called "systems of a purely defensive and deterrent character".^[96] During this period, MIT had six of its anti-war student activists sentenced to prison terms. Chomsky says MIT's students

suffered things that "should not have happened", though he has also described MIT as "the freest and the most honest and has the best relations between faculty and students than at any other ... [with] quite a good record on civil liberties".^[97] In 1970 he visited the Vietnamese city of Hanoi to give a lecture at the Hanoi University of Science and Technology; on this trip he also toured Laos to visit the refugee camps created by the war, and in 1973 he was among those leading a committee to commemorate the fiftieth anniversary of the War Resisters League.^[98]

As a result of his anti-war activism, Chomsky was ultimately arrested on multiple occasions, and U.S. President Richard Nixon included him on the master version of his Enemies List.^[99] He was aware of the potential repercussions of his civil disobedience, and his wife began studying for her own Ph.D. in linguistics in order to support the family in the event of Chomsky's imprisonment or loss of employment.^[100] However, MIT — despite being under some pressure to do so — refused to fire him due to his influential standing in the field of linguistics.^[101] His work in this area continued to gain international recognition; in 1967 he received honorary doctorates from both the University of London and the University of Chicago.^[102] In 1970, Loyola University and Swarthmore College also awarded him honorary D.H.L.'s, as did Bard College in 1971, Delhi University in 1972, and the University of Massachusetts in 1973.^[103]

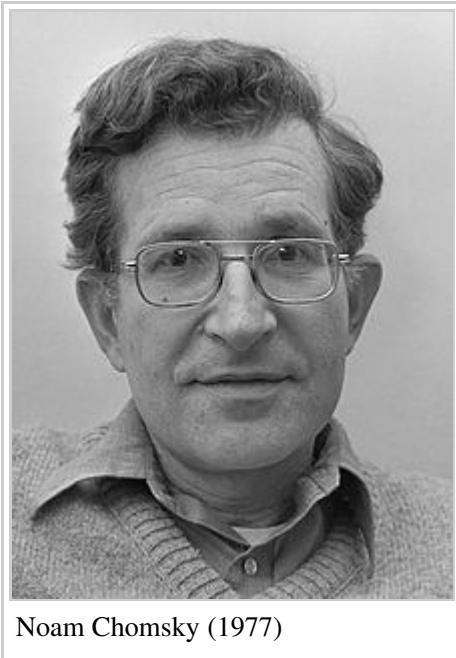


President Richard Nixon placed Chomsky on his 'Enemies List'.

In 1971 Chomsky gave the Bertrand Russell Memorial Lectures at the University of Cambridge, which were published as *Problems of Knowledge and Freedom* later that year. He also delivered the Whidden Lectures at McMaster University, the Huizinga Lecture at Leiden University in the Netherlands, the Woodbridge Lectures at Columbia University, and the Kant Lectures at Stanford University.^[104] In 1971 he partook in a televised debate with French philosopher Michel Foucault on Dutch television, entitled *Human Nature: Justice versus Power*.^[105] Although largely agreeing with Foucault's ideas, he was critical of post-modernism and French philosophy generally, believing that post-modern leftist philosophers used obfuscating language which did little to aid the cause of the working-classes^[106] and lambasting France as having "a highly parochial and remarkably illiterate culture".^[107] Chomsky also continued to publish prolifically in linguistics, publishing *Studies on Semantics in Generative Grammar* (1972),^[101] an enlarged edition of *Language and Mind* (1972),^[108] and *Reflections on Language* (1975).^[108] In 1974 he became a corresponding fellow of the British Academy.^[104]

Edward Herman and the Faurisson affair: 1976–1980

Throughout the late 1970s and 1980s, Chomsky's publications expanded and clarified his earlier work, addressing his critics and updating his grammatical theory.^[109] His public talks often generated considerable controversy, particularly when he criticized actions of the Israeli government and military,^[110] and his political views came under attack from right-wing and centrist figures, the most prominent of whom was Alan Dershowitz. Chomsky considered Dershowitz "a complete liar" and accused him of actively misrepresenting his position on issues.^[111] Furthermore, during the early 1970s he had begun collaborating with Edward S. Herman, who had also published critiques of the U.S. war in Vietnam.^[112] Together they authored *Counter-Revolutionary Violence: Bloodbaths in Fact & Propaganda*, a book which criticized U.S. military involvement in Southeast Asia and highlighted how mainstream media neglected to cover stories about these activities; the publisher Warner Modular initially accepted it, and it was published in 1973. However, Warner Modular's parent company, Warner Communications, disapproved of the book's contents and ordered all copies to be



Noam Chomsky (1977)

destroyed.^[113]

While mainstream publishing options proved elusive, Chomsky found support from Michael Albert's South End Press, an activist-oriented publishing company.^[114] In 1979, Chomsky and Herman revised *Counter-Revolutionary Violence* and published it with South End Press as the two-volume *The Political Economy of Human Rights*.^[115] In this they compared U.S. media reactions to the Cambodian genocide and the Indonesian occupation of East Timor. They argued that because Indonesia was a U.S. ally, U.S. media ignored the East Timorese situation while focusing on that in Cambodia, a U.S. enemy.^{[116][117]} Taking a particular interest in the situation in East Timor, Chomsky testified on the subject in front of the United Nations' Special Committee on Decolonization in both 1978 and 1979, and attended a conference on the occupation held in Lisbon in 1979.^[118] The following year, Steven Lukas authored an article for the *Times Higher Education Supplement* accusing Chomsky of betraying his anarchist ideals and acting as an apologist for Cambodian leader Pol Pot. Although Laura J.

Summers and Robin Woodsworth Carlsen replied to the article, arguing that Lukas completely misunderstood Chomsky and Herman's work, Chomsky himself did not. The controversy damaged his reputation,^[119] and Chomsky maintains that his critics deliberately printed lies about him in order to defame him.^[120]

Although Chomsky had long publicly criticized Nazism and totalitarianism more generally, his commitment to freedom of speech led him to defend the right of French historian Robert Faurisson to advocate a position widely characterized as Holocaust denial. Without Chomsky's knowledge, his plea for the historian's freedom of speech was published as the preface to Faurisson's 1980 book *Mémoire en défense contre ceux qui m'accusent de falsifier l'histoire*.^[121] Chomsky was widely condemned for defending Faurisson,^[122] and France's mainstream press accused Chomsky of being a Holocaust denier himself, refusing to publish his rebuttals to their accusations.^[123] Critiquing Chomsky's position, sociologist Werner Cohn later published an analysis of the affair titled *Partners in Hate: Noam Chomsky and the Holocaust Deniers*.^[124] The Faurisson affair had a lasting, damaging effect on Chomsky's career,^[125] and Chomsky did not visit France, where the translation of his political writings was delayed until the 2000s,^[126] for almost thirty years following the affair.^[127]

Reaganite era and work on the media: 1980–89

The election of Republican Party candidate Ronald Reagan to the U.S. Presidency in 1980 marked a period of increased military intervention in Central America.^[128] In 1985, during Nicaragua's Contra War – in which the U.S. supported the Contra militia against the Sandinista government – Chomsky travelled to Managua to meet with workers' organizations and refugees of the conflict, giving public lectures on politics and linguistics.^[129] Many of these lectures would be published in 1987 as *On Power and Ideology: The Managua Lectures*.^[130] In 1983 he published *The Fateful Triangle*, an examination of the Israel-Palestine conflict and the place of the U.S. within it, arguing that the U.S. had continually used the conflict for its own ends.^[131] In 1988, Chomsky then visited the Palestinian territories to witness the impact of Israeli military occupation.^[132]

In 1988, Chomsky and Herman published *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, in which they outlined their propaganda model for understanding the mainstream media; there they argued that even in countries without official censorship, the news provided was censored through four filters which had a

great impact on what stories are reported and how they are presented.^[133] The book was adapted into a 1992 film, *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*, which was directed by Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick.^[134] In 1989, Chomsky published *Necessary Illusions: Thought Control in Democratic Societies*, in which he critiqued what he sees as the pseudo-democratic nature of Western capitalist states.^[135]

By the 1980s, a number of Chomsky's students had become leading linguistic specialists in their own right, expanding, revising, and expanding on Chomsky's ideas of generative grammar.^[136] By the end of the 1980s, Chomsky had established himself as a globally recognized figure.^[137]

Increased political activism: 1990–present

In the 1990s, Chomsky embraced political activism to a greater degree than before.^[138] Retaining his commitment to the cause of East Timorese independence, in 1995 he visited Australia to talk on the issue at the behest of the East Timorese Relief Association and the National Council for East Timorese Resistance.^[139] The lectures that he gave on the subject would be published as *Powers and Prospects* in 1996.^[139] As a result of the international publicity generated by Chomsky, his biographer Wolfgang Sperlich opined that he did more to aid the cause of East Timorese independence than anyone but the investigative journalist John Pilger.^[140] After East Timor's independence from Indonesia was achieved in 1999, the Australian-led International Force for East Timor arrived as a peacekeeping force; Chomsky was critical of this, believing that it was designed to secure Australian access to East Timor's oil and gas reserves under the Timor Gap Treaty.^[141]



Chomsky retired from full-time teaching,^[142] although as an Emeritus he nevertheless continued to conduct research and seminars at MIT.^[143]

After the September 11 attacks in 2001, Chomsky was widely interviewed, with these interviews being collated and published by Seven Stories Press in October.^[144] Chomsky argued that the ensuing War on Terror was not a new development, but rather a continuation of the same U.S. foreign policy and its concomitant rhetoric that had been pursued since at least the Reagan era of the 1980s.^[145] In 2003 he published *Hegemony or Survival*, in which he articulated what he called the United States' "imperial grand strategy" and critiqued the Iraq War and other aspects of the 'War on Terror.'^[146]

Chomsky toured the world with increasing regularity during this period, giving talks on various subjects.^[147] In 2001 he gave the D.T. Lakdawala Memorial Lecture^[148] in New Delhi, India, and in 2003 visited Cuba at the invite of the Latin American Association of Social Scientists.^[147] In 2002 Chomsky visited Turkey in order to attend the trial of a publisher who had been accused of treason for printing one of Chomsky's books; Chomsky insisted on being a co-defendant and amid international media attention the Security Courts dropped the prosecution on the first day.^[149] During that trip, Chomsky visited Kurdish areas of Turkey and spoke out in favour of the Kurds' human rights.^[149] A supporter of the World Social Forum, he attended their conferences in Brazil in both 2002 and 2003, also attending the Forum event in India.^[150]

His wife, Carol, died in December 2008.^[142]

Chomsky was drawn to the energy and activism of the Occupy movement, delivering talks at encampments and producing two works that chronicled its influence, first *Occupy* a pamphlet, in 2012, then, in 2013, *Occupy*:

Reflections on Class War, Rebellion and Solidarity. Both were published by Zuccotti Park Press. His analysis included a critique that attributed Occupy's growth as a response to a perceived abandonment of the interests of the white working class by the Democratic Party.^[151]

In late 2015, Chomsky announced his support for Vermont U.S. senator Bernie Sanders in the upcoming 2016 United States presidential election.^[152]

In early 2016, Chomsky was publicly rebuked by President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan of Turkey after he signed an open letter condemning the Turkish leader for his anti-Kurdish repression and supporting terrorism.^[153] Chomsky accused Erdoğan of hypocrisy and added that the Turkish president supports al-Qaeda's Syrian affiliate,^[154] the al-Nusra Front.^[153] Chomsky also criticized the U.S.'s close ties with Saudi Arabia and U.S. involvement in Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen, highlighting that Saudi has "one of the most grotesque human rights records in the world".^[155]

In 2016, the documentary *Requiem for the American Dream* was released, summarizing his views on capitalism and economic inequality through a "75-minute teach-in".^[156] *Requiem for the American Dream* was published as a book in 2017, it is a furthering of the ideas put forward in the 2016 documentary (Seven Stories Press).^[157]

In an interview with Al Jazeera, Chomsky called Donald Trump an "ignorant, thin-skinned megalomaniac" and a "greater evil" than Hillary Clinton. Asked about claims that Russia interfered in the U.S. presidential election through hacking, Chomsky said: "It's possible, but it's a kind of strange complaint in the United States. The U.S. has been interfering with, and undermining, elections all over the world for decades and is proud of it."^[158]

Linguistic theory

Within the field of linguistics, McGilvray credits Chomsky with inaugurating the "cognitive revolution".^[160] McGilvray also credits him with establishing the field as a formal, natural science,^[161] moving it away from the procedural form of structural linguistics that was dominant during the mid-20th century.^[162] As such, some have called him "the father of modern linguistics".^{[163][164][165][166]}

The basis to Chomsky's linguistic theory is rooted in biolinguistics, holding that the principles underlying the structure of language are biologically determined in the human mind and hence genetically transmitted.^[167] He therefore argues that all humans share the same underlying linguistic structure, irrespective of sociocultural differences.^[168] In adopting this position, Chomsky rejects the radical behaviorist psychology of B. F. Skinner which views the mind as a *tabula rasa* ("blank slate") and thus treats language as learned behavior.^[169] Accordingly, he argues that language is a unique evolutionary development of the human species and is unlike modes of communication used by any other animal species.^{[170][171]} Chomsky's nativist, internalist view of language is



Chomsky speaking in support of the Occupy movement in 2011

What started as purely linguistic research ... has led, through involvement in political causes and an identification with an older philosophic tradition, to no less than an attempt to formulate an overall theory of man. The roots of this are manifest in the linguistic theory ... The discovery of cognitive structures common to the human race but only to humans (species specific), leads quite easily to thinking of unalienable human attributes.

Edward Marcotte on Chomsky's linguistic theory^[159]

consistent with the philosophical school of "rationalism", and is contrasted with the anti-nativist, externalist view of language, which is consistent with the philosophical school of "empiricism".^{[172][159]}

Universal grammar

Since the 1960s, Chomsky has maintained that syntactic knowledge is at least partially inborn, implying that children need only learn certain parochial features of their native languages. Chomsky based his argument on observations about human language acquisition, noting that there is an enormous gap between the linguistic stimuli to which children are exposed and the rich linguistic knowledge they attain (see: "poverty of the stimulus" argument). For example, although children are exposed to only a finite subset of the allowable syntactic variants within their first language, they somehow acquire the ability to understand and produce an infinite number of sentences, including ones that have never before been uttered. To explain this, Chomsky reasoned that the primary linguistic data (PLD) must be supplemented by an innate linguistic capacity. Furthermore, while a human baby and a kitten are both capable of inductive reasoning, if they are exposed to exactly the same linguistic data, the human will always acquire the ability to understand and produce language, while the kitten will never acquire either ability. Chomsky labeled whatever relevant capacity the human has that the cat lacks as the language acquisition device (LAD), and he suggested that one of the tasks for linguistics should be to determine what the LAD is and what constraints it imposes on the range of possible human languages. The universal features that would result from these constraints constitute "universal grammar".^{[173][174][175]}

[Chomsky's] vision of a complex universe within the mind, governed by myriad rules and prohibitions and yet infinite in its creative potential, opens up vistas possibly as important as Einstein's theories.

Daniel Yergin in *The New York Times Magazine*^[159]

Transformational generative grammar

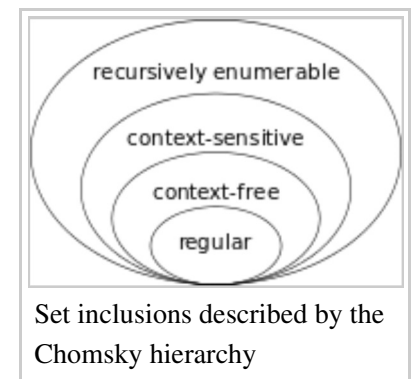
Beginning with his *Syntactic Structures* (1957), a distillation of his *Logical Structure of Linguistic Theory* (1955), Chomsky challenges structural linguistics and introduces transformational grammar.^[176]

Chomsky's theory posits that language consists of both **deep structures** and **surface structures**. Surface structure 'faces out' and is represented by spoken utterances, while deep structure 'faces inward' and expresses the underlying relations between words and

conceptual meaning. Transformational grammar is a generative grammar (which dictates that the syntax, or word order, of surface structures adheres to certain principles and parameters) that consists of a limited series of rules, expressed in mathematical notation, which transform deep structures into well-formed surface structures. The transformational grammar thus relates meaning and sound.^{[159][177]}

Chomsky hierarchy

The **Chomsky hierarchy**, sometimes referred to as the **Chomsky-Schützenberger hierarchy**, is a containment hierarchy of classes of formal grammars. The hierarchy imposes a logical structure across different language classes and provides a basis for understanding the relationship between grammars (devices that enumerate the valid sentences within languages). In order of increasing expressive power it includes regular (or Type-3) grammars, context-free (or Type-2) grammars, context-sensitive (or Type-1) grammars, and recursively enumerable (or Type-0) grammars. Each class is a strict subset of the class above it, i.e., each successive class can generate a broader set of formal languages (infinite sets of strings composed from finite sets of symbols, or alphabets) than



the one below.^[178] In addition to being important in linguistics, the Chomsky hierarchy is also relevant in theoretical computer science, especially in programming language theory,^[179] compiler construction, and automata theory.^[180]

Minimalist program

Since the 1990s, much of Chomsky's research has focused on what he calls the **Minimalist Program** (MP), in which he departs from much of his past research and instead attempts to simplify language into a system that relates meaning and sound using the minimum possible faculties that could be expected, given certain external conditions that are imposed on us independently. Chomsky dispenses with concepts such as 'deep structure' and 'surface structure' and instead places emphasis on the plasticity of the brain's neural circuits, along with which comes an infinite number of concepts, or 'Logical Forms.' When exposed to linguistic data, the brain of a hearer-speaker then proceeds to associate sound and meaning, and the rules of grammar that we observe are in fact only the consequences, or side effects, of the way that language works. Thus, while much of Chomsky's prior research has focused on the rules of language, he now focuses on the mechanisms that the brain uses to *create* these rules.^{[171][181]}

Political views

Chomsky's political views have changed little since his childhood,^[183] when he was influenced by the emphasis on political activism that was ingrained in Jewish working-class tradition.^[184] He usually identifies as an anarcho-syndicalist or a libertarian socialist.^[185] He views these positions not as precise political theories but as ideals which he thinks best meet the needs of humans: liberty, community, and freedom of association.^[186] Unlike some other socialists, such as those who accept Marxism, Chomsky believes that politics lies outside the remit of science;^[187] however, he still roots his ideas about an ideal society on empirical data and empirically justified theories.^[188]

The second major area to which Chomsky has contributed - and surely the best known in terms of the number of people in his audience and the ease of understanding what he writes and says - is his work on sociopolitical analysis, political, social, and economic history, and critical assessment of current political circumstance. In Chomsky's view, while those in power might - and do - try to obscure their intentions and defend their actions in ways that make them acceptable to citizens, it is easy for anyone who is willing to be critical and consider the facts to discern what they are up to.

James McGilvray, 2014^[182]

In Chomsky's view, the truth about political realities is systematically distorted or suppressed through elite corporate interests, who use corporate media, advertising, and think tanks to promote their own propaganda. His work seeks to reveal such manipulations and the truth that they obscure.^[189] He believes that "common sense" is all that is required to break through the web of falsehood and see the truth, if it is employed using both critical thinking skills and an awareness of the role that self-interest and self-deception plays on both oneself and on others.^[190] He believes that it is the moral responsibility of intellectuals to tell the truth about the world, but claims that few do so because they fear losing prestige and funding.^[191] He argues that, as such an intellectual, it is his duty to use his privilege, resources, and training to aid popular democracy movements their struggles.^[192]

Although he had joined protest marches and organized activist groups, he identifies his primarily political outlet as being that of education, offering free lessons and lectures to encourage wider political consciousness.^[193] His political writings have covered a wide range of topics, although there are a number of core themes throughout

much of his work.^[194] He is a member of the Industrial Workers of the World international union,^[195] and sits on the interim consultative committee of the International Organization for a Participatory Society.^[196]

United States foreign policy

Chomsky's published work has focused heavily on criticising the actions of the United States.^[197] Chomsky believes that the basic principle of the foreign policy of the United States is the establishment of "open societies" which are economically and politically controlled by the U.S. and where U.S.-based businesses can prosper.^[198] He argues that the U.S. seeks to suppress any movements within these countries that are not compliant to U.S. interests and ensure that U.S.-friendly governments are placed in power.^[191] When discussing current events, he emphasises their place within a wider historical perspective.^[197] He believes that official, sanctioned historical accounts of U.S. and British imperialism have consistently whitewashed these nations' actions in order to present them as having benevolent motives in either spreading democracy or, in older instances spreading Christianity; criticizing these accounts, he seeks to correct them.^[199] Prominent examples that he regularly cites are the actions of the British Empire in India and Africa, and the actions of the U.S. in Vietnam, the Philippines, Latin America, and the Middle East.^[199]

Chomsky explains his decision to focus on criticizing the U.S. over other countries as being because during his lifetime the country has militarily and economically dominated the world, and because its liberal democratic electoral system allows for the citizenry to exert an influence on government policy.^[200] His hope is that by spreading awareness of the negative impact that imperialism has on the populations affected by it, he can sway the population of the U.S. and other countries into opposing government policies that are imperialist in their nature.^[199] He urges people to criticize the motivations, decisions, and actions of their governments, to accept responsibility for one's own thoughts and actions, and to apply the same standards to others as one would apply to oneself.^[201]

He has been critical of U.S. involvement in the Israel-Palestine conflict, arguing that it has consistently blocked a peaceful settlement.^[191] Chomsky has long endorsed the left binationalist program, seeking to create a democratic state in the Levant that is home to both Jews and Arabs.^[202] However, acknowledging the realpolitik of the situation, Chomsky has also considered a two-state solution on the condition that both nation-states exist on equal terms.^[203] As a result of his criticisms of Israel, Chomsky was barred from entering Israel in 2010.^{[204][205][206][207][208]}

Capitalism and socialism

In his youth, Chomsky developed a dislike of capitalism and the selfish pursuit of material advancement.^[209] At the same time he developed a disdain for the authoritarian attempts to establish a socialist society, as represented by the Marxist–Leninist policies of the Soviet Union.^[210] Rather than accepting the common view among American economists that a spectrum exists between total state ownership of the economy on the one hand and total private ownership on the other, he instead suggests that a spectrum should be understood between total democratic control of the economy of the one hand and total autocratic control (whether state or private) on the other.^[211] He argues that Western capitalist nations are not really democratic,^[212] for in his view, a truly democratic society is one in which all persons have a say in public economic policy.^[213] He has stated his opposition to ruling elites, among them institutions like the IMF, World Bank, and GATT.^[214]

Chomsky highlights that since the 1970s, the U.S. has become increasingly economically unequal as a result of the repeal of various financial regulations and the rescindment of the Bretton Woods financial control

Socialism will be achieved only insofar as all social institutions, in particular the central industrial, commercial, and financial institutions of a modern society, are placed under democratic control in a federal industrial republic of the sort that Russell and others envisioned, with actively functioning workers' councils and other self-governing units in which each citizen, in Thomas Jefferson's words, will be "a direct participator in the government of affairs."

Noam Chomsky^[215]

agreements.^[216] He characterizes the U.S. as a *de facto* one-party state, viewing both the Republican Party and Democratic Party as manifestations of a single "Business Party" controlled by corporate and financial interests.^[217] Chomsky highlights that within Western capitalist liberal democracies, at least 80% of the population has no control over economic decisions, which are instead in the hands of a management class and ultimately controlled by a small, wealthy elite.^[218]

Noting that this economic system is firmly entrenched and difficult to overthrow, he believes that change is possible through the organized co-operation of large numbers of people who understand the problem and know how they want to re-organize the economy in a more equitable way.^[218] Although acknowledging that corporate domination of media and government stifle any significant change to this system, he sees reason for optimism, citing the historical examples of the social rejection of slavery as immoral, the advances in women's rights, and the forcing of government to justify invasions to illustrate how change is possible.^[216] He views violent revolution to overthrow a government as a last resort to be avoided if possible, citing the example of historical revolutions where the population's welfare has worsened as a result of the upheaval.^[218]

Chomsky deems libertarian socialist and anarcho-syndicalist ideas to be the inheritors of the classical liberal ideas of the Age of Enlightenment,^[219] arguing that his ideological position revolves around "nourishing the libertarian and creative character of the human being."^[220] He envisions an anarcho-syndicalist future in which there is direct worker control of the means of production, with society governed by workers' councils, who would select representatives to meet together at general assemblies.^[221] In this he believes that there will be no need for political parties.^[222] By controlling their productive life, he believes that individuals can gain job satisfaction, a sense of fulfilment, and purpose to their work.^[223] He argues that unpleasant and unpopular jobs could be fully automated, carried out by workers who are specially remunerated, or shared among everyone.^[224]

News media and propaganda

Chomsky's political writings have largely been focused with the two concepts of ideology and power, or the media and state policy.^[225] One of Chomsky's best-known works, *Manufacturing Consent*, dissects the media's role in reinforcing and acquiescing to state policies, across the political spectrum, while marginalizing contrary perspectives. Chomsky claims that this 'free-market' version of censorship is more subtle and difficult to undermine than the equivalent propaganda system which was present in the Soviet Union.^[226] As he argues, the mainstream press is corporate owned and thus reflects corporate priorities and interests.^[227] While acknowledging that many American journalists are dedicated and well-meaning, he argues that the choice of topics and issues featured in the mass media, the unquestioned premises on which that coverage rests, and the range of opinions that are expressed are all constrained to reinforce the state's ideology.^[228] He states that while the mass media will criticise individual politicians and political parties, it will not undermine the wider state-corporate nexus of which it is a part.^[229] As evidence, he highlights that the US mass media does not employ any socialist journalists or political commentators.^[230] He also points to examples of important news stories which have been ignored by U.S. mainstream media because reporting on them would reflect badly upon the U.S. state: for instance, it ignored the murder of Black Panther Fred Hampton with possible FBI involvement, the massacres perpetrated in Nicaragua by the U.S.-funded Contras, and the constant reporting on Israeli deaths

while ignoring the far larger number of Palestinian deaths in the conflict between those two nations.^[231] To remedy this situation, Chomsky calls for grassroots democratic control and involvement of the media.^[232]

Chomsky considers most conspiracy theories to be fruitless, distracting substitutes to thinking about policy formation in an institutional framework, where individual manipulation is secondary to broader social imperatives.^[233] He does not dismiss conspiracy theories outright, but he does consider them unproductive to challenging power in a substantial way. In response to the labeling of his own thoughts as "conspiracy theory", Chomsky has replied that it is very rational for the media to manipulate information in order to sell it, like any other business. He asks whether General Motors would be accused of conspiracy if they deliberately selected what they would use or discard to sell their product.^[234]

Philosophy

Chomsky has also been active in a number of philosophical fields, including the philosophy of mind, the philosophy of language, and the philosophy of science.^[235] In these fields he has been highly critical of many other philosophers, in particular those operating within the field of cognitive science.^[235]

Personal life

Chomsky endeavors to keep his family life, linguistic scholarship, and political activism strictly separate from one another,^[236] calling himself "scrupulous at keeping my politics out of the classroom".^[237] An intensely private person,^[238] he is uninterested in appearances and the fame that his work has brought him.^[239] McGilvray suggested that Chomsky was never motivated by a desire for fame, but that he was impelled to tell what he perceived as the truth and a desire to aid others in doing so.^[240] He also has little interest in modern art and music.^[241] He reads four or five newspapers daily; in the U.S., he subscribes to *The Boston Globe*, *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Financial Times*, and *The Christian Science Monitor*.^[242] He acknowledges that his income and the financial security that it accords him means that he lives a privileged life compared to the majority of the world's population.^[243] He characterizes himself as a "worker", albeit one who uses his intellect as his employable skill.^[142]

Chomsky's intellectual life had been divided between his work in linguistics and his political activism, philosophy coming as a distant third. Nonetheless, his influence among analytic philosophers has been enormous ... he has persistently defended his views against all takers, engaging in important debates with many of the major figures in analytic philosophy throughout his career.

Zoltán Gendler Szabó, 2004^[177]

Despite having been raised Jewish, Chomsky is currently non-religious, although he has expressed approval of forms of religion such as liberation theology.^[244] He is known for his "dry, laconic wit",^[245] and for the use of irony in his writings,^[246] and has attracted controversy for labeling established political and academic figures with terms like "corrupt", "fascist", and "fraudulent".^[245] Chomsky's colleague Steven Pinker has said that he "portrays people who disagree with him as stupid or evil, using withering scorn in his rhetoric", and that this contributes to the extreme reactions that he generates from his critics.^[247] Chomsky avoids attending academic conferences, including left-oriented ones such as the Socialist Scholars Conference, preferring to speak to activist groups or hold university seminars for mass audiences.^[248]

Chomsky was married to Carol Doris Schatz (Chomsky) from 1949 until her death in 2008.^{[249][250]} They had three children together: Aviva (b.1957), Diane (b.1960), and Harry (b.1967).^[251] In 2014, Chomsky married Valeria Wasserman.^[252]

Reception and influence

Chomsky's legacy is as both a "leader in the field" of linguistics and "a figure of enlightenment and inspiration" for political dissenters.^[254] Despite his academic success, his political viewpoints and activism have resulted in him being distrusted by the mainstream media apparatus, and he is regarded as being "on the outer margin of acceptability."^[255]

In academia

Linguist John Lyons remarked that within a few decades of publication, Chomskyan linguistics had become "the most dynamic and influential" school of thought in the field.^[256] By the 1970s, his work had also come to exert a considerable influence on philosophy,^[257] while a poll conducted by Minnesota State University found *Syntactic Structures* to be the single most important work in the field of cognitive science.^[258] In addition, his work in automata theory and the Chomsky hierarchy has become well known in computer science, and he is much cited within the field of computational linguistics.^{[259][260][261]}

Chomsky's work contributed substantially to the decline of behaviorist psychology;^[262] in addition, some arguments in evolutionary psychology are derived from his research results.^[263] Nim Chimpsky, a chimpanzee who was the subject of a study in animal language acquisition at Columbia University, was named after Chomsky in reference to his view of language acquisition as a uniquely human ability.^[264]

The 1984 Nobel Prize laureate in Medicine and Physiology, Niels Kaj Jerne, used Chomsky's generative model to explain the human immune system, equating "components of a generative grammar ... with various features of protein structures". The title of Jerne's Stockholm Nobel Lecture was "The Generative Grammar of the Immune System".^[265] His theory of generative grammar has also carried over into music theory and analysis.^{[266][267][268]}

An MIT press release found that Chomsky was cited within the Arts and Humanities Citation Index more often than any other living scholar from 1980 to 1992.^[269]

Despite their respect for his intellectual contribution, a number of linguists and philosophers have been very critical of Chomsky's approach to language. These critics include Christina Behme, Rudolph Botha, Vyvyan Evans, Daniel Everett, Chris Knight, Bruce Nevin and Michael Tomasello.^[270]

Chomsky's approach to academic freedom has led him to give support to MIT academics whose actions he deplors. In 1969, when Chomsky heard that Walt Rostow, a major architect of the Vietnam war, wanted to return to work at MIT, Chomsky threatened "to protest publicly" if Rostow was "denied a position at MIT". Then, in 1989, when Pentagon adviser, John Deutch, wanted to be the President of MIT, Chomsky supported his candidacy. Later, when Deutch became head of the CIA, the *New York Times* quoted Chomsky as saying, "He has more honesty and integrity than anyone I've ever met If somebody's got to be running the C.I.A., I'm glad it's him."^[271]

In politics

[Chomsky's] voice is heard in academia beyond linguistics and philosophy: from computer science to neuroscience, from anthropology to education, mathematics and literary criticism. If we include Chomsky's political activism then the boundaries become quite blurred, and it comes as no surprise that Chomsky is increasingly seen as enemy number one by those who inhabit that wide sphere of reactionary discourse and action.

Sperlich, 2006^[253]

[Chomsky's] become the guru of the new anti-capitalist and Third World movements. They take his views very uncritically; it's part of the Seattle mood – whatever America does is wrong. He confronts orthodoxy but he's becoming a big simplifier. What he can't see is Third World and other regimes that are oppressive and not controlled by America.

Fred Halliday, 2001^[272]

Chomsky biographer Wolfgang B. Sperlich characterizes the linguist and activist as "one of the most notable contemporary champions of the people",^[238] while journalist John Pilger described him as a "genuine people's hero; an inspiration for struggles all over the world for that basic decency known as freedom. To a lot of people in the margins – activists and movements – he's unfailingly supportive."^[272] Arundhati Roy called him "one of the greatest, most radical public thinkers of our time",^[273] and Edward Said thought him to be "one of the most significant challengers of unjust power and delusions".^[272] Fred Halliday stated that by the start of the 21st century, Chomsky had become a "guru" for the world's anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist movements.^[272] The propaganda

model of media criticism that he and Herman developed has been widely accepted in radical media critiques and adopted to some level in mainstream criticism of the media,^[274] also exerting a significant influence on the growth of alternative media, including radio, publishers, and the Internet, which in turn have helped to disseminate his work.^[275]

However, Sperlich notes that Chomsky has been vilified by corporate interests, particularly in the mainstream press.^[143] University departments devoted to history and political science rarely include Chomsky's work on their syllabuses for undergraduate reading.^[276] Critics have argued that despite publishing widely on social and political issues, Chomsky has no expertise in these areas; to this he has responded that such issues are not as complex as many social scientists claim and that almost everyone is able to comprehend them, regardless of whether they have been academically trained to do so or not.^[192]

His far-reaching criticisms of U.S. foreign policy and the legitimacy of U.S. power have raised controversy.^[277] A document obtained pursuant to a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request from the U.S. government revealed that the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) monitored Chomsky's activities and for years denied doing so. The CIA also destroyed its files on Chomsky at some point in time, possibly in violation of federal law.^[278] He has often received undercover police protection at MIT and when speaking on the Middle East, although he has refused uniformed police protection.^[279] German newspaper *Der Spiegel* described him as "the Ayatollah of anti-American hatred",^[143] while conservative commentator David Horowitz termed him "the most devious, the most dishonest and ... the most treacherous intellect in America", one whose work was infused with an "anti-American dementia" and which evidences Chomsky's "pathological hatred of his own country".^[280] Writing in *Commentary* magazine, the journalist Jonathan Kay described Chomsky as "a hard-boiled anti-American monomaniac who simply refuses to believe anything that any American leader says".^[281]



Bolivian Vice President Álvaro García Linera with Noam Chomsky in New York, 8 June 2013

His criticism of Israel has led to him being accused of being a traitor to the Jewish people and an anti-Semite.^[282] Criticizing Chomsky's defense of the right of individuals to engage in Holocaust denial on the grounds that freedom of speech must be extended to all viewpoints, Werner Cohn accused Chomsky of being "the most important patron" of the Neo-Nazi movement,^[283] while the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) accused him of being a Holocaust denier himself.^[284] The ADL have been accused of monitoring Chomsky's

activities,^[285] and have characterised him as a "dupe of intellectual pride so overweening that he is incapable of making distinctions between totalitarian and democratic societies, between oppressors and victims".^[284] In turn, Chomsky has claimed that the ADL is dominated by "Stalinist types" who oppose democracy in Israel.^[282] Alan Dershowitz considered Chomsky to be a "false prophet of the left",^[286] while Chomsky has accused Dershowitz of being on "a crazed jihad, dedicating much of his life to trying to destroy my reputation".^[287]

According to McGilvray, many of Chomsky's critics "do not bother quoting his work or quote out of context, distort, and create straw men that cannot be supported by Chomsky's text".^[192]

In Spring 2017, Chomsky taught a short-term politics course at the University of Arizona.^[288]

Academic achievements, awards, and honors

In 1970, Chomsky was named one of the "makers of the twentieth century" by the London *Times*.^[159] In early 1969, he delivered the John Locke Lectures at Oxford University; in January 1971, the Bertrand Russell Memorial Lecture at the University of Cambridge; in 1972, the Nehru Memorial Lecture in New Delhi;^[289] in 1975, the Whidden Lectures at McMaster University;^[104] in 1977, the Huizinga Lecture in Leiden; in 1978, the Woodbridge Lectures at Columbia University; in 1979, the Kant Lectures at Stanford University;^[289] in 1988, the Massey Lectures at the University of Toronto; in 1997, The Davie Memorial Lecture on Academic Freedom in Cape Town;^[290] in 2011, the Rickman Godlee Lecture at University College, London;^[291] and many others.^[289]

Chomsky has received honorary degrees from many colleges and universities around the world, including from the following:

- American University of Beirut^[292]
- Amherst College^[289]
- Bard College^[289]
- Central Connecticut State University^[293]
- Columbia University^[289]
- Drexel University^[294]
- Georgetown University^[289]
- Harvard University^[289]
- International School for Advanced Studies^[292]
- Islamic University of Gaza^[292]
- Loyola University of Chicago^[289]
- McGill University^[289]
- National and Kapodistrian University of Athens^[293]
- National Autonomous University of Mexico^[292]
- National Tsing Hua University^[292]
- National University of Colombia^[289]
- National University of Comahue^[292]
- Peking University^[292]
- Rovira i Virgili University^[289]
- Santo Domingo Institute of Technology^[292]

- Scuola Normale Superiore di Pisa^[289]
- Swarthmore College^[289]
- University of Bologna^[293]
- University of Buenos Aires^[289]
- University of Calcutta^[289]
- University of Cambridge^[289]
- University of Chicago^[289]
- University of Chile^[292]
- University of Connecticut^[289]
- University of Cyprus^[292]
- University of Florence^[292]
- University of La Frontera^[292]
- University of Ljubljana^[292]
- University of London^[289]
- University of Massachusetts^[289]
- University of Pennsylvania^[289]
- University of St Andrews^[292]
- University of Toronto^[289]
- University of Western Ontario^[289]
- Uppsala University^[292]
- Visva-Bharati University^[159]
- Vrije Universiteit Brussel^[293]

In the United States, he is a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the National Academy of Sciences, the Linguistic Society of America, the American Philosophical Association, and the American Association for the Advancement of Science.^[159] Abroad, he is a member of the Utrecht Society of Arts and Sciences, the Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina, a corresponding fellow of the British Academy, an honorary member of the British Psychological Society,^[159] and a foreign member of the Department of Social Sciences of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts.^[295] In addition, he is a recipient of a 1971 Guggenheim Fellowship, the 1984 American Psychological Association Award for Distinguished Contributions to Psychology, 1988 the Kyoto Prize in Basic Sciences,^[159] the 1996 Helmholtz Medal, the 1999 Benjamin Franklin Medal in Computer and Cognitive Science, and the Dorothy Eldridge Peacemaker Award.^[289] He is also a two-time winner of the Gustavus Myers Center Award, receiving the honor in both 1986 and 1988, and the NCTE George Orwell Award for Distinguished Contribution to Honesty and Clarity in Public Language, receiving the honor in both 1987 and 1989.^[159] He has also received the Rabindranath Tagore Centenary Award from The Asiatic Society.^[296]

In 2004 Chomsky received the Carl-von-Ossietszky Prize from the city of Oldenburg, Germany to acknowledge his body of work as a political analyst and media critic.^[297] In 2005, Chomsky received an honorary fellowship from the Literary and Historical Society.^[298] In February 2008, he received the President's Medal from the Literary and Debating Society of the National University of Ireland, Galway.^[299] Since 2009, he has been an honorary member of International Association of Professional Translators and Interpreters (IAPTI).^[300]

In 2010, Chomsky received the Erich Fromm Prize in Stuttgart, Germany.^[301] In April 2010, Chomsky became

the third scholar to receive the University of Wisconsin's A.E. Havens Center's Award for Lifetime Contribution to Critical Scholarship.^[302]



The *Megachile chomskyi* holotype, a bee that was named after Chomsky

Chomsky has an Erdős number of four.^[303]

Chomsky was voted the world's leading public intellectual in The 2005 Global Intellectuals Poll jointly conducted by American magazine *Foreign Policy* and British magazine *Prospect*.^[304] In a list compiled by the magazine *New Statesman* in 2006, he was voted seventh in the list of "Heroes of our time."^[305]

Actor Viggo Mortensen and avant-garde guitarist Buckethead dedicated their 2003 album *Pandemoniumfromamerica* to Chomsky.^[306] On January 22, 2010, a special honorary concert for Chomsky was given at Kresge Auditorium at MIT. The concert, attended by Chomsky and dozens of his family and friends, featured music composed by Edward

Manukyan and speeches by Chomsky's colleagues, including David Pesetsky of MIT and Gennaro Chierchia, head of the linguistics department at Harvard University.^[307]

In May 2007, Jamia Millia Islamia, a prestigious Indian university, named one of its complexes after Noam Chomsky.^[308]

In June 2011, Chomsky was awarded the Sydney Peace Prize, which cited his "unfailing courage, critical analysis of power and promotion of human rights."^[309] Also in 2011, Chomsky was inducted into IEEE Intelligent Systems' AI's Hall of Fame for "significant contributions to the field of AI and intelligent systems."^[310]

In 2013, a newly described species of bee was named after him: *Megachile chomskyi*.^[311]

Bibliography and filmography

See also

- American philosophy
- New Left
- Axiom of categoricity
- *The Anti-Chomsky Reader*
- Judith Chomsky
- "Colorless green ideas sleep furiously"
- Knowledge worker
- List of pioneers in computer science
- List of peace activists
- List of linguists

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