Anarchism and the Movement Against Globalization in the United States

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Introduction

The anti-globalization movement in the United States has received considerable attention over the past few years, invigorating tens of thousands of protesters to meetings of international economic institutions and bringing globalization to the attention of millions previously unaware of the fixtures and policies of global capitalism.[1] Though largely unrecognized by many scholars discussing the anti-globalization movement, anarchism has been, as anarchist scholar David Graeber has observed, "the heart of the movement, its soul; the source of most of what's new and hopeful about it." [2] An examination the three most recent large-scale anti-globalization protests in the United States reveals that anarchists have played a crucial role in organizing these actions. Further, anarchist ideals (including non-hierarchical organizing, consensus process, and spokes council meetings) have been the means by which most of the movement has advanced and mobilized.

The Limitations of SMO Theory

Unlike most social movements, anarchists do not simply seek reforms, but rather, seek a radical reconstruction of the systems to which they are opposed. Anarchists advocate the elimination of power, domination, hierarchy, economic and social inequality, as well as what they believe to be their institutional manifestations- capitalism, government, and corporate globalization. These distinctions between other social movements make seeking reform or incorporation into a hierarchical and/or capitalist system something viewed as a failure, as it would be a direct ideological detraction from the key principles of anarchism.

Thus, much of the scholarship on social movement organizations (SMOs) is insufficient for understanding the anarchist movement against globalization. Most scholars have based their work on groups that advocate reforms. Indeed, radical social movements, such as the anarchist mobilization against globalization, have often been neglected or marginalized in these studies and because of this, much of SMO theory is inadequate to accurately assess social movement organizations that do not seek reform, but radical change.[3]

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[1] While this paper focuses on the anarchist movement against globalization in the United States, it is necessary to note that the movement is international. This paper does not discuss the recent protests in Prague, Quebec, or Davos or the importance of anarchist movements across borders or oversees. Further, it is important to observe that the movement against globalization did not originate in the United States (or with anarchists), with some (I believe rightly) suggesting that "it began five hundred years ago- when colonialists first told indigenous peoples that they were going to have to do things differently if they were to 'develop' or be eligible for trade." Naomi Klein, "Reclaiming the Commons." *New Left Review* 9 (May-Jun 2001), p. 81.

[2] David Graeber, "The New Anarchists." *New Left Review* 13 (Jan-Feb. 2002), p. 62.
Only recently have scholars began to realize anarchism's importance. See, for example, Mark Rupert, "Anti-Capitalist Convergence? Anarchism, Socialism, and the Global Justice Movement." Presented at the conference on *Ideological Dimensions of Globalization*, Globalization Research Center, University of Hawaii, 9-12 December 2002.

[3] Kathleen J. Fitzgerald & Diane M. Rodgers, "Radical Social Movement Organizations: A Theoretical Model." *The Sociological Quarterly* 41 (Fall 2000).

Many SMO theorists have concluded that the achievements of a SMO can be defined in terms of "whether or not the organization succeeds in incorporating its participants into the existing political/economic structure."[4] This notion was largely proliferated by resource mobilization theory, which dominated SMO theory of the 70s and 80s. In their famous work, John D. McCarthy and Mayer N. Zald studied only reformists groups and concluded that incorporation into the political system should be a measure of success for a SMO.[5] As J. Craig Jenkins has noted, resource mobilization "research has been confined largely to liberal democratic regimes, linking movement access to changing electoral alignments, growing coalitions, and the institutional structure of the state."[6]

While numerous critiques have emerged against resource mobilization theory, much of the SMO literature still uses reformist groups as a base of study and views incorporation into the political system as a success. As Doug McAdam recently noted, "we see nothing in the events of the past quarter century to contradict" the findings of McCarthy and Zald.[7] He concludes, "the social movement is well on its way to being institutionalized as a feature of western democratic politics." Indeed, Sidney Tarrow recently illustrated the common understanding of a successful SMO: "a movement organizes massive public demonstrations on behalf of its demands; the government permits and even facilitates its continued expression; numerical growth has its direct effect in electing candidates to office; therefore, the movement turns into a party or enters a party in order to influence its policies."[8]

This framework for the political success of a SMO is insufficient when attempting to understand and assess groups with radical ideologies. For these groups, incorporation into the system to which they strictly oppose should, in fact, be viewed as a failure. However, little theory has been developed to accurately understand these movements. As one scholar has noted, "even theories of the most recent past are not necessarily applicable to the collective actions of today. In other words, we do not have good models to describe, let alone understand, how [radical] social movements… mobilize, construct their strategies, and articulate their claims."[9]

RSMO Theory and Anarchist Organization
Kathleen J. Fitzgerald and Diane M. Rodgers have developed one method of understanding radical social movement organizations (RSMOs). They note that RSMOs "focus on a radical restructuring of the system," are typically non-bureaucratic, non-hierarchically, anti-capitalist, and "emphasize working outside the current political/economic system."[10] Fitzgerald and Rodgers make clear that RSMOs must be judged by different standards than SMOs. They note that "RSMOs have been misinterpreted within social movement literature because they fail to fit the theoretical models, not because they have failed at their organizational objectives."[11] Indeed, "in order to adequately understand and assess social movement organizations, we must avoid imposing externally derived definitions of success and failure and instead take a 'bottom-up'

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[4] Ibid., p. 576.

[5] John D. McCarthy & Mayer N. Zald, "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory." *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 82. Issue 6 (May 1977), p. 1217.

[6] J. Craig Jenkins, "Resource Mobilization Theory and the Study of Social Movements." *Annual Review of Sociology* Vol. 9 (1983), p. 549.

[7] Doug McAdam, "The Future of Social Movements," in *From Contention to Democracy*, eds. Marco G. Guigni, Doug McAdam, & Charles Tilly (New York: Roman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc. 1998), p. 230.

[8] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics* (Second Edition: Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 84.

[9] Arturo Escobar, "Notes on Networks and Anti-Globalization Social Movements." Presented at the 2000 AAA Annual Meeting, San Francisco, November 15-19. Unpublished (A copy can be found at www.unc.edu/depts/anthro/faculty/fac_pages/escobarpaper.html)

[10] Fitzgerald & Rodgers, "Radical Social Movements," p. 573, 588.

[11] Ibid., p. 576.

approach: attempt to understand the organizations from the point of view of the participants themselves."[12]

The current anarchist movement against corporate globalization is a RSMO for which this theory is applicable. As one movement participant has observed, anarchists view capital and the state as "institutionalized systems of domination" which cannot "be mended or made benign," thus viewing incorporation to or engagement with the state as a failure.[13] This has led to the development of alternative systems of organization in the movement; ones without systems of hierarchy and domination found in institutions as the government. The creation of these new forms of organization consistent with anarchist ideologies has been a principle tactic (and goal) of the movement. As one anarchist explains, "the means and methods that are used for achieving a goal must be consistent with the goal itself. If we are out to achieve the goal of a free society we cannot do so by authoritarian, top-down means…. If our collective goal is a free society, then we must organize and make decisions in the same manner that we would if we were actually living in a free society right now."[14]

The movement therefore maintains "a decentralized organizational structure, based on affinity groups that work together on an ad hoc basis," with decisions made by consensus.[15] By organizing on these principles of direct democracy, the movement attempts to use methods that challenge the systems of capitalism and government. "Direct democracy is completely at odds with both the state and capitalism," an anarchist explains, "For as 'rule of the people' (the etymological root of *democracy*), democracy's underlying logic is essentially the unceasing movement of freedom making."[16] It is Graeber who perhaps makes most clear the purpose of the tactics used by the movement: "It is about creating new forms of organization. It is not lacking in ideology. Those new forms of organization *are* its ideology. It is about creating and enacting horizontal networks instead of top-down structures like states, parties, or corporations; networks based on principles of decentralized, non-hierarchical consensus democracy."[17]

The organizational structure of direct democracy aims to create "forms of democratic process that allow initiatives to rise from below and attain maximum effective solidarity, without stifling dissenting voices, creating leadership positions or compelling anyone to do anything which they have not freely agreed to do."[18] Two of the most utilized examples of this democratic process in anarchist organizing are affinity groups and spokescouncil meetings. Affinity groups, first used by anarchists in Spain during the late 19th Century, typically number between three and twenty-five people, who work in an autonomous and non-hierarchical fashion to further an explicit collective goal, such as blocking off a city street during a protest or supplying food to a demonstration.[19] Decisions within affinity groups are made by consensus, a structured process developed to ensure that each person's opinions are represented. After the members of the group present and discuss ideas, concerns are addressed and amendments can be made to the original proposal if everyone agrees to them. Consensus is then called and group members can either agree with the proposal, 'stand aside' (which communicates that the person will not participate in the proposal themselves, but would not block others from doing it), or block (in which the person communicates that the proposal "violates the fundamental principles or purposes of being in the group.")[20] The group will then address the person's reasons for blocking and the process

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[12] Ibid. p. 578.
[13] Cindy Milstein, "Democracy is Direct." Pamphlet published by the Institute for Social Ecology, p. 4.
[14] Shawn Ewald, Ed. *Anarchism in Action: Methods, Tactics, Skills, and Ideas.* Unpublished. (A copy can be found at http://www.radio4all.org/aia), p. 5.
[15] Barbara Epstein, "Anarchists and the Anti-Globalization Movement." *Monthly Review* Vol. 53, Num. 4. (September 2001).
[16] Milstein, "Democracy," p. 4.
[17] Graeber, "The New Anarchists," p. 70.
[18] Ibid., p. 71.
[19] Ewald, *Anarchism in Action*, p. 15.
[20] Graeber, "The New Anarchists," p. 71.

continues until everyone agrees or stands aside for the proposal. The affinity groups are largely seen as successful in representing peoples' interests and allowing for various voices to be heard. As one participant noted, "we may not always agree with each other, but there is a fair amount of *homogeneity* precisely because we've consciously chosen to come together." [21]

Spokes-councils occur most often when large actions or protests are coordinated between various groups. Each affinity group empowers a representative, a 'spoke,' to give voice to the group at the spokes-council meeting. These meetings also operate on the consensus model and thus the process of the meeting is very similar to affinity groups. However, often before major decisions, spokes reconvene with their affinity groups to ensure that the members will be in consensus about the position. In contrast to the US political system, anarchist Cindy Milstein argues that these processes "strive to take everyone's needs and desires into account. Substantive discussion replaces checking boxes on a ballot; face to face participation replaces handing over our lives to so-called representatives."[22]

Utilizing forms of organization based on the principles that the movement desires to be adapted on a societal level has been one clear goal of the movement. Another key goal has been to bring substantial attention to the international spread of capitalism by organizing large-scale demonstrations. These demonstrations have sought to communicate discontent to those in power as well as to other citizens and also to literally stop meetings organized to further global capitalism. An examination of the three largest of these protests occurring over the past few years allows for other aspects of the movements' tactics, goals, successes, and limitations to emerge.

The WTO, World Bank, and WEF Protests
In late November of 1999, over 6,000 delegates from 135 nations met in Seattle at the meetings of the World Trade Organization (WTO). They were greeted by over 70,000 protesters, many of whom were organized by the Direct Action Network (DAN), a group largely consisting of anarchists, which adheres to anarchist principles. The organizing effort was depicted as extremely successful both within the movement as well as by the national media. An article in the *Seattle Times* with the byline "No One's in Charge and That's Just the Way They Want it to Be," noted that "the goal" of the organizing effort was "to have it be free and organic and not have it hierarchical."[23] The article described the environment of the Convergence Center, the base of operations for the protest, as a place where no one "wants to be in charge." It also discussed the role of affinity groups: "protesters form small 'affinity groups' of five to fifteen people. Each group plans its 'direct action' and…will have a first-aid person, a legal observer and a general helper."[24] Another article observed that "there was no central organizing effort" that maintained a hierarchical command of demonstrators.[25] A later article explained that "anarchists" hold "opposition to hierarchies that rob people of their voices and access to basic rights."[26] Even though these messages were framed by the corporate media to which the movement often considers itself opposed, anarchist principles entering into a national discourse was largely seen as a success of the demonstration.

Another key achievement of Seattle was that many who took part in the demonstrations, the vast majority of whom were not anarchist, were either witness to or participants in anarchist methods

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[21] Cindy Milstein, "Reclaim the Cities: From Protest to Popular Reform." *Perspectives on Anarchist Theory* Vol. 4, No. 2, (2000).

[22] Ibid.

[23] I quote from corporate media in order to develop an understanding of how issues have been framed in the mainstream press. Furthermore, in depicting events, I have only used quotes that have been confirmed by anarchist sources.

[24] "Protesters Playing it Loose and Easy—No One's in Charge and That's Just the Way They Want it to Be," *The Seattle Times,* 25 November 1999, B1.

[25] "Police Switch to New Strategy- They Say Rough Protest Caught Them Off Guard," *The Seattle Times,* 1 December 1999, Al

[26] "Squatters Vacate Downtown Building After Deal," *The Seattle Times*, 5 December 1999, A17.

of organizing. "The entire event was organized according to anarchist principles," scholar Amory Starr, who is not an anarchist, observed. "Everyone who participated has now experienced the anarchist alternative to top-down systems. We saw self-organization at work and it worked."[27] Another movement observer commented that "for those who participated in an affinity group for the first time, or watched a spokes-council operate, or had their first experience of reaching consensus, the payoff was a rationale for democratic decision making as well as a set of tools for doing it."[28] Because anarchists are attempting to radically restructure society, the spread and proliferation of their ideas of organizing and direct democracy have been another successful achievement; one that is defined by the movement's own goals.

On November 30, the day that the WTO was to hold its opening meeting, a large direct action of 8,000 protesters (organized by DAN) resulted in the cancellation of meetings, forcing the Seattle Police Chief to admit that "those who were arguing that they were going to shut the WTO down were in fact successful today."[29] One paper observed that "many of the protesters splintered into so-called 'affinity groups' and once downtown, formed human blockades, sat cross-legged in intersections and chained themselves to scaffolding with bicycle locks."[30] As an anarchist noted, this action reflected "the strategy developed through the Direct Action Network meetings… anarchism in action."[31] Continuing, he described that the plan was to "divide the downtown area into pie slices, with the convention center as ground zero. Then, different affinity groups would take responsibility for different slices, and plan however they saw fit cause disruption that would hinder the operation of the conference. The cops could foresee very little since the strategy was so decentralized among closely knit groups." As one participant explains, many anarchists prefer direct action because it is "exactly the opposite" of formal protest, which typically recognizes "the authority of the people that you oppose even as you oppose them."[32] State permitted marches admit the legitimacy of the government as an instrument that has the right to authorize actions and legitimately control peoples' activities. Alternatively, direct actions are conducted as if the state's "power is completely illegitimate…. You directly try to stop them from doing what they're doing…. It's unmediated…. Direct action ties into the spirit of direct democracy."[33] That direct actions stopped meetings to advance corporate globalization was viewed as a pivotal accomplishment of the demonstration.

As the direct action brought the cancellation of the opening meetings, a small group of anarchists dressed in black a few blocks away used another method that they viewed as an anarchist tactic: property destruction. As one paper reported, "one group of about 200 demonstrators, dressed mostly in black and wearing hoods and masks, pulled out hammers and other small implements and began smashing windows."[34] The black clad anarchists smashed windows at NikeTown, Nordstrom, and Planet Hollywood, threw newspaper dispensers into the street, toppled dumpsters, and "flattened the tires of empty police cars and spray-painted objects with their trademark circle 'A.'"[35]

[27] Amory Starr, *Naming the Enemy: Anti-Corporate Movements Confront Globalization* (London: Zeb Books, 2000), p. 115, 116.

[28] Francesca Polletta, "'This is What Democracy Looks Like:' A Conversation with Direct Action Network Activists David Graeber, Brooke Lehman, Jose Lugo, and Jeremy Varon." *Social Policy* Vol. 31, Issue 4. (Summer 2001), p. 28.

[29] "Stop the WTO': Protesters Say Goal Achieved," *USA Today,* 1 December 1999, 19A.

[30] "Clashes, Protests Wrack WTO—Police Try to Break Up Protesters; Clash Delays Opening Event," *The Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999, A1.

[31] "Black Bloc Interview." *Alternative Press Review* (Spring 2000), p. 29.

[32] "Anarchy in the USA: An Interview with David Graeber," *Guerilla Action News*. Available at: http://www.guerrillanews.com/counter_intelligence/330.html

[33] Ibid.

[34] "Clashes, Protests Wrack WTO," *Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999.

[35] "Police Switch to New Strategy," *Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999.

A visible rift emerged between those using property destruction and other protesters, many of them fellow anarchists. One paper reported that "when a group of 20, all wearing black, began throwing metal newspaper boxes into the street, others chased them away, shouting at them to keep the demonstration non-violent." [36] A 24-year-old music teacher who wore a "Non-Violent Protester t-shirt" noted "it really angers me to see people doing this…. I just don't want to be around those people." Many felt that "the violence diverted attention from the vast majority of protesters who…were peaceful."[37] Another paper observed that when the anarchists partaking in property destruction "eventually marched away, the crowed cheered as they did when the police would retreat."[38] Further, many even tried to physically stop the property destruction, by either placing themselves in front of storefront windows or, in some cases, physically restraining black clad anarchists.[39]

The anarchists engaged in property destruction referred to their tactic as black bloc, "a temporary collection of anarchists that represent a contingent in a protest march," much like an affinity group, but oriented toward actions which go "beyond mere reformism and appeals to the state."[40] This often, though not always, results in the use of property destruction as a tactic. Black bloc first appeared in America during the demonstrations against the Gulf War in 1992, but its origins date back to the Autonomen in German during in the 1980's.[41] The Autonomen (not all of whom were anarchists and whose numbers grew to thousands and spread across Europe) initiated actions against capitalism, domestic social policies, and apartheid in South Africa. At a demonstration in Hamburg of over 10,000 in 1986, a group of 1,500 wearing all black literally battled with police and engaged in property destruction in defense of an area of squatted buildings.[42] In the US, throughout the 1990s the numbers of people engaging in black bloc at demonstrations remained mostly small until a few months before Seattle, when over 1,500 took part in the demonstration during April 1999 at Millions 4 Mumia in Philadelphia.[43]

After Seattle, a number of anarchist collectives that took part in the property destruction issued communiqués explaining the actions. One black bloc collective noted, "by attacking and destroying Capitalist private property…we go beyond rhetoric and actually inflict real material damage upon the urban out-posts of the oppressive and totally uninteresting commodified empire of the new Capitalists. By our method we transform indecisiveness and restraint into REAL action."[44] The communiqués stressed that property destruction should not be viewed as violent, as it causes no physical pain to humans. "Private property—especially corporate private property," one collective wrote, "is itself infinitely more violent than any action taken against it."[45] Further, they stressed that "when we smash a window, we aim to destroy the thin veneer of legitimacy that surrounds private property rights…. By 'destroying' private property, we convert its limited exchange value into an expanded use value." Through property destruction, the group not only makes a highly visible statement against capitalism but also attempts to reshape contemporary understandings of property. Smashing a store window creates "a vent to let some

[36] "Group Rejects Others' Pleas of No Violence- Black-Clad Anarchists Target Cars, Windows," *The Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999, A12.

[37] "Police Haul Hundreds to Jail- National Guard on Patrol; 1,000 Protesters Enter Restricted Zone," *The Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999, A1.

[38] "Group Rejects Others' Pleas," *Seattle Times*, 1 December 1999.

[39] ACME Collective, "N30 Black Bloc Communiqué." 4 December 1999. Published widely on the internet, for instance at: http://www.zmag.org/acme.htm

[40] "Black Bloc for Dummies," http://www.infoshop.org/blackbloc.html

[41] George Katsiaficas, *The Subversion of Politics: European Social Movements and the Decolonialization of Everyday Life* (New Jersey: Humanities Press, 1997).

[42] Ibid., pp. 128-131.

[43] "Black Bloc for Dummies," http://www.infoshop.org/blackbloc.html

[44] The Green Mountain Anarchist Collective, "A Communiqué on Tactics and Organization: To the Black Bloc, From Within the Black Bloc." Pamphlet, Published December 2000, p. 5.

[45] ACME Collective, "N30 Black Bloc Communiqué."

fresh air into the oppressive atmosphere of a retail outlet" and turning over a dumpster, allows it to become "an obstruction to the phalanx of rioting cops and a source of heat and light."[46]

Others within the anarchist movement spoke out against black bloc actions. Unlike the critiques that came from mainstream media or reformist organizations like Global Exchange, few anarchists viewed the actions as "violent" or offered an unequivocal denunciation of property destruction. Indeed, most opposing anarchists instead argued that the actions were undemocratic and hindered the ability of the movement to grow. One anarchist noted that "just because I may be 'ready' and willing to escalate a given confrontation with police, that doesn't mean everyone around me is…. The problem being our actions have repercussions for others in the vicinity, including passersby who don't realize they're involved in the struggle."[47] This unfairly hinders the autonomy of those surrounding the actions and is therefore an undemocratic act. Anarchist Michael Albert noted that the actions undemocratically shifted the direction of the protest: "breaking windows was not a demonstration agenda item. The stated and understood goal of the thousands upon thousands of people from all over the US and world who attended the event was to build movements to challenge the WTO using marches, rallies, and civil disobedience. To take advantage of the opportunity of the assembly by violating those aspirations undermines any sense of democracy."[48] Another anarchist challenged the effectiveness of the action: "Breaking windows of department stores can be momentarily exciting but…[does not] offer much in the way of educating the public about capitalism in general…. Targeting Nike as a major contributor to the evils of capitalism is necessary, but how and why it is true cannot be explained by broken windows."[49] Indeed, the actions were viewed as hindering the ability for the movement to grow: "changing society isn't a matter of breaking windows, it is a process of developing consciousness and vehicles for organization and movement, and of then applying these to win gains that benefit deserving constituencies and create conditions for still further victories."[50]

Others responded to these critiques, defending the actions by drawing attention to the importance of autonomous action of those who engaged in the black bloc: "The tactics of these 'anarchists' are no less legitimate than any other group who came to protest the WTO…. To assert that trashing had 'no positive effects', that it should only occur when it will 'meet widespread approval' (i.e. never or on the day of the Revolution)…denies a variety of tactics and the autonomy of minorities to act according to their own thinking and needs."[51] Another made clear that "these kids didn't come to simply break the windows of The Gap, but to *physically* perform a metaphor against the system as a whole, including the very idea of protest itself."[52] Another defender observed the authoritarianism in the claim "that there should be a popular front strategy, where all 'constituencies' of the 'movement' only need to agree on who or what the so-called greatest enemy is."[53] Anarchist critics such as Albert portrayed "the trashing as 100 militants hijacking a demonstration of 70,000," one anarchist observed, "Really, this is putting the cart before the horse. In actuality, Albert is trying to justify a tyranny of 70,000 telling 100 militants what is and not permitted at a demonstration. [We are charged] with being undemocratic. The anarchist response must be: But of course. We are anarchists, not majoritarians."[54]

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[46] Ibid.

[47] Brian Dominick, "Anarchy, Non/Violence, and the Seattle Actions." http://www.zmag.org/anarchynv.htm

[48] Michael Albert, "Reply to the ACME Collective." http://www.zmag.org/replytoacme.htm

[49] Rebecca DeWitt, "An Anarchist Response to Seattle: What Shall We do With Anarchism?" *Social Anarchism* No. 29 (2000), p. 8.

[50] Michael Albert, "Reply to the ACME Collective."

[51] George Katsiaficas, "Class, Race, and the Battle of Seattle: An Open Letter to Michael Albert." http://www.zmag.org/kats.htm

[52] Jonathan Slyk, "Smashing Seattle: How Anarchists Stole the Show at the WTO." *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* Vol. 18, No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2000), p. 56.

[53] Lawrence Jarach, "Dueling Diatribes- ACME and Albert." *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed* Vol. 18, No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2000), p. 46.

[54] Impulse, "I Love Trash: A Reply to Michael Albert." http://www.infoshop.org/octo/wto_trash.html

There was at least some validity to these claims, as anarchists who were going to partake in black bloc tactics had made it known previous to the protest. This was acknowledged months before the demonstration by an organizer quoted in the *Seattle Times*, who noted "You know, with the anarchists from Eugene, it'll be, 'Badges? We don't need no stinking badges.'"[55] The Seattle Police Chief Norm Stamper later commented, "we knew violence would be coming to our city in the form of anarchists; that wasn't a secret."[56] Indeed, anarchists using black bloc methods circulated a flier around Seattle in late November which noted "Pitting the 'non-violent' against the 'violent' is a concept that divides and rules from the inside…. Why confine ourselves to the limited tactics of passive resistance and abstention from property damage?…. We must not go into action, or in-action, on November 30 with preconceived set of ideas about how we must behave. Rather we should be flexible, spontaneous and free to seize opportunities as they arise."[57] Clearly, organizers, including many fellow anarchists, did not incorporate the perspectives of those who advocated black bloc actions into the possibilities of protest. As one anarchist noted, "knowing full well that the black bloc anarchist *planned* actions against particular corporate targets in Seattle, the Direct Action Network should have included that inevitably reality into their consensus and agree to respond."[58]

This dialogue that ensued following the Seattle action resulted in a greater understanding of each position, as many came to acknowledge the validity of the different perspectives. Many of those who did not engage in black bloc tactics recognized the need to respect others' autonomy and allow for input and dialogue with those who may wish to utilize different tactics.[59] Further, many of those who advocated black bloc actions realized the importance of not having their actions impede on the autonomy of other protesters. There has been a growing respect for diversity of tactics at subsequent large-scale protests. At the mobilization against the World Bank and International Monetary Fund meetings in Washington DC in April of 2000, the next large-scale demonstration following Seattle, black bloc and other protesters worked together. However, an examination of the DC protest reveals a number of new issues that arose and have hindered the movement.

As with Seattle, the DC protest was largely organized by anarchist groups using anarchist methods. However, the protest was viewed as less effective, both by mainstream commentators and participants. For one, the numbers were much smaller, as between 10,000-15,000 people attended the protests. Further, unlike Seattle, the DC demonstration was not able to delay or force the cancellation of the meeting. Roughly 8,000 people engaged in direct action on the morning of the 16th to block delegates from attending the meeting, but their attempt was unsuccessful.[60]

As noted, the dialogues before the protest resulted in agreements between those wanting to partake in black bloc actions and those who had spoken out against property destruction. In DC, "a conscious decision had been made that there would be no attacks on property. This decision was adhered to with remarkable discipline."[61] The Black Bloc respected "the desires of other constituencies and repeatedly actively defend[ed] their less prepared fellow participants…. Likewise, activists personally dedicated to non-violence openly respected those advocating different tactical views."[62]

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[55] "Resistance Takes Fast Track- Protesters Training Now for Sit-ins, Blockades," *The Seattle Times,* 10 September 1999, A1.

[56] "Seattle Caught Unprepared for Anarchists," *The Boston Globe,* 3 December 1999, A11.

[57] "Think For Yourself- Reclaim Your Mind!" Flier issued in Seattle in the days before November 30. Republished in *Anarchy: A Journal of Desire Armed,* Vol. 18, No. 1 (Spring-Summer 2000), p. 43.

[58] Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "The Tyranny of Democracy." *The Fifth Estate* 35, No. 1 (Spring, 2000), p. 10.

[59] "Anarchy in the USA: An Interview with David Graeber." http://www.guerrillanews.com/counter_intelligence/330.html

[60] Robin Hahnel, "Speaking Truth To Power: Speaking Truth to Ourselves." *Z Magazine* (June 2000), p 45.

[61] David Graeber, "The Riot That Wasn't." *In These Times*, 29 May 2000.

[62] Michael Albert, "Assessing A16." http://www.zmag.org/CrisesCurEvts/Globalism/assessing_a16.htm

Though the black bloc helped to defend many participants during the direct action, any attempts at separate autonomous actions were largely ineffective.[63] Police helicopters followed black bloc groups throughout the demonstrations. On April 17, when black bloc members attempted an action, clearly separate from those who did not wish to participate, they were attacked and arrested by police before they could take any formal action.[64] The visibility the black bloc attained in Seattle made them clear targets for preemptive arrests.

Further, the lack of "action" at the demonstration resulted in less favorable press coverage of the event. As Graeber noted, "the news, frustrated at the lack of images of violence and destruction, took vengeance in the only way they knew how: they declared the event a victory for the police…. Editorials consistently treated protester self-discipline as a failure."[65] Much of the press portrayed the protest as a defeat for not having forced the cancellation of the meetings. As the *New York Times* reported on the opening day of the meetings, "the International Monetary Fund achieved a major breakthrough today: they met."[66] The same newspapers who had declared protesters the winners in the Battle of Seattle "proclaimed that demonstrators failed to stop the IMF and World Bank meetings from taking place in Washington, DC, and singled out the DC police for special praise for maintaining order and keeping things peaceful."[67]

The DC police learned a great deal from Seattle and the police's lack of preparation. They began preparing for the actions shortly after Seattle, spending over $5 million in overtime and over $1 million in new riot protection gear.[68] This greater preparation resulted in a more effective control of the protest. A *Seattle Times* editorial accurately noted that "Washington DC did it better. A huge portion of the city was blocked off. Police- lots and lots of police- were on duty. Delegates to the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank were bused to meetings early Sunday morning," before demonstrations started for the day.[69]

The DC police also took several preemptive measures before the demonstration, something that had not been attempted in Seattle. On April 15, the day before the large-scale demonstrations were to be held, the police raided the Convergence Center, evicting over 200 protesters, confiscating puppets and materials, and sealing off the building.[70] Later that night, the police arrested almost 700 protesters in a peaceful march against the prison industrial complex. Though DC Police Chief Charles Ramsey claimed that protesters "had been given several opportunities" to vacate the streets, "protesters and even tourists who witnessed the event said not only did police fail to order people to disperse, but they also prevented those who wanted to leave from doing so."[71] The *New York Times* noted that its reporters at the march also never heard police orders to disperse.[72] As one commentator observed, "it was a blatant attempt by police to take some activists out of circulation, intimidate the less committed from coming downtown the next day, and to provoke violence."[73] Additionally, the DC police relied heavily on undercover officers

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[63] Active Transformation Collective, "Anarchist! Get Organized!" 22 July 2000.
       http://www.infoshop.org/news5/get_org.html
[64] Ibid. Exactly what the black bloc had planned to do is not clear since such decisions are never made public
[65] Graeber, "The Riot."
[66] "IMF Points to Big Accomplishment: It Met as Scheduled," *New York Times*, 17 April 2000, A9.
[67] Hahnel, "Speaking Truth To Power," p. 48.
[68] "Protests End With Voluntary Arrests; Police, Demonstrators Say They Met Goals," *The Washington Post,* 18 April 2000, A1.
[69] "Lessons from Seattle Learned Well in DC," *The Seattle Times*, 18 April 2000. B4.
[70] "Demonstrations Grow Near World Bank, IMF; Major Protests Today; DC Police Arrest Hundreds," *The Washington Post*, 16 April 2000, A28.
[71] Ibid.
[72] "Police Move Against Trade Demonstrators," *The New York Times*, 16 April 2000, A6.
[73] Hahnel, "Speaking Truth To Power," p. 48.

to infiltrate meetings and demonstrations, enabling them to gain information and be positioned to make (often unwarranted) arrests.[74]

The mobilization against DC was also hindered by an inability to build on the coalitions that had been so effective in Seattle. Religious groups held a rally for debt relief on April 9 and organized labor groups held a demonstration on April 12, but neither coalition was an active part of the main demonstrations on April 16.[75] There had been less outreach to different groups leading up to the demonstrations for April 16, which resulted in a lack of participants from groups outside of student, activist, and radical circles.

Additionally, the action was overwhelming white. This was also true for Seattle, where there had been little attempt to incorporate people of color into the organizing effort. Much of the demonstration was organized via the internet, which hindered involvement by people of color who have less online access.[76] Additionally, as scholar and activist Elizabeth Martinez has observed, when people of color were aware of the Seattle demonstration, they often lacked funds, had greater concerns about police repression, and/or felt alienated from what they (correctly) viewed as an overwhelmingly white movement. However, the DC organizing effort attempted much greater grassroots outreach to different minority groups (particularly to those within the racially diverse city of DC), but still, there was a tremendous lack of people of color at the action.[77] One non-anarchist person of color observed that "it seems that the ideals of absence of leadership…function best in a homogeneous group" and hinders the ability for new, non-anarchist, participants to get involved.[78] Chris Dixon, a founding member of DAN, observed that the movement's inability to connect issues to a local level also hindered participation by people of color: "What about privatization of city services as neoliberalism on the home front? What about welfare 'reform' as domestic structural adjustment?…. The connections are all there, as are the often unacknowledged activist working to challenge these injustices, yet many white, middle-class radicals simply aren't seeing them."[79]

The protest, however, achieved considerable levels of accomplishment in at least two respects. As noted, it was successfully organized by anarchist principles. Additionally, it again brought tremendous attention to the issues of corporate globalization. Discussions of the problems with the World Bank and IMF spread via numerous teach-ins and through various articles written about the organizing effort and the demonstration. This sent a message to those within the international economic bodies as well as millions of citizens previously unaware of these institutions that there are a great number of people "who are absolutely convinced that, far from yielding efficiency gains and benefits for all, corporate sponsored globalization actually misdirects productive potentials [and] benefits the few at the expense of the many."[80]

These trends that emerged in DC—greater police preparation and suppression, a lack of coalition building with non-radical groups, less media attention, and, as occurred in Seattle and continued in DC, a lack of people of color, were also evident at the protest against the World Economic Forum (WEF) in late January of 2002. Over 20,000 people demonstrated in New York City, at the protest organized by DAN, the Anti-Capitalist Convergence (an anarchist group), and Another

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[74] Cynthia Peters, "The DC Demos." 18 April 2000. Http://www.zmag.org/ZSustainers/ZDaily/2000-04/18peters.htm

[75] Mark Weisbrot, "Spring Protests in Washington, DC: Another Seattle?" 24 March 2000. http://www.zmag.org/ZSustainers/ZDaily/2000-03/24weisbrot.htm

[76] Elizabeth Betita Martinez, "Where Was the Color in Seattle? Looking For Reasons Why the Great Battle Was So White." *Colorlines* Vol. 3. Nub. 1 (Spring 2000).

[77] "Poetry Slams, Speeches, Posters, Rallies: All Efforts Fail to Get Black DC Activists Involved in IMF Fight," *The Washington Post*, 15 April 2000, B1.

[78] Colin Rajah, "Globalism and Race at A16 in DC," *Colorlines,* Vol. 3. Nub. 3. (Fall 2000).

[79] Chris Dixon, "Finding Hope After Seattle: Rethinking Radical Activism and Building a Movement." http://www.infoshop.org/rants/dixon_seattle.html

[80] Hahnel, "Speaking Truth To Power," p. 45.

World is Possible (which organizes by anarchist principles). While the demonstration had much to overcome in organizing a protest so soon in NYC after September 11, the action was also hindered by similar factors that emerged in DC.

Partially due to the post September 11 atmosphere, all unions and NGOs attached to the WEF protest distanced themselves from possible involvement. As one anarchist observed, "The relationship between unions…continues to be imbued with 'tension.'" [81] Many anarchists felt unions were distancing away from the movement, preferring to fight for reformist goals (for instance, AFL-CIO President John Sweeney was actually attending the WEF as a participant). Additionally, the march remained overwhelmingly white. One anarchist, in her pleas for greater outreach and solidarity, noted that anarchist groups "will need to decide whether or not they can support concrete struggles outside of mass protest. Otherwise, people of color will not see the movement as something worth connecting with. The same debate gets rehashed after every big demonstration." [82]

While black bloc had come to an agreement that property destruction would be avoided, its participants were again rendered largely ineffective even to use other tactics, as the police arbitrarily arrested hundreds of black bloc members (identifying anyone dressed in black as such). Further, for non-black bloc protesters, the police was able to succeed "in controlling our space, from the very beginning. Not because anyone wanted them to…not because of any lack of solidarity on the part of the march, but simply because they had the power and the resources to do so, and we didn't have the political legal clout or the tactical ability to stop them." [83] There were also numerous reports of police infiltration at planning meetings as well as throughout the demonstration.

Additionally, the media did not give ample coverage to the demonstration. As one participant noted, "the media gave us enormous attention in anticipation of lots of broken glass and heads. But the Phantom never materialized. Aside from one broken window on the animal rights [demonstration], all the rest of our actions were marches, rallies, and other nonviolent forms of protest…. The Media deemed this a police victory." [84] David Graeber highlighted one telling example: "*Nightline* had taped an elaborate segment which, for once, actually would have discussed central issues of the globalization movement. But producers canceled the show because of the lack of 'violence' in the news." [85]

Conclusion

The anarchist movement against globalization has clearly been hindered by a number of factors such as a dwindling of coalitions, a lack of diversity in involvement, poor media coverage, and police suppression. These factors will continue to hamper the movement's ability to further its successes unless significant attempts are made from within the movement to improve these conditions. However, the movement has also attained a considerable level of accomplishment by remaining "remarkably [along] anarchistic lines- with no national leadership, no overarching hierarchies but a vast collection of autonomous affinity groups, each operating on principles of democratic consensus." [86] Further, the movement's accomplishments are not limited simply to the successful organization along its key principles, but also in its ability to bring substantial attention to the issue of corporate globalization. Indeed, the anarchist movement against globalization has contributed greatly to bringing global observance to the activities of international economic institutions, fulfilling another a key goal of the movement.

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[81] Russ Schultz, "WEF Protests: Success or Failure?" 13 February 2002. http://nyc.indymedia.org/front.php3?article_id=20114

[82] Ibid.

[83] Starhawk, "New York! Saturday and Beyond." 14 February 2002. http://www.starhawk.org/activism/ny-sat-beyond.html

[84] Ibid.

[85] David Graeber, "Reinventing Democracy," *In These Times* 19 February 2002.

[86] Graeber, "The Riot."